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Subject **FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT** Page

Wednesday, 25 November 2009

J MICKEL
SPEAKER

N J LAURIE
CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENT

L J OSMOND
CHIEF HANSARD REPORTER

WEDNESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2009

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. John Mickel, Logan) read prayers and took the chair.

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petitions, lodged by the honourable members indicated—

Wondai, Seizure of Dogs

Mrs Pratt, from 1,205 petitioners, requesting the House to prosecute, to the full extent of the law, the owners of the breeding kennel in Wondai where DPI & RSPCA officials recently seized 250 dogs and puppies [1471].

Moreton Bay Marine Park Zoning Plan

Dr Robinson, from 21 petitioners, requesting the House to amend the government's Moreton Bay Marine Park Plan to allow recreational fishers to fish with one line per person in these fish-rich areas (the green zones); make available the science used in the decision to stop recreational fishing in the green zones of Moreton Bay, and to conduct a more rigorous and independent study of the fish stocks [1472].

Railways, Graffiti

Mr Nicholls, from 32 petitioners, requesting the House to remove existing graffiti vandalism along rail corridors, railway stations and train carriages; and to develop and implement a long-term strategy to ensure rail assets and adjacent properties are better protected and less likely to be targeted by graffiti vandals [1473].

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

MEMBERS' PAPERS TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following members' papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Cleveland (Dr Robinson)—

1474 Non-conforming petition from 30 petitioners regarding the exclusion of recreational fishers from some of the best fishing grounds (the green zones) of Moreton Bay

Member for Nanango (Mrs Pratt)—

1475 Non-conforming petition from 133 petitioners requesting the House to prosecute, to the full extent of the law, the owners of the breeding kennel in Wondai where DPI and RSPCA officials recently seized 250 dogs and puppies from appalling conditions

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Domestic and Family Violence

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.32 am): Domestic violence remains a serious blight on our community, with up to 60 domestic violence related deaths in Queensland over the past five years. I think every member of this House believes that is unacceptable and is committed to breaking the cycle of violence, protecting victims and their children and holding perpetrators accountable. Thankfully, we have mostly moved beyond the time when these issues were not dealt with or were swept under the carpet because they simply were not spoken about. But there is still much more that can be done.

Today we all have a chance to take a small but important stand against this scourge. Today is White Ribbon Day—an international event that aims to eliminate violence against women by changing behaviour. This year's campaign encourages all men to swear an oath to never commit, excuse or remain silent on the issue of violence against women. The Prime Minister, the federal Treasurer and many other well-known figures in sport, TV and music have now taken this oath and I congratulate them for doing so.

The government is undertaking a five-year strategy to tackle domestic violence issues. The strategy includes a review panel that will investigate all domestic violence related deaths in the last five years. I am very pleased that the Minister for Women, Karen Struthers, is also leading a review of the current Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act so that it best reflects the needs of women and children in these circumstances. She will be speaking on these matters further and will be representing the government at a function here at Parliament House later today to mark White Ribbon Day. Other events will be occurring across the country and I encourage everyone to get involved.

Queensland is also working closely with the Commonwealth and other states and territories on a national plan to reduce violence against women and children to be considered by COAG next year. As we mark White Ribbon Day, let us all remain vigilant as we condemn all forms of domestic and family violence.

Tourism Industry

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.34 am): The effects of the global financial crisis have been felt in almost every corner of our state—across the breadth of industries and in the homes of many Queenslanders. As members would be well aware, one industry that has been hit particularly hard is our tourism industry. The simple reality is that, when times are tough and people have less money to spend, it gets harder to attract visitors from around Australia and around the globe and our incoming tourism markets suffer. The effects of this kind of a downturn on tourism can be catastrophic, especially here in Queensland where tourism dominates the local economies of a number of major towns and cities in our regions and is a key economic driver.

That is why our government is determined to turn those impacts around to ensure the future for tourism in Queensland and secure the jobs of the 200,000 people who are employed by the industry in our state. To do this we need to work hand in hand with industry itself. So today, along with the Minister for Tourism and others, I will be attending our tourism summit with industry. This summit has brought together major tourism operators from different fields right across Queensland. We have done this because we want to hear from those operators on the ground about what is happening and what ideas they have to grow this industry. We will be working with them to ensure that our three-year plan for the future of tourism in Queensland, which is currently being drafted, will deliver the results that our industry needs. We need to build a brand and an image that draws people to Queensland, to choose Queensland as their destination not just once but for many years to come.

I am very pleased to say today that some positive moves are already underway that will assist. In a major boost to one of Queensland's tourism capitals, Cairns Airport has confirmed that it has signed a deal with Jetstar, which will bring up to 300,000 new passengers into the city over the next 2½ years. According to growth projections from the Cairns Airport, the additional international flights are expected to inject more than $220 million into the local economy in direct tourism spending and will help create up to 2,000 new jobs.

The local members in Cairns have spoken to me at length about the catastrophic effect that the decision by Qantas last year to withdraw flights has had on the local economy and I have seen it for myself on my many visits there. This deal will mean more tourists in the region and more money being injected into the local economy. The Queensland government will be working with all parties to ensure that the new flights deliver the results that Cairns tourism needs through ongoing marketing initiatives. We have already invested $3 million in tourism marketing for tropical North Queensland this financial year alone and we will continue to work with local business and airlines to ensure that we get maximum bang for our buck through targeted campaigns.

A successful tourism industry is also about delivering successful events. So I am also very pleased to advise the House today that the Splendour in the Grass music festival, which is traditionally held at Byron Bay, has confirmed that it will be relocating to the site of the Woodford Folk Festival next year. The move from Byron Bay to Woodford, north of Brisbane, for next year's festival is expected to pump up to $13 million into the local economy as it attracts around 30,000 visitors to the region. This is great news for Queensland music lovers but it is also very good news for locals, who will reap the benefits of such a big event, and for Queensland tourism as a whole. We know we need a combination of both short-term and long-term initiatives and partnerships to shore up tourism in Queensland for the future. Today's tourism summit will present an opportunity for industry to put their ideas on the table and I look forward to hearing from people working at the grassroots as well as industry leaders on their ideas for this important industry sector.

Ecotourism

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.38 am): On the subject of tourism we know, like every other industry, that delivering a modern Queensland and a modern tourism industry means thinking outside the box. As the entire world is under pressure financially, environmentally and socially, we know that we have to look at new solutions to deliver the best outcomes for our community. This is the case when it comes to managing climate change, it is the case when it comes to investing in infrastructure for the future and it is certainly the case when it comes to refreshing our tourism industry in these tough times. Modern challenges call for new ideas and that is why today I am very pleased to announce a new plan to put Queensland's best environmental assets on show in the growing ecotourism market.

Under our plan, the Queensland government will be seeking expressions of interest from private investors to establish low-impact ecotourism holiday accommodation in or adjacent to seven national parks throughout Queensland. The seven areas that have been identified under the plan are Eurong on

Fraser Island, Wallaman Falls at Girringun west of Cardwell, Ninny Rise at Mission Beach, Jonah Bay at Whitsunday, Mount Mee at D'Aguilar National Park, Green Mountain at Lamington National Park and Cowan South on Moreton Island. These are some of our most beautiful locations, but for those unwilling or unable to pitch their own tent these locations have simply been off limits.

Today's announcement will potentially open up these unique destinations to whole new markets to complement the existing camping facilities and offer new visitors greater choice. For years other states have successfully rolled out low-impact accommodation in or adjacent to their most popular parks. For instance, on the edge of the World Heritage listed Cradle Mountain in Tasmania there is an ecofriendly tourist lodge. I have had the pleasure of staying in it and I can certainly attest to how much it has opened up that park. Victoria's Wilsons Promontory National Park features non-intrusive safari style tents, and visitors can stay in small huts at Western Australia's Karijini National Park.

These are the kinds of tourism opportunities our state is currently missing out on, and that is something our government wants to rectify. The debate between tourism operators and environmentalists about low-impact accommodation in national parks has raged for many years. Other states have successfully managed to find the balance between protecting these precious environmental assets and providing the opportunities for visitors and ordinary Australians to visit their own national parks. It is time to take this issue out of the too-hard basket and to stop talking about hypotheticals and get some real proposals and designs on the table so they can be fully assessed.

Under our plan, ecofriendly accommodation such as semipermanent safari tents could be established with tight environmental controls to ensure minimal environmental impact. This occurs in other states. The new infrastructure would be operated and built by private companies but will remain under state ownership. Returns will go towards national parks in Queensland—a boost for conservation to ensure these parks can be enjoyed for years to come.

This is a new avenue for new tourism which the industry has been a vocal champion for. This proposal comes after talks with both tourism and environmental groups, and the benefits for both locals and visitors are tremendous. Introducing more people into our national parks will not only be a major boost for tourism but also help to build awareness about conservation and encourage more people to appreciate and respect our incredible natural environment.

Ecotourism is becoming more and more popular around the world. It is a market we simply cannot afford to turn our back on. Countries like New Zealand and states like Tasmania have done an exceptional job of marketing themselves as ecotourism venues. With some of the best environmental wonders in the world, Queensland should be right up there with these destinations. No-one wants to see five-star major resorts take over our national parks. This is about tapping into the growing ecotourism market by putting some of our best environmental assets on show while ensuring that they are properly protected. It is a proposal that will take our tourism industry forward and create new opportunities for jobs, new opportunities for investment and new opportunities for everyday people to get out there and enjoy the best of what Queensland has to offer.

Aged Care, Funding

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (9.43 am): On any given night in Queensland there are around 400 patients in our acute hospital beds who do not require urgent treatment and would be better cared for in nursing homes. During 2008-09 almost 150,000 patient days were used in our acute public hospitals by patients who would be better served in a nursing home and also thereby freeing up beds for patients who need them for acute treatment. I want to make it very clear that I am not referring to elderly patients who require hospital treatment; I am referring to patients who need nursing home care but cannot get into a nursing home.

The Australian government's National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission process has put this issue front and centre in the healthcare debate that is going on in Australia right now. The Queensland government provides about five per cent of nursing home beds. The federal government is responsible for aged care. It regulates it and it funds it. After years of underfunding and neglect by the Howard government, the aged-care sector has struggled to keep up with demand for its services. The result is that older Australians who need and deserve to be cared for in aged-care facilities have no place to go except to a bed in our acute public hospitals. That situation is no good for our aged-care patients and it is no good for our acute public hospitals which have to provide them with beds and health professionals who should be devoted to making sick people well again. There are 400 beds across Queensland that are being used unnecessarily by aged-care patients due to this historical neglect of the aged-care sector.

To put this in perspective, if aged-care patients were moved out of our acute hospitals and into more appropriate care we would free up enough beds to fill a hospital the size of Cairns Base Hospital or Rockhampton Hospital. Many of us see constituents who are dealing with this issue of placing loved ones in nursing homes. Moreover, that is 400 patients who could call an aged-care facility home instead of an acute public hospital bed.

The federal government has responsibility for aged care and is the primary provider and funder of nursing home facilities. It is time that the Commonwealth met its responsibility in the aged-care sector. We want to see the Health and Hospitals Reform process achieve this. The Australian government has talked about whether it should take over our health system. A good first step for the Prime Minister and the health and ageing minister would be to step up to the plate on the Commonwealth's own responsibilities in aged care. Commonwealth health funding under the Howard government fell in less than a decade from 50 per cent to 35 per cent. This meant that in areas in which the federal government was traditionally responsible, particularly aged care, Queenslanders were short-changed. The Queensland government picked up the tab, but this is not sustainable. In fact, for every nursing home bed the state government operates compared to the private sector, we get about $6,000 less per year than the Commonwealth pays the private sector, merely because we are the state government.

For too long under John Howard aged care was neglected in this country. One result is that our hospital beds are housing aged-care patients instead of treating more sick and injured patients. Another result is that the Queensland government has stepped into the breach to provide aged-care services where the private sector and the federal government have failed. Queensland Health has 20 Commonwealth accredited and funded residential aged-care facilities providing care to 1,496 residents, or about five per cent. Total Queensland government funding for residential aged care and longer stay older patients in 2008-09 is estimated to be $180.6 million. That is $180.6 million of Queensland taxpayers' money spent on an area of federal responsibility. That could provide 22,631 extra operations, and with $180.6 million we could employ more than 2,000 extra nurses.

If the Australian government under John Howard had delivered on its responsibility to provide aged care, Queensland would have enough spare beds to fill a whole hospital and $180 million a year to run it. The Rudd government has initiated the health and hospitals reform process to address this historic neglect. I applaud Kevin Rudd and Nicola Roxon for doing so. The ball is now in their court.

LNG Industry

Hon. AP FRASER (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (9.47 am): The LNG industry has the potential to deliver thousands of jobs and a whole new export industry for the state. The Bligh government is determined to pave the way with this new industry and the billions of dollars of investment that would flow. We have abundant gas resources in this state, with reserves being proved in support of the proposed investment. As we provide an export path for this gas to help power the development of the region, we are also keen to ensure that domestic supply needs are secured. We have conducted a consultation process on this front and are determined to implement a mechanism to ensure future supply if necessary.

It must be stated up-front that currently we have around 500 years of supply at current levels. Two policy proposals, either a reservation of total gas produced by proponents or the reservation of particular fields for domestic supply, were included in a consultation document tabled in this parliament in September. I publicly acknowledge the productive, constructive engagement with the LNG industry on this matter. While there are currently eight projects proposed, industry and the market know that all eight will not proceed and that consolidation will occur. Despite this very competitive tension, the LNG industry has ensured that it has cooperated amongst themselves and with government. This has been to the benefit of the policy position now determined. That policy will see a capacity for future fields proposed for exploration to be reserved for domestic gas supply should supply be determined to be constrained through a transparent process led by a gas commissioner.

To promote competition we will also facilitate the development of a short-term gas trading market by 2011. However, LNG is not the only industry where job creation is on the agenda. We are also welcoming global IT firm Dhanush Infotech to Springfield. Dhanush is a multi-national information technology company based in India with offices around the world. Thanks to the work of Invest Queensland, which works tirelessly to attract businesses here to this state, Dhanush has established its Asia-Pacific headquarters right here in the south-east corner. That is right: IT jobs from an Indian company coming here to Queensland. Dhanush identified the opportunities on offer in Queensland, in particular the new corridor at Springfield, and invested $1.5 million in its new headquarters. It expects to employ 200 people within five years, and I can tell members that, from speaking with Dhanush executives, we will probably see those 200 people even quicker.

Lastly, yesterday I supported the bid of Protected Transport Systems in its quest to win a $1 billion Defence Force contract. That project enjoys strong support also from the member for Toowoomba North. If successful, PTS will be able to employ 250 people in the Toowoomba region to develop light armoured vehicles for the Australian defence forces. Projects like those will continue to drive development and economic growth in Queensland. Those projects and prospects are important to securing the future of jobs in regional Queensland and this government remains determined to drive job creation right across the state.

Ecotourism

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (9.50 am): The Bligh government has made its commitment to the environment and Queensland's tourism industry very clear. We recognise that our natural environment is essential for the future of Queensland tourism. The Great Barrier Reef, the Daintree and the Wet Tropics have all been protected for future generations because of strong, positive policy. Our natural tourism assets draw millions of domestic and international tourists and billions of dollars in tourism expenditure to our state every year.

Today the challenge is to ensure that people can continue to enjoy our environment without harming it. It is a delicate but essential process. To ensure a viable and sustainable tourism industry that will continue to compete with and surpass other states, the Bligh government has decided to develop new tourism products and attractions that will showcase Queensland's unique natural assets.

One way to achieve this is through new tourism product initiatives in or near protected areas. As many tourism destinations lie within Queensland's protected areas, the Bligh government believes that there is scope for greater nature based private and public investment in eco-friendly tourism infrastructure. As part of the Tourism in Protected Areas project, the state government will offer investment opportunities for ecotourism in or near national parks. The opportunities will be geared toward semi permanent and low-impact development, for example, safari style tent accommodation. This is something that is available in other states but, in Queensland it has been approached cautiously and in careful consultation with stakeholders.

International tourism markets such as Europe and Germany—and they are separate markets—have keen ecotourism travellers who are generally willing to stay longer in Australia. We just have to give them an excuse. They have a considerable interest in visiting remote places and staying in this type of low-impact accommodation that is on or adjacent to protected areas. New nature based tourism products will enhance Queensland's attractiveness to both international and domestic visitors, and therefore support local economies and jobs. The Bligh government is dedicated to ensuring that future access to our national parks will not be made by a National Party bulldozer, but through positive environmental policy.

Ecotourism

Hon. KJ JONES (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability) (9.53 am): The ecotourism investment opportunities our government has announced today are what Queensland needs if we are to keep pace with the rest of the country. We are home to some of Australia's most attractive and spectacular natural features. It makes sense that we do all we can to encourage more people to appreciate them. What we have announced today is another major step towards achieving this. We will make sure the commercial operators who take up these opportunities pay their way and contribute over and above any additional management costs that may arise from the increased use of these parks. We are seeking a net increase in the funds available to manage our parks through any arrangements that are put in place. This will mean an overall improvement in the management and maintenance of these parks. Importantly, I will ensure that they pass strict biodiversity and environmental tests before they proceed.

Queensland has some of the world's unique protected areas, such as the Great Barrier Reef, the Daintree and Fraser Island. Our state has more World Heritage areas than any other state of Australia. We know they are the reasons why many visitors come to Queensland. We do not want to do anything that would jeopardise that. We want to enhance their attraction so that more people can appreciate all that we have to offer—people who would not otherwise contemplate spending time in our parks. Some of these investment opportunities are on protected areas and, importantly, these will be low-impact, semi permanent structures in keeping with the unique natural environment of the area. Investors will need to demonstrate their ecotourism credentials to ensure that these opportunities are operated to the highest standards. Overall state ownership will be retained.

This government's commitment to conservation values is concrete. We have committed to increasing our total national park area by 50 per cent to 12.9 million hectares by 2020. We are making good on this commitment, with an additional 120,000 hectares achieved this year, taking our total past the eight million hectare mark. This achievement is all the more significant in the face of extraordinarily high population growth in Queensland, particularly in the south-east corner.

Civil and Criminal Jurisdiction Reform and Modernisation Amendment Bill

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.55 am): The Australian Labor Party has a well-deserved reputation as being the party of reform and the Bligh government is continuing this tradition as it seeks to respond to emerging challenges and to make decisions that will help build a safe, modern and vibrant Queensland. This approach extends to the Justice portfolio, where we have been implementing many reforms to modernise our court system. Today I announce the next phase of our reform agenda. Last year, the Honourable Martin Moynihan,

former Senior Judge Administrator of the Supreme Court, conducted a wide-ranging review of the Queensland justice system. His report contained 60 recommendations aimed at making more effective use of public resources within the system. The report and the Queensland government's response were released on 21 July 2009.

The government has now developed a bill implementing the first stage of reforms in response to the report. The key reforms in this bill expand the criminal and civil jurisdiction of the District Court and Magistrates Court, streamline the committal process, and provide greater encouragement for defendants to enter a plea of guilty at the earliest reasonable opportunity. This legislation will have significant benefits for Queensland courts, the legal profession and the community generally. I now table a consultation draft of the Civil and Criminal Jurisdiction Reform and Modernisation Amendment Bill 2009 and explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Consultation draft of the Civil and Criminal Jurisdiction Reform and Modernisation Amendment Bill [1476].

Tabled paper: Consultation draft of the Civil and Criminal Jurisdiction Reform and Modernisation Amendment Bill, explanatory notes [1477].

The issues canvassed by Mr Moynihan have been a matter of concern for some time and extensive consultation was undertaken in the review. I believe this bill fairly balances the needs of all stakeholders, the community and the interests of justice in Queensland. A significant benefit of the legislation is enabling litigants and defendants to have more matters heard and determined in the District Court and Magistrates Court. The reforms are designed to ensure a more appropriate and effective use of resources across the justice system. In particular, they will help manage the workload of cases in the Supreme and District courts by allowing those courts to focus on more serious and complex matters. Comments and feedback on the bill are due by 31 January 2010. The government anticipates that the final version of the bill will be introduced into the Legislative Assembly early next year.

Ipswich Motorway Upgrade

Hon. CA WALLACE (Thuringowa—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads) (9.57 am): I would like to update parliament on the Ipswich-Logan interchange project being constructed as part of the Ipswich Motorway upgrade. This interchange is a vital part of the project and the first component of the upgrade to be completed. To celebrate this milestone, the local community is invited to attend the official commissioning of the interchange this Sunday, 29 November on the signature bridge overlooking the Ipswich Motorway, connecting Old Logan Road to Wilruna Street. The federal member for Oxley, Bernie Ripoll, representing Transport and Infrastructure Minister Anthony Albanese, and I will commission the interchange.

The Bligh government is holding its 20th community cabinet in the western suburbs on Sunday and Monday and the completion of this interchange is of great importance to the people of the local area. The $255 million Ipswich-Logan interchange project is a key milestone in the upgrade of the Ipswich Motorway. The project involved a major upgrade of the Ipswich Motorway and the Logan Motorway interchange, with the construction of 12 new bridges, service roads, three underpasses and a 2.2 kilometre section of the Ipswich Motorway widened from four lanes to six lanes.

This project was built under the constraints of keeping traffic flowing, as around 90,000 vehicles use the Ipswich Motorway every day. It required more than 50 major traffic realignments, where a significant amount of work was undertaken at night to minimise impacts on motorists.

Mr Wendt: They've done a great job.

Mr WALLACE: I take the interjection of the member for Ipswich West. A great job has been done out there by some hardworking men and women who deserve a pat on the back.

The Ipswich-Logan interchange project has contributed to Queensland's economic strength by providing employment and training opportunities. About 1,896 direct and indirect jobs were sustained over the life of the project. The upgraded Ipswich-Logan interchange will improve traffic flow, reduce congestion, increase safety and reliability, reduce travel times and improve local access. It is another example of the Rudd and Bligh governments working together to deliver the infrastructure needed to meet population growth in Queensland, particularly in the western corridor.

As the western corridor grows, we are planning for the future, working in partnership with the Rudd government to ensure that we have the road infrastructure in place to meet this growth. However, opposition members are stuck in the past. Their federal colleague, if one could call him that, the member for Wide Bay, recently said that if the coalition were re-elected it would build the Goodna bypass. This is despite the people of Ipswich overwhelmingly rejecting the bypass at the last federal election. We are getting on with the job of building a better Queensland—making sure that we can meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade. I am sorry; you are quite right. I call the Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology.

Department of Public Works, Infrastructure Projects

Hon. RE SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology) (10.00 am): Thank you. I have no desire to have his job, Mr Speaker. It is better to be looked over than overlooked, Mr Speaker.

As our government continues the delivery of its record infrastructure program, it is fitting to look back on the contribution of the Department of Public Works to the state's economy in 2009. Public Works has played a lead role in managing capital works projects, with a value of $8.5 billion. More importantly, the Queensland government has supported thousands of jobs in the construction industry at a time when they are needed most and, just as importantly, we are planning for the future growth of Queensland and the infrastructure needs that will have to be met.

There are many highlights, dating back to the start of the year when the $82 million Queensland Tennis Centre was officially opened by the Premier and the then minister for sport, the Hon. Judy Spence, on 2 January. Approximately 725 jobs were created as a result of that project. On 4 October, the $63.3 million Kurilpa Bridge was opened. During the first month of counting, just over 27,000 cyclists and pedestrians have used the bridge each week. Construction of the bridge created approximately 1,050 jobs. Notably, the opposition criticised that project. In the same vicinity, the $41 million redevelopment of the Queensland Performing Arts Centre was completed in June this year, producing 316 full-time equivalent positions.

Public Works has also overseen the construction of government office buildings across Queensland. On Palm Island two new government office buildings opened in July, with locals contributing 16,000 hours of work during construction. On Thursday Island, work started on the $12 million government office buildings, which has resulted in approximately 90 jobs. The Queensland government has met its election—

Mr O'Brien: It's a great project.

Mr SCHWARTEN: Of course it was a great project, yes.

Mr Seeney: Just table it. No-one is listening to you.

Mr SCHWARTEN: I take that interjection. The individuals across from me have no interest in job creation in this state in the construction industry. Let the record show that. They are uninterested in employment in the construction industry. That speaks for itself.

Let me go back to Thursday Island, about which the honourable member for Cook interjected.

Mr Seeney: What do the QR guys in Rocky call you? What do the signs in Rocky say about you?

Mr SCHWARTEN: I know what the people in your electorate call you, and I know what Di McCauley said about you in the book.

Mr Seeney: What does d-o-g spell? What do they mean when they call you a dog, Robbie?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Callide.

Mr SCHWARTEN: No-one calls me a dog, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Callide. The honourable the minister.

Mr Hinchliffe: He's the one doing the yapping.

Mr SCHWARTEN: We know what part of the dog he is, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: No. The honourable the minister.

Mr SCHWARTEN: The Queensland government has met its election commitment to build an AFL stadium on the Gold Coast at Carrara—again, opposed and criticised by those opposite. The $126 million project will create an estimated 950 jobs—another 950 jobs opposed by those who sit opposite and bleat. There is the $445 million Lotus Glen Correctional Centre, which will create an estimated 3,700 full-time equivalent jobs. I was there a couple of weeks ago and there were 300 new jobs on that site—300 chippies, sparkies and all the rest of them; another 300 living in that area.

The $485 million Gatton Correctional Centre will create approximately 3,650 jobs. The $600 million Brisbane Supreme Court and District Court Complex will create an estimated 5,000 jobs. The Gold Coast University Hospital is valued at $1.76 billion, creating an estimated 13,000 full-time equivalent jobs. In January 2010, the $41 million Ingham Hospital redevelopment, which has created 312 jobs, will open. I note that that is in one of the tory electorates. I suppose they oppose that, too.

With the population growing rapidly both in the south-east corner and throughout Queensland, these projects are both timely and beneficial to the people of this state. We went to an election in March this year and said that we would do everything to face the challenges to create jobs and to protect our building program. This is evidence that that has occurred. I note again that those who sit opposite in their rightful places oppose that.

Water Supply

Hon. S ROBERTSON (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade) (10.05 am): The recently released 50-year South East Queensland Water Strategy encompasses a broad range of water supply strategies to cater for Queensland's rapid population growth. One of the many responses to ensure our long-term water supply security is to harvest stormwater to supplement our water supplies in South-East Queensland. While large climate-resilient bulk water supplies are vital to provide for the needs of a booming South-East Queensland, it is also smart to utilise all possible sources of water, including local supplies such as stormwater harvesting and rainwater tanks.

Stormwater harvesting represents one such opportunity and has received detailed consideration by the Queensland Water Commission, as evidenced by the reports available on its website. Most new houses have a rainwater tank to meet the water savings target introduced by this government, but stormwater, greywater and recycled water can also be used. The results of the QWC study indicate that stormwater harvesting projects are viable in new greenfield sites but are unlikely to be cost-effective in retro-fitting in existing residential developments. It is estimated that by 2056 water savings from these sources will come from 800,000 new houses, resulting in 60,000 megalitres of local supply per annum in South-East Queensland.

The government is putting stormwater harvesting into action. We have provided $4.6 million to assist a stormwater harvesting scheme at Brisbane's South Bank. The scheme will capture water from existing urban areas and provide 77 megalitres a year for irrigation of parks and green spaces. The Queensland Water Commission has also funded a feasibility study into stormwater use as part of an Urban Land Development Authority housing development in Fitzgibbon. Not only will this development provide affordable housing; it will showcase stormwater harvesting, providing 89 megalitres a year for residential and park use.

Queensland's rapidly growing population must be catered for, and we are leading Australia in making sure that our population has a safe and secure water supply from a variety of options. Stormwater, though, can only provide a small fraction of the 70,000 megalitres annually that Traveston Crossing Dam would have supplied the water grid by 2017—enough water for 800,000 people. No stormwater harvesting scheme can supply water security for that number of people. We must maximise every opportunity to capture and re-use water sources, and this government is committed to investing in research and alternative water projects such as stormwater harvesting and other opportunities.

State Schools

Hon. GJ WILSON (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Training) (10.08 am): Our state and our population are continuing to grow at a rapid rate, and that is why the Bligh government is continuing to invest in the services Queenslanders need. We are delivering new roads, new hospitals, new schools, kindergarten services and TAFEs. We have spent record funds to expand and refurbish state school facilities for the new year. More than $2 billion has been allocated this financial year for new schools, classrooms, TAFE facilities and early childhood buildings in growth areas. In total, more than 200 new classrooms will be provided across Queensland to accommodate growth in 2010. This includes four new schools—the $26 million Amberley District State School, the $36 million Brisbane Bayside State College, along with the first two of seven new schools being delivered under the $1 billion public-private partnership model.

The PPP schools to open in 2010 are Bayview State School and Peregian Springs State School on the Sunshine Coast. Amberley District, Bayview and Peregian Springs will open their doors to prep to year 7 students for the 2010 school year, offering young people exceptional educational facilities, including high-tech classrooms fitted with wireless networks. Amberley District will cater also for early childhood students.

The first two of what will eventually be some 240 additional kindergarten units should open their doors early next year. Work is underway on the kindy at Stretton State College, which is being built on site. The kindy for Moorooka State School is also well advanced. It is being built off site at a Yatala factory, which the Premier and I visited on Sunday to inspect progress.

We are looking after regional Queensland. We will soon begin to see more and more kindys cropping up throughout the regions as well, with new services due to be built at Seaforth and Beaconsfield, near Mackay, Redlynch near Cairns, Mudgeeraba on the Gold Coast, and Oonoonba near Townsville. The rollout is part of our commitment to providing universal access to kindergarten for Queensland students. We know that demand for these services will continue to grow as our population increases, and we want to ensure that we meet the needs of a growing state.

A majority of works in the Bayside, Inala and eastern Ipswich clusters and at Innisfail under our State Schools of Tomorrow program will be finalised in time for the new year. Round 2 of the State Schools of Tomorrow program, due for completion in June 2011, will see refurbishment of selected facilities at up to 250 primary and secondary schools as part of the landmark, five-year $850 million initiative.

Other major developments for the start of the 2010 school year include the $14.8 million stage 3 development of Meridan State College, the $13.4 million stage 3 development at Weipa's Western Cape College, the $3.6 million stage 2 work at Park Lake State School, the $20 million redevelopment of Brisbane State High School, and $5 million to relocate the Xavier Special Education Program.

But we know that giving Queensland kids a great education means investing in more than bricks and mortar; we need to invest in our teachers as well. Teaching is undoubtedly a challenging profession but its effects are critical: teachers are helping to shape Queensland's future. That is why I am pleased to say that Queensland teachers have voted overwhelmingly in favour of the government's new pay offer. This $1 billion investment will make Queensland's beginning teachers the nation's highest paid. The 12.5 per cent deal also includes extra sweeteners for principals and senior teachers. We need to attract the best and brightest into the profession and to keep high-performing teachers in the classroom, and the new EB recognises this.

Local Government

Hon. D BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.12 am): This government is investing in the order of $344 million in local governments. For Central Queensland councils, including Gladstone, Isaac, Rockhampton and Central Highlands, this translates to an injection of almost $50 million. This investment will pay dividends for all Queenslanders, not just those living in the communities of Capricornia. As one of our fastest growing regions, the resource industry based in Capricornia will help power our prosperity long into this century. That is why we have committed $20 million for the soon-to-be-completed Capricorn Coast-Fitzroy River water pipeline. This 30-kilometre pipeline will provide drought protection for the Capricorn Coast.

There is the $5 million Moranbah sewage treatment plant upgrade, which will ensure that it has the capacity to meet the demands of future growth. Right now, it is meeting the needs of 8,400 people, with the upgrades to more than double its capacity to cater for 18,000 people. In Gladstone, the $25 million upgrade to the water supply of Agnes Water and 1770 will help meet the long-term needs of these growing communities.

Then there is the new $2 million upgrade of Emerald's airport, expected to be completed in February next year, which will help improve transport links in this region. This investment will help councils manage population growth. Not only are we helping them build essential infrastructure to meet the needs of growing populations, we are also investing in the kind of infrastructure that brings a community to life—the kind of infrastructure that will make these regions attractive to Queenslanders who are looking for a great place to start their family or to make a new life.

Bligh government funding is helping this region's councils invest in community infrastructure that is enriching and enhancing people's lives. Projects like beach-access stairs in Agnes Water, new security cameras in Rockhampton and digital TV reception in Isaac are just a few examples. There are still challenges ahead of us, but I am optimistic about our future. Our $344 million investment in local governments across Queensland is supporting jobs and ensuring councils are stronger, better resourced and better positioned to deliver for the future of all our regions.

Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services, Achievements

Hon. NS ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services) (10.15 am): With around 2,000 people moving to Queensland every week, the Bligh government is taking the tough decisions to deliver the services and infrastructure required for the future. This determination is aptly demonstrated within my Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services portfolio. Thanks to Bligh government funding, additional police and ambulance officers are working in communities across Queensland. We are also funding a massive Capital Works Program across police, ambulance, fire and corrections to ensure facilities are in place to cater for increased population growth.

In the past year, close to 500 new police officers have graduated from the Oxley campus of the Queensland Police Academy, as well as the Townsville campus. These graduations have pushed the number of police officers on the beat in Queensland to more than 10,300. There have been 24 police capital works projects recently completed, including nine new stations, nine replacement stations and six upgrades.

Within the Queensland Ambulance Service, new or refurbished stations have been opened at Tamborine Mountain, Mitchell, Clermont, Pimpama, Julia Creek, Redcliffe, Mount Morgan and Burleigh Heads. Thirty of a promised 50 additional front-line ambulance officers have already been employed, in line with our commitment to boost officer numbers by 50 this year. These positions will be on top of the more than 500 positions added during the last two years and will ensure that ambulance services in the state are maintained and enhanced well into the future despite population growth.

In Queensland Corrective Services, work is progressing on the $485 million state-of-the-art women's prison near Gatton in the Lockyer Valley, as well as the $445 million upgrade of the Lotus Glen Correctional Centre in Far North Queensland. Within the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, work continues on the construction of nine new or improved urban fire and rescue stations, including two new 24-hour, seven-day permanently staffed stations at Redland Bay and Nerang.

With more and more people making their home in Queensland, it is vital we continue to build and enhance services such as police, corrective services and emergency services to meet growing demand and community expectation. That is exactly what the Bligh government is doing.

Primary Industries

Hon. TS MULHERIN (Mackay—ALP) (Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland) (10.17 am): I am pleased to announce primary industries will jump towards $14 billion in total value this financial year. This is a very encouraging result and demonstrates the great strength of the sector. We are predicting primary industries commodities and first-stage processing will be worth $13.82 billion in 2009-10. That is an impressive nine per cent increase on the previous year. Our forecasts are contained in the annual *Prospects* report, which is now available online.

The outlook for our crop sectors is particularly impressive, with sugarcane production expected to exceed last year's expectations by 46 per cent to $1.34 billion. World sugar prices have reached a 28-year high, and international demand is expected to steadily increase, with sugar now regarded as a staple food rather than a luxury for developing countries. Queensland cotton is also expected to similarly benefit from reviving world demand. Our cotton production is forecast to increase by 24 per cent to $420 million, with the area sown to irrigated cotton expected to increase by over 10,000 hectares in the Darling Downs, the Border Rivers area and Central Queensland. Other crops expected to do well are avocados at $80 million, up 23 per cent; mandarines at $70 million, up 17 per cent; tomatoes at $240 million, up 20 per cent; and sweet potatoes at $55 million, up 22 per cent, thanks to greater production on farm.

The gross value of production of Queensland's cattle and calf industry is forecast at $3.44 billion, nearly one per cent lower than the final estimate for last year. Slaughter numbers will be down, partly due to herd rebuilding. Milk, pig and poultry industries are expected to modestly increase.

Falling prices, production and yields have caused lower estimates for wheat at $320 million, down 34 per cent, grain sorghum at $245 million and barley at $33 million, both down six per cent. Although not all agricultural sectors are expected to increase in value, the overall forecasts are impressive when you consider the floods we had earlier this year and that 35 per cent of the state is still in drought. With a growing population, our primary industries will continue to be central to the state's development, providing food, jobs and exports.

Disability Services

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (10.20 am): The Bligh government is committed to delivering quality care and support to Queenslanders with a disability. We are developing a 10-year disability services plan, which will ensure that more Queenslanders get a service. We want to create a modern and inclusive Queensland in which people with a disability get real opportunities.

I welcome the Prime Minister's announcement earlier this week that the Productivity Commission will investigate the feasibility of new approaches to delivering long-term disability care and support. One of the options the Productivity Commission will consider is the establishment of a national disability insurance scheme. According to the federal parliamentary secretary for disabilities, Bill Shorten—

Old systems are struggling to cope and we need to look at new ways of funding the growing costs associated with disability.

Queensland supports a national disability insurance scheme in principle. We recognise the need to reform the way disability services are funded and delivered and will continue to work with the Rudd government. However, we do not want to give people false expectations and hopes. We need to see what the Productivity Commission study concludes and how any national disability insurance scheme would be funded. As a nation, we need to get this right and make sure that we get the best outcomes for people with a disability.

The demand for disability services will only continue to grow. A recent Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report showed that around 2.3 million Australians will have a high level of disability by 2030. This means that more Queenslanders than ever will need access to disability services in the years ahead. Disability can happen to anyone at any time. It can be from a car accident, from a sporting injury, or from the onset of a medical condition. The Bligh government will continue to work with the Commonwealth to secure a better future for Queenslanders with a disability.

North Queensland Sports Foundation

Hon. PG REEVES (Mansfield—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport) (10.22 am): The Bligh government is proud to commit almost $200,000 over the next two years to sport and recreation activities for children in rural and remote parts of North Queensland. Last month I visited north-west Queensland with the member for Mount Isa, and it was an honour to see firsthand our rural communities embracing the Bligh government's programs which promote healthy lifestyles. This funding of $197,767 over the next two years for the North Queensland Sports Foundation will assist with the delivery of more sport and recreation programs for children in north and north-west Queensland.

The Bligh government is committed to ensuring all Queenslanders have access to sport and recreation. Our rapidly growing population means it is important we put the grassroots programs in place now. We are planning for the future health of Queenslanders via partnerships with organisations like the North Queensland Sports Foundation, which delivers grassroots sporting activities across rural and remote areas. This funding will allow around 7,500 children from 95 schools to be involved in the foundation's sports education tours, encompassing both sport and recreation activities and the promotion of healthy eating habits.

These education tours involve demonstrations and coaching on a range of sporting codes activity such as rugby league, gymnastics, surf-lifesaving, T-ball, basketball and cricket. These tours are a great opportunity for children across the region to learn a range of game skills in a fun environment while learning healthy eating habits for their future. We remain committed to making Queenslanders Australia's healthiest people. Our partnership with the foundation will certainly help us achieve this goal.

This funding is an excellent example of the Queensland government and the sporting industry working together to improve sport and recreation services for all Queenslanders now and for the future.

Social Housing

Hon. KL STRUTHERS (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women) (10.23 am): The Bligh government is taking action now to meet South-East Queensland's unprecedented growth. With an unprecedented investment in more than 4,000 new social housing dwellings, 525 new dwellings are expected to be completed by June next year and 75 per cent of the total will be ready by the end of next year. It is action stations in cities and regional centres all around Queenslanders. Building workers have their hard hats on from Cairns to Coolangatta. Our investment in social housing is helping to kick-start local economies. It is a win for workers in the building industry and a win for people who need a roof over their head.

We have created more than 4½ thousand jobs this year alone. We are also spending $80 million on repairs and maintenance to spruce up our existing social housing stock. That means jobs for local electricians, landscape workers, painters and local builders. This billion-dollar-plus investment under the nation-building plan is on top of the Bligh government's own $500 million building program. We have entered an exciting new era in social housing in Queensland. We are building new ones, sprucing up the old ones and even buying up old motels and giving them a motel makeover. More often than not, you will find that our social housing is the best-looking house in the street.

The Bligh government is tackling growth, homelessness and unemployment with sensible, workable solutions, but it is an uphill battle when some local councils object to social housing. We need their support and say to them: next time there is a development application before you, think twice before revving up public fear. Think twice before scaremongering in regard to social housing. Think about the people who are living rough, with no place to call home.

Councils tend to base their planning guidelines on an average of 2.5 people per dwelling. Our social housing often accommodates single people—single older people generally—in studio apartments and one-bedroom apartments. I will be meeting with local government representatives around the state to seek their understanding of the differences in our social housing tenancies and to seek their support for our biggest ever investment in social housing. We have an opposition in Queensland with no policies for people sleeping rough and no policies for people doing it tough. That is all the more reason for the rest of us to work doubly hard to make sure that tomorrow's Queensland is a fairer place.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER

Hon. JC SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.26 am): I wish to advise the House that the Minister for Transport will be absent from the House today. Minister Nolan is absent due to illness.

LAW, JUSTICE AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report

Ms STONE (Springwood—ALP) (10.26 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 73 of the Law, Justice and Safety Committee.

Tabled paper: Law, Justice and Safety Committee, Report No. 73—Inquiry into Alcohol Related Violence Interim Report [1478].

This is an interim report on the progress of the committee's inquiry into alcohol related violence—an area of great importance and interest to the community. The committee has received over 140 submissions. It has undertaken extensive consultation, including public hearings in Townsville, Cairns and Brisbane and several meetings with stakeholders and inspections of venues and entertainment precincts in Brisbane and in regional Queensland. The committee has discussed the issues with a diverse range of stakeholders. The committee also launched a Facebook page for the inquiry—the first parliamentary committee to do so in Queensland, if not in Australia.

The interim report highlights some of the issues which have emerged in this inquiry. Many of these have been the subject of significant community debate—matters such as the use of glass, trading hours and lockouts, enforcement and prevention and the use of illicit drugs. The committee believes that there needs to be a cultural shift in the attitudes to drinking, particularly binge drinking, and an important focus on the committee's future considerations will be developing recommendations to achieve lasting attitudinal change in this regard.

The extent to which the use of illicit drugs contributes to the levels of public violence has been raised on a number of occasions during the committee's consultation. The committee believes that this is an area requiring detailed examination and consideration. It falls outside the terms of reference of the committee's inquiry, and the committee has recommended that this be the subject of a further parliamentary inquiry.

The scourge of alcohol related violence involves wide-ranging and complex problems which require considered and wide-ranging solutions. I thank committee members and staff for their tireless dedication and enthusiasm in this inquiry. We look forward to our further deliberations before providing a final report with all recommendations to the parliament by 18 March 2010.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Crime and Misconduct Commission Inquiry; Government Grants

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.29 am): I give notice that I will move—

Following revelations at the CMC inquiry into Labor's rorting of sports grants, this House calls upon the Attorney-General to sufficiently resource the CMC so that the current inquiry can be expanded to look at the awarding of all grants, from all departments where staff from a ministerial office have been involved.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

School Group Tours

Mr SPEAKER: In the public gallery today students from Sheldon College in the electorate of Redlands and students from Norville State School in the electorate of Bundaberg will be joining us.

White Ribbon Day

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, to mark White Ribbon Day and to highlight the campaign to eliminate violence against women, I am hosting a luncheon event today at 1 pm on the Speaker's Green. I remind all MPs that they are invited to attend and urge all male MPs in particular to join with me in swearing the White Ribbon oath.

Harris Fields State School Choir

Mr SPEAKER: Also this afternoon at 3 pm the choir from the Harris Fields State School in the electorate of Woodridge will be performing here at Parliament House in the Annexe. I invite all honourable members to attend.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Crime and Misconduct Commission, Sports Grants Inquiry

Mr LANGBROEK (10.30 am): My first question without notice is to the Premier. The inquiry into Labor's rorting of sports grants has been told that special 2009 guidelines were crafted so that schools which had missed out on funding approval would now get approval—coincidentally in the lead-up to the election—and I ask: will the Premier release these special 2009 guidelines and will she confirm if they were written in her own office?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the member for the question and draw his attention to my answer to a question on a similar matter yesterday. I do not intend to speculate on a daily basis on matters that are the subject of public hearings. These public hearings have not reached any conclusion and nor has the CMC had an opportunity to finalise its investigation and provide any recommendations to government.

Mr Springborg: I was asked questions every day about Fitzgerald—20 years!

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms BLIGH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I can, however, advise the member and advise all members of the House that the government has provided all the assistance that has been requested by the CMC. If it requires any documents, any cabinet material or any archival material from my agency, the sports department or in fact any department of government, it will get that assistance, as it always has.

Crime and Misconduct Commission, Sports Grants Inquiry

Mr LANGBROEK: My second question without notice is also to the Premier. At the inquiry into Labor's rorting of sports grants, one of the Premier's hand-picked Labor MPs, the member for Bulimba, has admitted that it was improper and against the guidelines for her to implement the special $4.2 million 'vroom deal' at the request of the ministerial staffer to the present member for Sunnybank, and I ask: given the Premier seconded the motion to exonerate Gordon Nuttall, does she now also exonerate these two Labor caucus colleagues?

Mr Lucas: Announce the result and then have the hearing.

Ms BLIGH: Yes—sentence first, investigate later.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you will cease interjecting.

Ms BLIGH: Mr Speaker, thank you. I am watching with interest the investigations being held by the CMC. I think it is a very important area of public administration that it is looking into and I will welcome its recommendations when it has had an opportunity to finalise its report. Firstly to clarify the member's first question, there have been no guidelines prepared out of my office on this or any other related matter. Secondly in relation, as I have said, to the report, we will listen to what the CMC has to say. We will look at the recommendations. If there are any matters of public administration that can be improved as a result of this inquiry, then we will not hesitate to act. It is this side of politics—it is the people on this side of the House—who have been prepared to bite the bullet on integrity, on accountability reform, to take the step forward to introduce into this House—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms BLIGH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. There has been constant attention to integrity and accountability reform from this government. What we saw in my first cabinet meeting was a commitment to overhaul our freedom of information laws, and what happened? We delivered it! They are the best in the country. We are the most open and accountable government in Australia, and other jurisdictions are following us. We have then gone on to build on that platform with significant public sector reform and with big administrative changes requiring the lobbyist industry to register and to declare their interests. Many other states in Australia have still failed to do this.

We have not only moved on the legislation that is before the House—and I will not comment on its contents—but we have moved on a number of administrative issues, including a determination by this side of politics to no longer involve ourselves in dinners that involve high fees from those seeking access—unlike those opposite. They have failed that test—still doing it, still having secret dinners, still will not tell. That is what is happening over that side—still having their little secret dinners, still will not tell. They want to keep Queenslanders in the dark. Queenslanders know what they are up to, and they do not like it.

Ecotourism

Ms JARRATT: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier outline for the House how the government will achieve a balance between protecting the environment and supporting jobs in the tourism industry under the plan to create ecotourism opportunities in our national parks?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for her question. The member for Whitsunday, perhaps more than a lot of other members in this House, understands what a precious and marvellous natural environment we have and what a drawcard it is for tourists from around her region, from around the state, from around the country and from around the world. She also understands that there are many parts of our environment in national park tenure that are not easy to get to, and if you do get into them they are not easy to camp in or stay in for many people because of age or inexperience with camping et cetera. What we are looking at now is a proposal that has been jointly developed between Tourism Queensland and a number of environmental groups to go out to the market and look for ideas and expressions of interest for construction in or adjacent to seven of our national park areas, including Jonah Bay in the great Whitsundays.

Ms Jarratt: A beautiful place.

Ms BLIGH: It is a very beautiful place. What we are looking for is something that will very sensitively give ordinary Australians and visitors access to some parts of our national parks that have previously been inaccessible to them. But I give this guarantee: our government will tread lightly. We understand how precious these national parks are. We do not want to see them subject to massive or insensitive developments. What we want is eco-friendly, very low impact and in most cases permanent tent-like arrangements that we see in other states. For too long we in Queensland have put this issue in the too-hard basket. Because it has been in that too-hard basket, what we see is other states like Tasmania and other countries in the region like New Zealand getting right ahead of us in marketing themselves as a great destination for ecotourism.

When one thinks about a holiday in Tasmania, they think about walking in those great national parks. When one thinks about a holiday in New Zealand, they think about an opportunity to visit some of those spectacular national park regions, and those jurisdictions make it easy for people to do so. You can be a tourist who is not into roughing it and still get into those parks and have a real opportunity, very carefully, to enjoy that environment. We look forward to seeing the proposals that industry brings back, but I also give this guarantee: no proposal will succeed unless it meets the highest of environmental standards. We have seen other jurisdictions get this balance right, and I believe that we are capable of doing that here in Queensland. I look forward to informing the House about the process of inviting the tourism industry and tourism operators to put ideas to us. As I said, I am very confident we will see some good ideas, but it will only be those ideas that meet the highest environmental standards that will go forward. I know there will be some very genuine concern about this; I share it. We will tread lightly and we will get the balance right, and that is in the interests in the long term of people understanding what is in our national park estate and why it is worth preserving.

(Time expired)

Crime and Misconduct Commission, Sports Grants Inquiry

Mr NICHOLLS: My question is to the Premier. With a string of Labor Party MPs and ministerial staffers being paraded before the CMC inquiry into Labor corruption and grant rorting, will the Premier advise how much money has been set aside from the public purse to provide legal advice and assistance for the member for Sunnybank, the member for Bulimba, ministerial staff and public servants appearing before the inquiry?

Ms BLIGH: The member asking the question knows full well that that is not a figure that can possibly be determined and given to him here. These matters are still proceeding and those costs will be unknown until such time as the inquiry has completed. The inquiry through the CMC will be required, as it always is, to put those costs into the public arena.

I presume that the member for Clayfield is not suggesting that the CMC should not be spending this money. This is exactly what the CMC is established to do. The role of the CMC is to use its powers under its act as a standing royal commission to investigate matters that come before it. The public hearings that they are holding this week are another reminder to all of us that they not only have the powers to do this but also have sufficient independence of will and capacity to do so in a public hearing. I think that is good for our democracy and I think the lessons that might come out of this will be ones that are very interesting, not only for Queensland but also for all other jurisdictions.

The member again parrots his question. It is an unknowable answer until the inquiry is over. It is simply ridiculous and he has wasted his own time in question time.

Mr Nicholls: How much are their lawyers costing?

Ms BLIGH: As I have said, the costs of this inquiry will be known when it is completed. The CMC has a budget. It is subject to all of the checks and balances, such as estimates hearings, and the member will be able to ask those questions—

Honourable members interjected.

Ms BLIGH: The Department of Justice and Attorney-General has its budget, which is subject to checks and balances. Those questions can be asked when the answer is known. The answer cannot be given until such time as the inquiry has finished and we know how much legal representation has been given, how much time has been spent in hearings and how much it has cost the CMC and other agencies of government.

Climate Change

Mr MOORHEAD: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier inform the House of the latest developments in the efforts to tackle climate change?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for the question and I thank him for his very genuine interest in this issue. I think it is something that occupies the minds of many Australians, but I know it particularly occupies the minds of young Australians and the member for Waterford is certainly in that category.

The compromise package on the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme that is now before the federal parliament and which is the subject, we think, of some agreement includes a number of amendments that I think are worth me putting on record as they will considerably reduce the impact of this scheme on Queensland. Many of those amendments are consistent with concessions that I sought from the federal government.

Firstly, the assistance formula for emissions intensive trade exposed industries has been improved to extend the period that those industries will enjoy the increased rate of assistance. That is positive for our minerals processing sector. Queensland's gassy coalmines will benefit from a doubling in assistance to the coal sector of $1.5 billion. That is something that I specifically sought from the federal minister. Agricultural emissions will not be part of the CPRS but farmers will be able to create abatement credits. That will provide an incentive for our farmers to play their role in reducing emissions. Again, it is something that I sought from the federal minister and it will be an advantage to the rural sector. Our LNG industry will get more assistance and our large energy-using businesses will gain transitional assistance. The top-up in the allocation of permits to LNG projects will ensure they receive an effective assistance rate of at least 50 per cent.

But where are the Liberal and National parties on this issue? Have we ever seen a shambles in the federal parliament like we are seeing played out? First we had an outbreak of peace. Then there was an outbreak of confusion. Then there was an outbreak of war about the peace and an outbreak of confusion about the war. And now we have a spill motion. We know what the Nats here think. We know that the deputy and many of the others are deniers who think that volcanoes cause climate change.

This week is the 150th anniversary of the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species.* We know that if those opposite had been around at the time they would have led the charge to ostracise Charles Darwin, just like they would have locked up Galileo. They believe that 'origin of species' is a football game that is played once a year. Science and intellectual ideas are anathema to the National Party. Of course, the Liberal Party has rolled over and acquiesced. We at least know where the member for Southern Downs stands. The member for Surfers Paradise has gone missing.

Premier's Chief of Staff, Salary

Mr McARDLE: My question is to the Premier. When the Premier approved the salary for Mike Kaiser as her chief of staff she said that his appointment was, to use the Premier's precise words, 'a role model for other government media and policy advisers'. Given that Labor MPs have now admitted to the CMC inquiry that ministerial advisers stood over and instructed them to approve grants, does the Premier now accept that appointing a confessed electoral rorter as chief of staff was not the best role model for other ministerial staff?

Ms BLIGH: What an extraordinary question to come from the very model of a solicitor! I do not think we will be taking any lessons in morals or ethics from that member.

Mr Messenger: How is Gordon, anyway? Has he rung you from jail?

Ms BLIGH: What a cheerful little soul you are! What a little ray of sunshine has come into the world! Yesterday in this House we saw I think a pretty despicable attack on my new chief of staff. We saw the member for Callide and his minions suggest that when a woman does a job she should get a lower salary for the same job than a man does.

Mr Seeney interjected.

Ms BLIGH: The member for Callide does not like it but, of course, the role of the member for Callide increasingly in this parliament is to come in here and ask the one question that nobody else on his team would be prepared to ask. It is his job to do for Jake that which even the member for Southern Downs will not do. That is what he does not like. We know that they do not like it. Let us be clear about—

Mr Robertson: That hit a raw nerve.

Ms BLIGH: That is right. He turns up and no-one else will take it but his reputation is so low that he can take anything.

Mr Lucas: He is like the Reserve Bank—the lender of last resort.

Ms BLIGH: He is the questioner of last resort. I think it is important that people let the CMC get on with the job that they are doing and they are doing it independently and they are doing it professionally, as we would expect and as Queensland taxpayers would expect. I have no doubt that there will be interesting recommendations. We will take them seriously.

I will not have the actions of one member of a ministerial staff be a reflection on all of the people who serve this government and, in doing so, serve the people of Queensland. These are tough jobs. People put in extraordinary hours and they do it because they want to serve the people of Queensland. If there are lessons to learn then we will learn them, but I will not condemn good people on the actions of one.

Queensland Health

Mr HOOLIHAN: My question without notice is to the honourable Deputy Premier and Minister for Health. Will the Deputy Premier advise the House how modern science is integral to delivering better outcomes for Queenslanders in the health sector?

Mr LUCAS: The Queensland government is a government that supports the promulgation of science. We support medical research, whether it is our investment in the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, the Institute for Molecular Bioscience or the Brain Institute. These are things that we think are very, very important. We are investing $100 million towards the Translational Research Institute occupied by Ian Frazer who developed the cervical cancer vaccine, Gardasil.

What do those opposite do? We support cancer elimination while it is the party of Milan Brych, the man who claimed to cure cancer but was charged overseas for fraud. The government brings in tough new antismoking laws, but what does the opposition do? It has its amendments and then the member for Dalrymple gets in there and opposes them as a nanny state. The member for Burnett then says that his own party's amendments do not do what they say.

This government supports investments such as $10 million in a solar thermal project in Cloncurry. Those opposite are the traditional promoters of the Horvath steam engine. Remember that the great hero of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition would not open up the hood in King George Square? This side of parliament supports the largest busway network in Australia. The member for Maroochydore supports a Redcliffe rail link subject to an asterisk for the world financial crisis that her then leader opposes. We build a northern missing link, but the member for Maroochydore supports a rail system on the Sunshine Coast that is a missing link.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition decries climate change, which if it does exist is caused by volcanos, but the member for Burnett advocates hospital ships as a method for dealing with climate change when sea levels rise one to two metres even though at worst with climate change, which he of course denies, they will go up 80 centimetres by 2100.

The member for Gympie protests in favour of lungfish. The member for Indooroopilly says that we should keep flying foxes, that they are an important part of our natural forest, yet the member for Dalrymple wants to shoot them in the millions. The member for Gympie opposes Traveston Dam, other members of the opposition oppose Traveston Dam and say the money should be spent on desalination. But of course the member for Noosa and the member for Kawana say not on the Sunshine Coast, and the member for Burnett says not in the Burnett. Of course, the former Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Caloundra, says it all should be spent on a hospital even though water assets are financed by user-pay charges and hospitals are free.

The Leader of the Opposition opposes decentralisation policies yet the member for Beaudesert wants to build Las Vegas in Central Queensland. Those opposite stand for nothing; they are all over the shop. They do not deserve to be in the opposition. They do not deserve to be in the parliament.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. I move—

That the minister be further heard.

I move that motion so he can tell us about health.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable Deputy Premier will have two further minutes.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I will just wait for the House to come to order.

Mr LUCAS: I am delighted to say more to the House. The member for Caloundra says that we should not build a children's hospital but instead we should spend it on the Sunshine Coast University Hospital which, of course, members on the Sunshine Coast say should be financed out of a dam. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition talks tough on crime yet rolls over to the bikies. And, of course, the member for Gaven is happy to have family functions hosted at bikies' dens.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr LUCAS: You wanted to hear me further. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Mermaid Beach—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Stop the clock. There is a resolution before the House that the member be further heard. I want to hear the honourable member.

Mr LUCAS: The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Mermaid Beach get up and tell everyone on the Gold Coast that they are in favour of the Carrara Stadium, yet then they go to North Queensland and take out advertisements telling people that they want to do the opposite.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. The motion that was carried by the House was that the minister be further heard so that he could talk about health.

Government members interjected.

Mr SEENEY: That was the motion I moved.

Mr Hinchliffe: Another tactical lie.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable minister will withdraw that word.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: The resolution that I heard was that the member be further heard. I think that is what the House passed.

Mr LUCAS: I do apologise that the member for Callide has tactical deafness when it comes to moving his own motions. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition opposes privatisation of government assets yet sat in a government on government benches that endorsed the Vince FitzGerald commission of audit that said amongst other things they should privatise electricity assets, that said amongst other things they should privatise other government assets and then set about selling the state government interest in Suncorp Metway. Those opposite say one thing and do the other. They cannot even agree on what they say in the community. I have never seen a group of people that makes the federal opposition look united and organised and intellectually capable.

Mr FOLEY: I rise to a point of order. The chooks are cackling so loudly I cannot hear anything up here.

Mr SPEAKER: When the House comes to order we will all be able to hear.

Crime and Misconduct Commission

Mr SPRINGBORG: My question without notice is to the Attorney-General. I table a statutory declaration and supporting documents from Dr Christine Eastwood containing serious allegations of undisclosed conflicts of interest by the CMC's Acting Assistant Commissioner of Misconduct, as well as allegations that the chairman of the CMC refused to act on a complaint of alleged serious crimes when these matters were brought to his attention. Is the Attorney-General aware of these serious allegations and can the Attorney-General update the House on what action, if any, has been taken to fully investigate these matters and if he is satisfied with those investigations?

Mr DICK: I thank the honourable member for the question. As the honourable member well knows from having been in this House for 20 years, from having sat in the House when the original legislation creating the Criminal Justice Commission was established, for the establishment of the Criminal Justice Parliamentary Committee, for the subsequent legislation that established the Crime and Misconduct Commission, for the legislation that then created the parliamentary committee for that commission also, there are mechanisms for reporting serious matters relating to the conduct of the CMC. In particular, those serious matters should be referred to the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee. As all honourable members know, the Crime and Misconduct Commission is a creature of this parliament.

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat, Attorney-General. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the material that you have tabled appears to be matters that are before a parliamentary committee. I therefore would ask the honourable the Deputy Leader of the Opposition whether permission has been granted by the committee to release this material?

Mr SPRINGBORG: The material has been sent to me by the person who has a serious grievance that there has not been a proper and full investigation of the serious matters that have been raised pertaining to the conflict of interest and also the failure to properly investigate serious criminal allegations.

Mr SPEAKER: This is the course of action I propose to take: the honourable Attorney-General will finish his question—

Mr Lucas interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, the honourable Deputy Premier! I will then ascertain whether this material has been released by the committee before I allow it to be tabled in this House. Let us hear from the Attorney-General.

Mr DICK: Mr Speaker, I will not talk further on those matters that are clearly very serious and need to be the subject of investigation. I will say this: I have been in this parliament for eight months and feel very privileged to be here. However, day in and day out, I am criticised by the opposition for being a 'new boy'—those are their words. Isn't it extraordinary that someone who has three times led his party to an election in this state, who has purported to be the alternative leader of this state, who has served in the parliament for 20 years during a period of significant reform in public administration in this state, including the oversight of the CJC and the CMC, someone who on two occasions has purported to be the shadow Attorney-General and who has put himself forward as the alternative first law officer of this state, on days like today—

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr DICK: I take the interjection from the honourable member for Everton. He is the same person who asked me about a witness in the witness protection program before a committee of this parliament. He seeks to criminalise lying before parliamentary committees, and yet uses and abuses parliamentary committees for his own base political purposes. He now comes in here, trawling this information. These may very well be serious matters, but they need to be investigated by the appropriate body. It is a disgrace. It dishonours the opposition that they use question time and the parliamentary process at any stage—including second reading debates from beginning to end—to score cheap political points that they think will damage this government. This government has integrity. We will not be taken off our course. We will not be blown off course by these sorts of attacks and scurrilous tactics. The matter will be properly investigated. If I need to refer it to any appropriate body, I will. I will ensure that the matter is properly investigated, unlike those members opposite.

(Time expired)

Mr LUCAS: I rise to a point of order. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition claims that a document was sent to him by a person who is a complainant to a parliamentary committee. The document indicates that it is a submission to a parliamentary committee.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I want to hear the point of order.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! It is not tabled.

Mr LUCAS: It is a submission to a parliamentary committee, as advised by the Clerk. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has been here for well over 20 years and, whilst members of the public may or may not know the rules, he knows full well that it is a contempt for members of parliament to seek to deal with submissions to a parliamentary committee without the permission of that committee.

Speaker's Ruling, Documents Sought To Be Tabled

Mr SPEAKER: Order! On the point of order, the Deputy Premier is correct when he refers to this. I draw all members' attention to standing order 209(1), which states—

> No member shall in the House refer to any proceedings of a committee, until the committee has reported those proceedings to the House or otherwise published the proceedings.

Accordingly, I will do two things. I will send the material to the committee to see whether these are matters before the committee and, until I have received the advice from the committee, I will order that the material not be tabled.

Mr SPRINGBORG: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr Fraser: Keep digging.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Let me hear the point of order.

Mr SPRINGBORG: How is the DC-10 going? Crash landed again?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will address the point.

Mr SPRINGBORG: Mr Speaker, does your ruling apply to the statutory declaration that has been signed by Dr Christine Eastwood?

Mr SPEAKER: It will apply to all the material that is there until I seek advice from the committee that these are matters before the committee.

Mr SPRINGBORG: Mr Speaker, the statutory declaration is not material before the committee.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Those on my right will cease interjecting.

Mr SPRINGBORG: The material contains information I have received from this person with a request that I raise it on their behalf. It includes a statutory declaration and some correspondence. Quite clearly, from that material there can be no inference that the statutory declaration in any way can actually be taken to be before a committee.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I will wait for the House to come to order. Those on my right will cease interjecting. What the honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition is saying may well be correct. I want to study the document further. As is advised to me, the statutory declaration makes reference to matters that may well be before the committee. That is my ruling for the moment. I would like to check the documents, but I also want to refer those documents to the committee. I call the member for Springwood.

Research

Ms STONE: My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development. Can the Treasurer advise the House of any world-leading research being undertaken here in Queensland?

Mr FRASER: I thank the member for Springwood for her question and for her interest in our investment in innovation, which funds new science and breakthroughs, as well as the jobs of tomorrow. Last Friday, I was at the University of Queensland visiting a facility that has been supported through an investment from the Queensland government, where world-leading research is being conducted into spider venom. Spider venom is being researched for its capacity to create new pesticides because, after all, as the leaders of this research say, when it comes to killing insects no-one knows how to do it quite like a spider. The application of this venom has the potential to provide environmentally friendly pesticides for application around the state. They are also looking at using the venom to create new pain-killing drugs. Many people do not associate venom from spiders with pain relief. Clearly this world-class research being done at the University of Queensland, which is attracting scientists from around the world, has the potential to come up with a new pain relief drug manufactured from spider venom.

Of course, pain relief is very much needed by most members who have been forced to sit through the explanations of those opposite as they attempt to deny their true position on the proposal of this government to put assets to the market. Over the years a parade of them have walked into this place stating their intention to privatise the breadth of Queensland's assets. Since then we have seen a painful attempt to deny that position. Even more painful was the attempt by the Leader of the Opposition, as reported in the *Daily Mercury* earlier this month, to explain what his alternative was. His alternative was 'to use business principles to grow the economy'. What a revelation! That is like saying, 'I'm going to beat Usain Bolt by running faster.'

What we see is yet another drop of fairy floss from the circus opposite. They have no capacity to define a policy. Of course, we know that we have to look at what they have done in the past. They are on the record for the sale of assets. When it comes to being on the record, we need look no further than the shadow Treasurer's time at the Brisbane City Council. What were the alternatives? Raising taxes, cutting services or selling assets? What did he do while he was the self-styled author of the budgets? He jacked up rates at twice the rate of inflation. Tick to alternative No. 1! What else did he do? He proposed to close libraries, museums and public golf courses, and to make contestable the provision of maintenance to a whole range of city assets in a review that he led during his time in the Brisbane City Council. Therefore, members should not believe a word that they utter in here, but should look only to their record. When we look at their record, it speaks volumes. They are now and always will be proponents for the sell off of the public assets. If they ever fall onto this side, the people of Queensland know the truth.

Comments by Attorney-General

Mr SEENEY: My question without notice is to the Attorney-General. Can the Attorney-General provide any support at all for his comments yesterday implying that the opposition had accepted bribes, or was this just a dishonest accusation driven by the overinflated ego of a first-term member in a feebly pathetic attempt to muscle up in support of his ongoing bid to roll the Premier?

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will not call the Attorney until I have order in the House. The honourable the Attorney-General.

Mr DICK: The member for Callide—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable has asked his question.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Both sides of the House will come to order. The Attorney-General.

Mr DICK: The member for Callide would know very well about being rolled. He is an expert on it. What we do know is that there is a moment that is coming very soon in this parliament—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Stop the clock. I will wait for the House to come to order. The honourable the Attorney-General.

Mr DICK:—when those who talk the talk on law and order will have the opportunity to walk the walk. They will have an opportunity very shortly to explain to this House and to the people of Queensland whether they support victims of crime or whether they stand with perpetrators of crime, whether they seek to respond to what is a significant threat in the Queensland community—a serious criminal problem that for years we have looked away from. They will have the opportunity—

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would suggest that the Attorney-General's comments are in relation to the bill before the House. The question was: does he have any evidence to support his scurrilous accusation yesterday? He can answer that question without referring to the bill.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable the Attorney-General.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Both sides of the House will come to order.

Mr DICK: They seem very agitated today, Mr Speaker, don't they? I have no intention of commenting on the bill. What Queenslanders want is a government that is clear, consistent and careful. That is what Queenslanders want—consistency in government. They want leadership in this state that is clear and consistent, and that is what they get from the Bligh government, as distinct from those opposite. Every day they change their position to suit themselves. They are the opposition of the private sector. They are the party of the private sector. They cry long and loud about the private sector.

When they came into this House to debate a bill to refer the balance of the private sector to the Commonwealth, what was their position on industrial relations? They said, 'We should have two systems in Queensland—one for employees employed by corporations and one for everyone else.' How is that for red tape—two different systems for the private sector in our state? Every industry group in this state supported a seamless, single national industrial relations system. Their stakeholders, not ours, supported the position that this government took into this parliament. We had the craven policy positions of those opposite seeking to score cheap political points because they thought it was in their interests. We stand for good policy and good government for Queensland. That is our responsibility, and that is what we will deliver for Queensland.

Population Growth

Ms FARMER: My question without notice is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning. Population growth is a real concern for Queenslanders. Could the minister please advise the House what planning tools have been put in place to help the state adapt to growth?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I thank the honourable member for Bulimba for her question. As she knows, Queensland was once seen as a quiet backwater with a big country town as its capital, but Queensland has changed. Each week our population increases by 2,000 people. Unlike the members opposite, the Bligh government is willing to adapt and address the challenges that growth brings—adapt to challenges such as housing affordability by considering the traditional forms of housing, and adapt to a shortage of development-ready land with simplified and streamlined assessment systems. We need to adapt to change, be it through decision making, governance or the practices and processes of industry. That is how our whole state needs to change in the face of growth.

Earlier the Premier mentioned that this week marks the 150th anniversary, the sesquicentenary, of the publication of Charles Darwin's landmark work *The Origin of Species*. As Darwin said—

It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.

The Bligh government is adapting to our challenges.

While we are talking to people about modernising Queensland, those opposite are stuck in the past. They are people who do not believe in evolution. They cite kooky, wacky examples supposedly debunking natural selection. I never thought I would join them, but I have discovered an example myself. It is right here in this very parliament. If one wants an example of an organism that has never changed, that has never evolved, that has never adapted despite the pressure placed on it, one only has to look to the other side of the parliament.

The LNP members are stuck in the flat-earth past, where the wheel is new technology that threatens the whole of their world view. They think climate change is caused by volcanoes. They think wild pigs are the major threat to the Great Barrier Reef, not greenhouse gases. They do not believe in science. I can tell the House that this government believes in science. We believe in science, not superstition. For the erudition of members opposite, I table *The Origin of Species*, the most important book in history. I table it for their information. I hope they can learn a thing or two about how they can adapt and how they can change.

Tabled paper: Copy of 'The Origin of Species' by Charles Darwin [1479].

Vietnamese Community, Memorial

Mr CRIPPS: My question without notice is to the Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs. I refer the minister to her answer to my question without notice on Wednesday, 11 November 2009 in respect of a proposed memorial for Vietnamese boat people. The minister advised that, following consultation with the Vietnamese community, it was decided that the memorial would be built in Inala or Darra. Can the minister confirm that in fact the Vietnamese community intends to submit an application to the Brisbane City Council for the memorial to be built at Kangaroo Point? Did the minister mislead the House or is the minister just out of touch with an important part of her own community?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Just resume your seat. I will wait for both sides of the House to come to order.

Mr Lucas interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Deputy Premier. The honourable the Minister for Multicultural Affairs.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member very much for the question. I answered this question in depth at the last sitting of parliament. I have discussed this matter with the Vietnamese community. In fact, at the multicultural function held here at Parliament House last night, which was attended by over 200 members of our multicultural community, there were representatives from the Vietnamese community and they came up to me and once again discussed this issue about there being a freedom square located in the electorate of Inala. You are the person out of touch here—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Direct your comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Hinchinbrook is out of touch here in relation to this matter. The Vietnamese community is very well aware of the memorial and what they want. They are in discussions with both me and Councillor Milton Dick. This has been very, very well established.

At the last sitting of parliament we discussed that the National Party had no policies when it came to multicultural affairs—nothing. I have seen the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Hinchinbrook at different functions around the place. I see them talking to people but I see no action. I see no words. I see no development of any policies. I see nothing at all. I have not seen the Leader of the Opposition say anything in relation to what the member for Gregory said last time as well. We have heard absolutely nothing.

But I might be a little bit wrong when I said they had no policy at all, because I did come across a multicultural policy that the Borbidge government had. This is the last time they had a policy. In fact, it was the worst policy in the country. It was the worst in Australia, but at least they had one. How do we know that it was the worst multicultural policy in Australia? We know because Borbidge's own advisers told him so. What did they say? The advisory committee's chairwoman, Mary Kalantzis, said the government's policies were 'misguided, haphazard and were helping to fuel racist attitudes'. We have had some fuelling of racist attitudes by the member for Gregory, haven't we?

Mr JOHNSON: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks from the honourable minister to be offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable minister will withdraw those comments.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I withdraw, but the comments you made in the House at the last session—

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, the comments you made at the last session should have been taken up by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The minister will withdraw the comments unreservedly and direct her comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I withdraw.

Mr Johnson: You've got no guts.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have got more guts than you.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Say them outside publicly.

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat, Minister.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Go on, say them outside.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Resume your seat! The honourable member for Gregory, those words were unparliamentary. You will withdraw them.

Mr Johnson: Mr Speaker, I withdraw and I apologise.

Ms PALASZCZUK: So what else did they say about Borbidge's fantastic multicultural policy? Professor Kalantzis said Queensland's ethnic affairs policy by the Borbidge government was 'the most inadequate in the country'. So that is your policy as it stands at the moment.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Direct your comments through the chair, please.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, we have seen no development on policy at all. It is a disgrace. The member for Hinchinbrook said in his paper that he wanted to develop a sharper edge when it came to policy development. Well, either get the pen out and start writing and come up with a policy for the future direction of multicultural affairs or say whether or not you support what we are doing.

Domestic and Family Violence

Mrs SCOTT: My question without notice is to the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women. It is White Ribbon Day today, an opportunity to raise awareness of domestic violence in the community. Could the minister please advise what steps the government is taking to help stem the tide of domestic violence in Queensland?

Ms STRUTHERS: I thank the honourable member for Woodridge for her question. Domestic violence is a serious issue and it calls for serious action. Over the past five years there have been up to 60 domestic violence related deaths in Queensland: 60 women who have died at the hands of their partners. Indigenous women are 35 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence than non-Indigenous women. We have got to turn these disturbing statistics around. We need to bring domestic violence out from behind closed doors and deal with it.

That is why we have embarked on a groundbreaking five-year strategy to tackle domestic violence in Queensland. Our strategy includes a death review panel, which is a team of experts who will investigate all domestic violence related deaths in Queensland over the past five years. We will also review the current act so that it truly reflects the needs of women and children today.

I am pleased to announce today on White Ribbon Day that a 20-month trial is now underway in Rockhampton. It is a first for Queensland, a genuine coming together of government, the courts and the non-government sector. Over the past few months a dedicated team from the Department of Communities, Justice and Attorney-General, police, Legal Aid and the local magistrate have been working together to tackle the issue of domestic and family violence. They are now dealing with their first clients this week. It is an innovative project and it is about making sure the people affected by domestic violence get the earliest possible help. It is about making sure women and children have somewhere safe to stay and someone to turn to straightaway. It is about linking them to the services they need to turn their lives around.

We have a police officer, a child safety officer and a domestic and family violence specialist all working together in a 'breaking the cycle' team. They work with victims, develop safety plans and get them to the right services at the right time. It is about making sure people do not slip through the cracks and get caught up in what can be a complex system of services and court processes. It is a real collaboration to meet the real needs of victims of domestic and family violence. It is about delivering a brighter future for our sons and daughters.

Corrective Services, Bullying

Mrs PRATT: My question is to the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services. Minister, section 34 of the WorkCover Queensland Act 1996 specifically relates to bullying. It has been alleged that the section referring to 'reasonable management action taken in a reasonable way' is being abused, in that it is allowing bullying claims for compensation to be rejected—

Mr SPEAKER: I am sorry, member for Nanango. I must not have been concentrating. Who is the question directed to?

Mrs PRATT: The Minister for Police and Corrective Services.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you.

Mrs PRATT: It has been alleged that the section referring to 'reasonable management action taken in a reasonable way' is being abused, in that it is allowing bullying claims for compensation to be rejected and unethical behaviour to be perpetrated against the affected employees. What avenues have employees who are negatively affected by bullying in Queensland Corrections got to gain justice, and will the government protect and investigate these victims' issues?

Mr ROBERTS: Obviously, any bullying in any of the agencies for which I am responsible is absolutely unacceptable. With regard to Queensland Corrections, members of this House would be aware that some weeks ago—indeed a couple of months ago—a number of allegations were made regarding bullying in other parts of the Department of Community Safety. As a response to that, an alternative panel was set up to enable those employees who did not have confidence in the existing avenues—I have total confidence in them, but some people felt they did not want to raise matters within the existing channels—to have an opportunity to raise allegations, such as bullying or harassment, with an alternative panel. That panel exists for both the department of emergency services and the department of corrective services. So if the member for Nanango has any knowledge of any allegations or if any individuals have approached her who would like to use that alternative panel, I suggest she recommends that they make contact through the Department of Community Safety. I can provide the details to her.

As I have indicated, the issues of harassment and bullying are raised from time to time in this place. It is something that all agencies and all government departments treat very seriously. I have made it very clear to all of the agencies for which I am responsible that these matters must be appropriately investigated and must be followed through appropriately. We need to have processes in place where people can feel confident that if they make a complaint it will be properly investigated and dealt with. All I can do is encourage the member to encourage the people who have raised this with her to make these alternative approaches. My first suggestion is to use existing processes within the particular agency. I have confidence in those processes, but if people do not there is an alternative that we have made available to them.

Christmas Trading Hours

Mr PITT: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations. Can the minister outline to the House any information about work and pay arrangements that may be relevant for workers during the Christmas trading period?

Mr DICK: I thank the honourable member for his question and his interest in retail workers throughout Queensland. Today is 25 November, one calendar month before Christmas. For many Queenslanders, the next 30 days could be fairly frantic, particularly for those shoppers who leave Christmas shopping to the last minute. But let us not forget the workers in retail trade who also have to cope with this last-minute frenzy. It is worth while issuing a reminder at this time about trading hours.

Large retail stores across Queensland will be able to trade until midnight on Wednesday, 23 December. These stores can operate under normal trading hours on Christmas Eve, Thursday, 24 December. There will be special arrangements for stores at the Westfield shopping complex at Chermside in Brisbane. They may trade continuously if they wish from 8 am on Wednesday, 23 December, until 9 pm on Thursday, 24 December. That is 37 hours of continuous trading. Large retail shops will close this year on Christmas Day throughout Queensland but will be allowed to open for trade on Boxing Day, 26 December, for their normal Saturday trading hours. In accordance with past practice, Monday, 28 December will be the substituted public holiday for Boxing Day. Small, independent retail shops will also be closed on Christmas Day, especially if they are predominantly food or grocery shops.

On New Year's Day, a public holiday, large retail shops will be allowed to open in South-East Queensland from 9 am to 6 pm. In designated tourist and major population areas, such as Townsville, Cairns, Mossman, Port Douglas and Hervey Bay, they will be allowed to open from 8.30 am to 5.30 pm.

Public holidays and extended trading hours raise several wage issues for employees and employers. I urge all people working during holiday periods to check they are receiving appropriate pay for the hours they will be working. Comprehensive information is available on the Wageline website—wageline.qld.gov.au—or by calling 1300369945.

In conclusion, all members of this House and all Queenslanders should spare a thought for shop assistants and other retail workers at this time of year. They work very hard to make Christmas special for others, often at the expense of their own families. We should remember them at this important time of the year and give them that extra thanks when we are shopping.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The time for question time has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Crime and Misconduct Commission, Sports Grants Inquiry

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.30 am): There are serious questions for the government to answer about the transfer of funds following the normal Labor tradition of vote rorting and cash for mates. The CMC investigation that is currently being carried out has some interesting material in it that I asked the Premier about this morning concerning the 2009 guidelines. I will quote for members the question Mr Ralph Devlin SC asked at page 42 of the transcript to the Leader of the House. He states—

No reason was provided to support the school's inclusion—

that is Warrigal Road State School in the electorate of the present member for Sunnybank—

although it should be noted that schools were a targeted group for the 2009 guidelines.

This morning I asked the Premier whether those guidelines were fashioned in her office. Clearly the Premier was not prepared to answer and did not spend the length of time that she normally does on answers, which begs the question: what has happened in this Labor government? We have had the sports rorts. Everyone remembers the gravy train, when Labor Party committee members under Robert Hough went on a tour and were able to tell the department that that is what they were going to do. Yesterday at the commission there was an admission by the member for Sunnybank, the Leader of the House, at page 13 of the transcript that ministerial advisers get formal training by the Premier's office on a regular basis. There are serious questions for the government to answer.

The great tradition of this government and the Premier verballing people continued yesterday, with comments about me on page 3452 of *Hansard* that I have had conflicting views on climate change. She said that I had made a recent statement but she did not attribute it. What she said that I said is that I cannot stand the fact that in 2050 we are not going to have anything for my children to inherit. What I said and will always say is that I cannot stand the fact that people make out that in 2050 we will have nothing for our children to inherit. That is what I said.

(Time expired)

C-17 Heavy Airlifter Simulator

Mr WENDT (Ipswich West—ALP) (11.32 am): I want to advise the House today of another piece of the puzzle being put into place in the government's plans to make the RAAF Amberley air base and its immediate precinct a hive of high-tech jobs for the future. I had the pleasure of assisting the federal member for Blair, Mr Shayne Neumann, last week in commissioning the RAAF's latest piece of high-tech hardware, and by that I mean the C-17 simulator, which has been a major training achievement for Australia's heavy airlift capability.

For those who are not aware, the C-17 Globemaster is a Boeing aircraft which is used by the RAAF for the rapid strategic airlift of troops and cargo to main operating bases throughout the world. But at the same time it is also capable of performing tactical airlifts involving medical evacuation and airdrop missions to places such as the Middle East to supply our Australian forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. More recently it has transported humanitarian supplies to Papua New Guinea in 2007 and to Burma in 2008, following Cyclone Nargis, and transported relief supplies to Samoa following the 2009 earthquake.

The C-17 simulator commissioning marks the start of air crew training in Australia from January 2010, as opposed to the previous situation whereby RAAF pilots had to travel to the United States. To give some idea of how strong the relationship is between the US and Australia, it needs to be pointed out that this simulator, although being the 21st built by Boeing, is the first to be constructed outside of the US. What this simulator means for Ipswich and the surrounding areas is more high-tech jobs in the aviation industry now and into the future. In addition, it will mean that the integrity and capability of the aircraft will be enhanced and extended due to the fact that more training hours in the simulator will mean fewer hours operating the actual aircraft over Ipswich, and this will also mean there will be less emissions and a reduced carbon footprint.

I can vouch from personal experience that the simulator is a replica of the C-17 cockpit and provides realistic training conditions for all C-17 missions. As such, I can report that South-East Queensland was safe last week when I took off and landed the simulator after performing a number of difficult manoeuvres over many of your houses. What this proves more than ever is that the Queensland government is backing a winner in its plan to create an aerospace precinct at Amberley.

Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Serious and Organised Crime Unexplained Wealth) Amendment Bill

Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.34 am): I table a draft consultation bill that lays out the LNP's position on smashing serious and organised crime.

Tabled paper: Private member's consultation draft of the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Serious and Organised Crime Unexplained Wealth) Amendment Bill 2009 [1480].

Tabled paper: Explanatory notes for public consultation on the consultation draft of the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Serious and Organised Crime Unexplained Wealth) Amendment Bill [1481].

Profit and wealth are the chief motivators of participants in organised crime. The Criminal Proceeds Confiscation (Serious and Organised Crime Unexplained Wealth) Amendment Bill 2009 proposes to do more than any other legislation ever introduced in Queensland to attack the profit and wealth motivators of organised crime. The core objective of this bill is to remove the financial incentive to commit organised crime. Two important concepts introduced in this exposure draft include (1) the concept of unexplained wealth and (2) the concept of a reverse onus of proof.

The proposed bill defines 'unexplained wealth' as wealth that is greater than the person's wealth that was lawfully acquired. Under existing Queensland law, for the state to confiscate assets there has to be a direct connection between the assets and the criminal offences. That is, the prosecution must first prove a nexus between criminal activity and assets derived from crime. The proposed bill allows for the confiscation of not just unexplained assets legally owned by individuals but also assets effectively controlled or gifted away by that person.

A recent Commonwealth joint committee inquiry into the legislative arrangements to outlaw serious and organised crime groups heard considerable evidence from many Australian and international law enforcement agencies. These law enforcement agencies praised the benefits of unexplained wealth legislation that reverses the onus of proof as a way of disrupting organised crime. From that inquiry it was clear that if we can take away the profit benefit then we are having more impact than we would through any number of other measures.

The LNP's proposed bill contains a number of provisions dealing specifically with drug traffickers. The proposed bill will have the effect of financially devastating declared convicted drug traffickers. The bill would allow authorities to confiscate unexplained assets but also all legitimate assets from a declared drug trafficker. The Public Interest Monitor will oversee the rights of others who are subject to the reverse onus of proof provisions of the bill. I wait for public comment.

Funeral Homes, Council Approval

Ms STONE (Springwood—ALP) (11.36 am): Imagine you have just been told your 21-year-old son has been killed in a motorbike accident. You now have to arrange a funeral for your son. No-one expects to have to be arranging funerals for their children. Where would you even start? After making arrangements the family decides to have a viewing of their loved one. It is December in Queensland. It is hot and it is humid. The family is told to go to a street in an industrial estate. They arrive to find that the viewing is in a very hot tin shed. There is no nice room for the family to sit and grieve, no nice room to view their son, no comforting environment. This is what one of my constituents had to endure. Any one of us in this room could be faced with a similar situation, having to say goodbye to a departed loved one in a hot tin shed in an industrial estate.

When I met with some members of the funeral industry last week I heard how the story I conveyed about my constituent could become the norm rather than a rare occurrence. I was told that some councils in the state are not planning for funeral homes in our communities but instead are referring them to industrial estates, to complexes like I have just described. In other words, funeral directors are telling me that when they are thinking of building new facilities in an area they are referred by council to look in industrial estates if they want their development approved.

I say to those councils: if you think that by putting a funeral home in an industrial estate you are taking the thought of death out of our communities, you are wrong. In the same council area, because of religious or cultural beliefs you can have a body in a home for viewing for a few days, yet you do not want a funeral home in that suburb. I would like to point out to these councils that if they have a look at some of our older suburbs in Brisbane they will see facilities that have been there for many years, have undergone changes and refurbs, and over time the place has been changed so it provides the serenity and surroundings one would expect. As I have said, they have been there for decades in our suburbs. I ask local council when considering planning for these facilities to think about what they would like for their families if they had to use this service.

Solar Hot-Water Heaters

Mr SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (11.38 am): Anna Bligh's election promise of low-cost solar hot-water heaters for 200,000 Queensland homes—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! The member will refer to the honourable member by her proper title.

Mr SEENEY: The Premier's election promise of low-cost solar hot-water heaters for 200,000 Queensland homes has become a farce. It has taken almost a year to install one unit at Windsor, according to the minister's most recent media statements.

Queensland householders were conned into believing that they would soon get low-cost solar units. Thousands have been left waiting, with no word from the government about what is happening and the scheme has turned into a bureaucratic and administrative nightmare. At the same time Queensland's solar companies, particularly smaller family-run firms, have seen their normal business levels plummet as many who have been contemplating solar pulled back to take up the Bligh government's promise. Labor's solar promise was always dodgy. It was poorly conceived and largely based on federal subsidies with no actual state budget funding allocated. All the warnings from the local industry were ignored and all we have heard is that one unit has been installed. Many longstanding solar companies were shocked at what was being proposed. In short, they said that there was no way the Bligh government could enter the market and set the price for solar hot-water heaters, because that is what the scheme attempted to do. The winning tendering company, Conergy Australia, is a subsidiary of a German company, but few in Queensland had even heard of its existence when it was awarded the tender.

This was a totally unfunded promise. It was all about the Premier's chances at the ballot box. The Queensland solar hot-water sector has been severely disrupted and a lot of Queenslanders who have been promised low-cost systems have been kept in the dark. People who applied for the solar hot-water scheme have in recent days been sent a letter outlining the processes that are involved in completing their application. It is a page and a half of bureaucratic gobbledegook, and I will table it for the benefit of the House. It means that anyone who is successful in eventually getting a solar hot-water system under this scheme must get a final receipt from the state government, apply to the federal government for a subsidy, return the subsidy to the state government or meet the costs themselves. I table the document for the benefit of members.

Tabled paper: Copy of a document, undated, from Greg Nielsen, Assistant Director-General, Office of Clean Energy, in relation to the Queensland Solar Hot Water Program [1482].

(Time expired)

Seniors, Public Transport

Mr KILBURN (Chatsworth—ALP) (11.40 am): On 21 October I was very pleased to have Minister Struthers visit the Aveo Retirement Village in my electorate. I want to thank the minister for her visit and for the information she was able to provide to residents regarding the Bligh government's policies that support seniors. One of the topics that was discussed was the Queensland government's go card and access to public transport. As a result, I arranged for TransLink staff to provide an information session for the residents. This retirement village is located directly beside the public transport hub at Carindale Shopping Centre. I want to thank Holly Burgess, a customer liaison officer with TransLink, for coming to the village and providing a very informative talk to the residents.

The residents at Aveo were informed about how to obtain a go card and how to top up the card, as well as being informed about upcoming improvements to the go card system such as the news that TransLink would soon issue 400,000 free go cards loaded with $10 credit in the early part of 2010; the introduction of a limited-life go card for occasional users; the introduction of off-peak go cards with discounts of 10 per cent, rising to 20 per cent by 2012; a doubling of the retail network for go card purchases; and expansion of the number of ticketing machines at major busway stations and interchanges. Importantly for seniors, a very good project is the rollout of a seniors card that will double as a go card, and the people at the village were very impressed with that.

I want to thank TransLink for taking this opportunity to provide the seniors go card to some of the residents who attended the meeting. I am going to return to Aveo in a short time to speak with the residents to obtain some feedback on their experience with the go card. The seniors go card is maroon in colour and quite easy to use. I have my go card; I use it regularly. I encourage everyone to avail themselves of a go card and to use it whenever possible. I again want to thank TransLink and Holly Burgess for taking the time to promote this valuable service to my constituents.

(Time expired)

Queensland Racing

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (11.42 am): I rise this morning to highlight yet again the complete ineptitude and incompetence of the minister responsible for racing in this state. Why does the minister ignore a situation with Queensland Racing which has such a detrimental effect on racing in Queensland and which has cost the industry hundreds of thousands of dollars? The process of appointment of new members to the Queensland Racing board is a complete fiasco and I urge Minister Lawlor to use his ministerial power to rein in the unfettered power of its chairman, Bob Bentley, and Queensland Racing. Queensland Racing has thumbed its nose at the Queensland judicial system by rejecting the court's direction to run a fair and equitable election process. Queensland Racing has wasted half a million dollars of racing industry funds that should have gone to owners, trainers and jockeys and has been tied up pursuing Queensland Racing's biased position to elect favourable candidates who will support any decision the chairman makes. This is no way to run an industry—that is, by dictating to others who and what is best for the industry.

This situation has happened despite a three to two division within existing board members, with Labor powerbroker Bill Ludwig siding with Chairman Bob Bentley to deny current board member Mr Bill Andrews natural justice in the selection process. The direction by Justice McMurdo to Queensland Racing after it ignored the original court findings to find another independent HR consultant cast grave aspersions over the independence and professional integrity of the original HR consultancy firm of Northern Recruitment. I urge the minister to stop sitting on his hands and to act to clean up the Queensland Racing administration so processes for this and future board appointments are impartial, fair and entirely equitable. He should be earning his ministerial salary and refer this whole election process to the CMC for proper investigation.

White Ribbon Day

Mr RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (11.44 am): White Ribbon Day is observed on 25 November each year and aims to send a strong message to the community about the unacceptability of violence against women. The White Ribbon campaign urges men to speak out against violence against women and pledges to end the violence by promoting a culture change. As a White Ribbon ambassador, I am calling on the people of the Morayfield state electorate and Queenslanders generally to get behind the campaign and wear a white ribbon today and on 25 November every year. The small gesture of wearing a white ribbon on 25 November sends a powerful message to men in the community that our community does not accept violence against women.

Violence against women is not okay. It has never been okay, and it never will be okay. By wearing a white ribbon, we show our support for the White Ribbon message. I also encourage men from around Australia to take the White Ribbon oath. By swearing this oath, Australian men demonstrate their personal and collective support for the campaign. I want to take this opportunity to place my oath on the parliamentary record—

I swear:

Never to commit violence against women

Never to excuse violence against women

Never to remain silent about violence against women.

This is my oath.

I want to encourage all Australian men to swear an oath to end violence against women and send a strong message to our entire community that violence against women is entirely unacceptable.

Sunshine Coast, Desalination Plant

Mr DICKSON (Buderim—LNP) (11.46 am): I rise to speak about the government's proposal to build a desalination plant on the Sunshine Coast—one of two more such plants it claims Queensland will need now that the Traveston Crossing Dam has been vetoed. The government has a sorry history when it comes to water management. First it spent $680 million on the Traveston Dam, only to be told what it already knew was the case—the science that proved that the environmental damage was too great. In the process it caused untold harm to the Mary Valley community. It has built a pipeline that delivers water from the Sunshine Coast to Brisbane and claims that if the Sunshine Coast needs water in the future that water will be delivered. The only problem is that it has not built the infrastructure that would allow water to be pumped back to the Sunshine Coast.

The government is reorganising the delivery of water in South-East Queensland, even though on the Sunshine Coast at least it was already very well managed. It is creating a whole new bureaucracy in that process, yet it has the hide to blame the federal government's decision to ban the Traveston Dam for the increased costs of water in South-East Queensland and the loss of water security. This is a bit rich coming from a government that had not planned how to provide water security to meet the future needs of a growing population. Local governments like Maroochy and Caloundra managed it a lot better

and invested in infrastructure. Now they are paying the price for good planning, with the state stepping in and taking over. Now the people of the Sunshine Coast, particularly those who live in the vicinity of the proposed desalination plant at Marcoola, face the same uncertainty as did the people of the Mary Valley.

The government has now come up with a new 50-year water strategy. It is saying that we may be able to hold off building at least one desalination plant if everyone in South-East Queensland agrees to sustainable water usage targets. Why is this draft strategy only being proposed now? It would have made a lot more sense if it had done this prior to these expensive mistakes. Let us not see the Traveston Dam debacle repeated by this government and the money that has been involved. The taxpayers of Queensland have been done over. The people of the Mary Valley have been done over. Let us not see that same mistake made again.

Climate Change

Ms NELSON-CARR (Mundingburra—ALP) (11.48 am): It was with pride that in Townsville last Friday I witnessed this government's financial support to James Cook University and MBD Energy in such an impressive project that brings together the best of the Smart State's brains and innovation along with a practical, high-technology solution to a significant reduction of greenhouse gas production to ameliorate the effects of climate change. The Premier called this very efficient and elegantly simple fuel substitute 'green vegemite'.

Basically, algae is used as biosequestration because simple aquatic plants live by absorbing carbon dioxide, water and chemical nutrients from the environment. They utilise the energy in sunlight to produce various by-products. I will talk about how that works at another time but, basically, the algae grows and produces oxygen and water, which is then harvested.

The James Cook University pilot plant will develop local expertise in algae production, trial and select the best algal strain and optimise the selection of algae for oil production. The algae has been selected from the Great Barrier Reef. All work at the James Cook University test plant has proven positive and the outcomes have been excellent.

Using MBD's projections, it appears that a 400 megawatt coal-burning power plant—about the size of the Tarong coal fired power station—will use two million tonnes of carbon dioxide produced by the power plant per year; produce 300 million litres of biofuel, which is about two per cent of current national usage; produce 450 tonnes of stock feed, replacing 15 per cent of Australia's imported soy meal; and 25,000 tonnes of glycerine.

As a nation we face unprecedented concerns about the state of climate change and our children's future. While Malcolm Turnbull struggles to win party support for Kevin Rudd's trading scheme, this partnership here in Queensland is leaving out the politics and is getting on with the job of finding a better way. JCU ought to be congratulated.

(Time expired)

Lockyer Valley, Recycled Water

Mr RICKUSS (Lockyer—LNP) (11.50 am): I just cannot believe how this government continues not to use a $2.2 billion recycled water project that has been developed for the area west of Ipswich. The water is within 20 kilometres of the Lockyer Valley. It is supplying about 20 megalitres, which powers a couple of power stations. Yet hundreds of megalitres are not being treated and sent up to the Lockyer farmers.

Mr Knuth: Shame.

Mr RICKUSS: Shame, shame, shame! I cannot believe that this government has wasted $2.2 billion. The scheme in Virginia can produce the water for $120 a megalitre. The scheme in Cranbourne can produce it for about $140 a megalitre. Yet this government has to supply it at $450 a megalitre. Why? Because of the incompetence of the infrastructure program that it has put in place over the years.

The water from the recycled water project should be sent to the farmers in the Lockyer Valley where they can actually use it. They need class A treated water. They only need water that has been treated to a certain extent. What is happening to the rest of the water? Is the government dumping it back into the Bremer River or wherever so that it is ending up in the bay? What is happening to that sewage water?

The plant is working at about 10 per cent of its capacity. What is happening to the water then? What is happening to the recycled water? Is it being dumped into the bay? How is that meeting the EPA's standards?

Mr Lucas interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! Member for Lockyer. Address your comments through the chair.

Mr RICKUSS: I take that interjection from the Deputy Premier. Yes, the cost of production for drinking water is $450 a megalitre. The farmers do not need drinking water. Get it through your thick skulls. They only need class A.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Lockyer will direct his comments through the chair.

Mr RICKUSS: Through you, Mr Chair, they should get it through their thick skulls. They do need class A.

(Time expired)

National Apology for Forgotten Australians and Child Migrants

Mrs ATTWOOD (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (11.52 am): On Monday, 16 November, I was pleased to be able to represent the Bligh government at the national apology for forgotten Australians and child migrants at Parliament House in Canberra. On that day I was able to speak firsthand with some of those affected during those miserable, shameful times. What I heard seemed impossible. It was unimaginable that such maltreatment could ever have taken place but, sadly, it did.

Kevin Rudd offered a heartfelt apology on behalf of the federal government. He talked about the indignity and degradation and the break-up of families that was suffered by 500,000 children, including child migrants, raised in institutions, orphanages and foster care throughout the last century. Many of these children were subjected to prolonged mental and physical harm and some endured years of sexual abuse. This time was an incredibly sad part of Australia's history when our governments did not really know what was going on and perhaps chose not to know.

What, then, is the Australian government going to do for these people who have been forgotten by previous governments? Our Prime Minister has announced the following measures: support for the National Library and the National Museum to provide future generations with a solemn reminder of the past to ensure that their experiences will never be forgotten; identify care leavers as a special needs group for aged-care purposes to ensure that care is appropriate and responsive and to provide a range of further counselling and support services; and provide coordinated family tracing and support services and a national database to locate personal and family history files and to then reunite those people with their families.

To ensure that these people are well represented, the government has provided, and will continue to provide, funding to advocacy groups such as the Child Migrants Trust, the Alliance for Forgotten Australians, and the Care Leavers Australia Network. The Prime Minister said that governments must continue to commit to the systematic auditing, inspection and quality assurance of the child protection services that they administer today. Currently, there are some 28,000 to 30,000 children in care across Australia, all of whom need to be protected from harm and mistreatment.

(Time expired)

Atherton Hospital, CT Scanner

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—LNP) (11.55 am): Yesterday I tabled a petition with more than 7,050 signatories regarding the lack of a CT scanner at the Atherton Hospital. This petition was borne out of the frustration and emotional trauma of many patients who are forced to go to other major hospitals for diagnosis. I acknowledge the announcement by the Minister for Health to make provision to call for tenders for the CT scanner at the Atherton Hospital. I welcome this announcement. But these 7,050 signatories to this petition provide evidence that the people of my electorate are serious about getting a CT scanner for Atherton Hospital, which has been promised and for which Tablelanders have been waiting for up to five years.

Local medicos are threatening to leave the area unless the state government comes good on this promise. Each year, 1,000 patients from the Tablelands are forced to travel to Cairns to receive scans. The need for a CT scanner for Atherton Hospital is one of the most important issues for the Atherton Tablelands and also for the city of Cairns and its surrounding districts as 1,337 people are waiting to receive elective surgery at the Cairns Base Hospital, which is stretched to capacity. A CT scanner would alleviate the pressure on the Cairns Base Hospital by allowing surgery to take place at the Atherton Hospital. It would also save patients and taxpayers their massive transport costs and wasted travel time. It would also take the pressure off the roads.

To provide this scanner is just plain common sense. It costs about $500 to transport patients from Atherton to Cairns by ambulance and by helicopter about $6,000 per hour. If we add to that cost the cost of an accompanying nurse we see that not having a CT scanner at Atherton Hospital is an extreme waste of resources and time. A CT scanner provides a whole range of surgical diagnosis, including safe post-operative care. It is beyond comprehension that a CT scanner was not provided at Atherton Hospital years ago. I call on the minister to continue with his commitment, not delay it, and provide that scanner.

Water-Wise Garden Awards

Ms van LITSENBURG (Redcliffe—ALP) (11.56 am): It was a pleasure to officiate at the Water-Wise Garden Awards last week. The people eligible for these awards are tenants in social housing managed by the Department of Communities, local government, or community organisations. I was impressed by the innovation and creativity with which entrants approached the development of their gardens, particularly given the often very limited space they had in which to create gardens—in common areas of unit blocks, in individual courtyards and on balconies. Those people overwhelmingly demonstrated their pride in their homes, their gardens and their communities. The winner of the main award was Faye Preston.

The Bligh Labor government has given tenants in social housing the opportunity to succeed and to be recognised for their achievements. Those achievements can give communities and individual tenants a real purpose to their lives. Many tenants work together to develop, maintain and contest these awards, which give them the opportunity to form partnerships with other members of their community, make valuable community connections and also be active. These factors contribute to healthier lifestyles. They also contribute to the government's Toward Q2 target of Queenslanders becoming the healthiest people in the nation.

Part of assisting Queenslanders to become the healthiest people in Australia is providing them with the peace of mind that they have a comfortable and affordable house to live in. It is only the Bligh Labor government that has embarked on a huge program of providing social housing to ensure that Queenslanders have security for their families. Our policies are working towards cutting out homelessness and encouraging Queenslanders to become more active and healthier, ensuring that they have a better quality of life. This Labor government is about delivering for Queenslanders. We do it every day. It is the focus of all of our legislation, policies and actions.

Calliope, Police Station

Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (11.58 am): I thank the Minister for Health for visiting my electorate last week and meeting with members of my community so that they can express concerns about health services. I appreciate him giving his time.

Another need is for a police station at Calliope. I have spoken with the police minister, but I want to again put on the record the need for a new police station for that area. The previous minister for police promised $3 million for a new station at Calliope. The need for that station has grown rather than diminished. There are currently two officers at the station. At this precise point in time four are needed. The two officers who are there are doing a brilliant job, but that region is growing exponentially. In the next 10 or 12 years it will need to be a 24-hour station. The population growth is expected to be 16,000 people.

There were two options considered. One was to extend the existing police station, which is a small demountable that was moved onto the land. It is very effective for two officers. As I said, we need four there now. To extend that building is impractical. It is a short-term fix for a long-term problem. The block of land next door to the current police station is owned by the department and available for a police building. The $3 million should be spent on a new police station that would cater for the growth in the Calliope area. It would have off-street parking, not only for the safety of the police officers but also for the public. It would properly recognise the growth projections for the Calliope township and the areas surrounding Calliope. It would give confidence to the police officers that the government does understand their responsibilities, the growth in the area and the pressure that that will put on services. Also, as I said, it would be a sound investment of the promised $3 million rather than be a case of throwing good money after bad. I implore the minister to have that station built as soon as possible.

Moorooka State School, Kindergarten

Mr FINN (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (12.00 pm): The young children of Moorooka are poised to have a flying start to their education journey. In just three months the new kindergarten will open at Moorooka State School with local children of kindergarten age able to begin the journey for the 2010 school year. This kindergarten is the first of the government's commitment to 240 new services across Queensland to give thousands of young Queenslanders an opportunity for this flying start and targeting a 95 per cent participation rate in kindergarten by 2014. The Moorooka kindergarten building is a new, modern facility that is close to completion at a factory in Yatala and will be shipped to the school soon for preparation for the 2010 opening.

It is no mistake or random decision that Moorooka has been targeted for a new kindergarten service. The rollout of the flying start program will be in locations determined by local need, and the Moorooka area has a high demand for early education services. With estimates that the local area will be home to more than 250 four-year-old children by 2013, it is critical that early education services meet population demand. In 2010 Moorooka's new kindergarten will cater for up to 44 kindy-age children and

will offer a program delivered by an early childhood teacher for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year. This is a school community that is made up of 25 per cent of children born overseas, including 15 per cent who are refugees. These children need a good start to their education.

This building program will deliver 240 new kindergartens and create 2,500 construction jobs and represents a $321 million investment in Queensland's growth and population demands. Population growth, and the subsequent pressure on services and infrastructure, is at the core of challenges facing Queensland, and this flying start for our children is about this government delivering today and planning for the needs of tomorrow.

RADIATION SAFETY AMENDMENT BILL

First Reading

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (12.02 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Radiation Safety Act 1999. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Radiation Safety Amendment Bill 2009 [1483].
Tabled paper: Radiation Safety Amendment Bill 2009, explanatory notes [1484].

Second Reading

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (12.02 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce this bill to the House. The purpose of the bill is to amend the Radiation Safety Act 1999 to enhance the security of particularly hazardous radiation sources located in Queensland. The Radiation Safety Act creates a regulatory framework to protect people and the environment from the harmful effects of particular sources of ionising radiation and harmful non-ionising radiation. As part of this framework, the act provides for the implementation of radiation safety and protection measures that govern the possession, use, acquisition, relocation, disposal and transport of radiation sources.

It is important to acknowledge that radiation sources are used to great effect in medicine, industry and scientific research. However, due to historical events, in April 2007 COAG decided a uniform approach must be taken to enhance Australia's existing national counterterrorism arrangements. The Bligh government is committed to bringing our legislation into line with the nationally consistent regulatory framework to stop radiation sources being accessed by persons with malicious intent.

The most significant change to the Radiation Safety Act concerns the adoption of the Code of Practice for the Security of Radioactive Sources. In order to give effect to the Code of Practice for the Security of Radioactive Sources, the bill creates a new category of radiation sources—security enhanced sources—that present the greatest danger to human health should they be misused. A radiation source will be prescribed as being a security enhanced source depending on the concentration or activity level of the radioactive components in the source. The provisions in the bill provide that a person wishing to possess, use, transport or otherwise deal with a security enhanced source in Queensland will be required to undergo either an identity check or a security background check. A person will be required to undergo an identity check if their access to a security enhanced source is to be restricted.

To illustrate when an identity check will be sufficient, I provide the example of a pathologist sterilising a blood sample in an irradiator containing a category 1 security enhanced source. Although able to use the irradiator for the designated purpose, the pathologist will not be able to gain access to the radiation source within the irradiator because of the significant physical protection preventing access to the source. In this instance, the pathologist has restricted access and therefore only needs to undergo an identity check for security to be assured. However, if a person is to have unrestricted access to a security enhanced source—for example a person changing the radiation source in the irradiator just described—they will be required to undergo a security background check because they have full access to the source.

A security background check will entail an identity check, a criminal history check and a security check for politically motivated violence obtained from ASIO. It is intended that the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986 will not apply to the asking for, or giving of, information for the purposes of a security background check. Access to information about a person's full criminal history is necessary to ensure a more complete assessment is undertaken of any charges or spent convictions that may indicate a pattern of behaviour suggesting a person may pose a potential security risk.

The bill will also require that a plan for the security of a security enhanced source, including for the transport of a source, be developed to specify how the requirements of the national security code will be satisfied. These plans, to be known as security plans and transport security plans, will detail—

- the responsibilities and duties of persons responsible for or otherwise dealing with the security enhanced source.
- the physical and procedural measures to be implemented to safeguard the source.
- the circumstances under which a person may have access to a security enhanced source, such as identity and security checks and participation in training.
- record keeping and other accountability requirements.

The legislation will also impose a statutory obligation on licensees and others dealing with a security enhanced source to take reasonable steps to ensure the security of the source, for example by complying with the approved security plan or transport security plan for the source.

The implementation of these new regulatory measures is an important step in creating and maintaining an effective security culture within those organisations and businesses that deal with security enhanced sources. An organisational culture that ensures security issues receive the attention they warrant will reduce the likelihood of a source being acquired or accessed for a malicious purpose.

While the main focus of the bill is to enhance security, the bill also includes a number of amendments that will clarify the application of the Radiation Safety Act in relation to the protection of the environment from the harmful effects of radiation sources. These amendments will, for example—

- expand the statutory obligations imposed on persons authorised to possess and use a radiation source, to ensure that the environment is not adversely affected by exposure to radiation as a result of their actions; and
- enable inspectors to inquire into the circumstances concerning a serious risk to the environment and, if necessary, seize the source to prevent further harm.

The Radiation Safety Act provides for a suite of internationally recognised radiation safety and protection measures to be implemented to protect the health and safety of Queenslanders and our environment. The bill provides for this suite of measures to be strengthened to increase the security of radiation sources and our ability to protect the environment, ensuring that we continue to benefit from the use of these sources while minimising the associated risks. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Langbroek, adjourned.

INTEGRITY BILL

COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY (CORRUPTION, CRONYISM AND UNETHICAL BEHAVIOUR) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Integrity Bill resumed from 24 November (see p. 3529), on motion of Ms Bligh, and the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill resumed from 24 November (see p. 3529), on motion of Mr Langbroek—

That the bills be now read a second time.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (12.08 pm): I rise to support both of these bills and to seek some clarification on the Integrity Bill in particular. I thank the minister for the opportunity to have a briefing yesterday on the contents of this bill. Certainly her staff were very helpful. Yesterday in the debate it was interesting to listen to the interjections in relation to integrity or a lack thereof, or accusations of a lack thereof. It seems to me, from the time that I have been in this parliament, that the recollections of interjectors were at times optimistic and often inaccurate, and the reflections of some on the events of the past certainly had an interesting twist.

I note the comments of Mr Fitzgerald. They provide a very salient warning in relation to the governing of this state. In the late 1980s he saw and experienced firsthand the process that occurred that led to the deterioration of standards in the state. As a result of the Fitzgerald inquiry, he heard how it occurred and he could see the progression of events. His most recent statements are an important reminder, as he could see similar patterns developing—those are my words, not his. I believe it is important, indeed it is critical, to the government of this state and to the people of this state that that warning be heeded.

Much has been said, particularly by members of the government, about how Labor governments have been leaders in integrity and have adjusted legislation to address issues of integrity or a lack thereof. My observation is that that has occurred only when errors have been brought to light. I am not as convinced that the government would be proactive in addressing those matters without the glare of public opinion and the media. However, irrespective of the motive, changes and protections to integrity for the benefit of all is critically important.

Access to the Integrity Commissioner by all members of the Legislative Assembly is an important step. I note that the Clerk of the Parliament will still be the Registrar of Interests. However, it will be possible for individual members to have information and guidance from the Integrity Commissioner. On that basis, I believe it is incredibly important that members have confidence in the holder of that position and his or her political impartiality. In that regard I note that the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition can approach the Integrity Commissioner and get advice on ethical or integrity issues involving any member of their particular parties. I would like the minister to ensure that there is a very strong constraint that the Premier can only receive information about his or her party members and the opposition leader can only receive information about his or her opposition members, for obvious reasons.

The second issue that I want to address relates to the regulation of lobbying activities. Again, this issue has arisen because public concern has been expressed about the activity of former ministers and former members of parliament who perhaps have made inopportune comments about their ready access to the ear of ministers and parliamentary secretaries. On the basis of the briefing that I received, there is a possibility that there could be confusion in the minds of members of the public as to who must and who must not register. I think many people, from an abundance of caution, will register and I guess that will not hurt. However, the easy blanket statement is that if there is a commercial relationship between the lobbyist and the organisation that they are representing at the time, as a lobbyist they must be registered. There is a caveat, and I seek the minister's clarification if my understanding is wrong, that if there is a paid relationship between a lobbyist and a not-for-profit entity then the lobbyist does not have to be registered. I would seek confirmation of my understanding of that point.

I do not believe government can assume that existing lobbyists and people who lobby on a very small scale will automatically know of this requirement to lobby. There will have to be very good publicity to ensure that everybody involved in representing organisations understands their new legislative obligations. While I note that no fine will be issued or other action taken if a lobbyist contravenes or fails to abide by this requirement, certainly people who are genuinely trying to help their communities do not want to find themselves in any sort of strife.

The application of the definition of a lobbyist is quite broad. At the briefing, it was repeatedly stated that it is down to individuals who are involved in government relations. However, as I said, there needs to be clarity and there needs to be contact with all communities through publicity, so that people who are lobbying on a small scale understand their obligations. An example was given of people who may have worked in local government or in other public areas. As their role either ends or diminishes, they might start to assist organisations in the preparation of documents for funding submissions et cetera. They may be caught by this legislation without realising it, because while their role has transitioned into a lobbying role they see it as supporting their community. I note that the legislation clarifies what is not lobbying. Clause 42(2) states—

(a) contact with a committee of the Legislative Assembly or a local government;

(b) contact with a member of the Legislative Assembly, or a councillor, in his or her capacity as a local representative on a constituency matter—

Obviously, that is very important. I would not regard any of my constituents, barring one or two, as lobbyists. They are just representing their concerns and they should be free and unfettered to do that.

(c) contact in response to a call for submissions;

(d) petitions or contact of a grassroots campaign nature in an attempt to influence a government policy or decision;

(e) contact in response to a request for tender;

(f) statements made in a public forum;

(g) responses to requests by government representatives for information;

(h) incidental meetings beyond the control of a government representative;

Example—

A Minister speaks at a conference and has an unscheduled discussion with a lobbyist who is a conference participant.

(i) contact on non-business issues, for example, issues not relating to a client of the lobbyist or the lobbyists' sector.

(3) ***Contact*** includes telephone contact, email contact, written mail contact and face-to-face meetings.

I note that there is an amendment to be discussed in consideration in detail that will add parliamentary secretaries to the list of government representatives. There is an opportunity to refuse registration of a lobbyist. The legislation sets out the matters that the Integrity Commissioner may consider in relation to that.

The issue of success fees is an interesting one. Apparently, what has been occurring is that a fee will be set—in the smaller area it may be a $200 fee—perhaps to help with the presentation of an application for funding through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund, but an added bonus is paid to the person giving assistance if the application is successful. We were advised that that fee for service, which is the success fee, will no longer be able to be asked for, required or paid. I wonder how the lobbyists will get around that? Will they increase their fee-for-service cost in an effort to recoup some of what was their success fee?

In relation to the issue of lobbyists and the activities of former senior government representatives, be they ministers or senior bureaucrats, the community is heartily tired of what it sees as an abuse of those positions. I am not sure how effective this legislation will be, but I commend the government for bringing it in. I reiterate that it was as a result of problems with former Labor government ministers in particular which has created this sense that there is a lack of transparency. It is important that that be established.

The other issue that I wanted to raise was the amendment to the Government Owned Corporations Act and the readmission of GOCs to the administration of the Crime and Misconduct Commission. I commend the Premier for these amendments. I believe that publicly the CMC expressed some concern about the removal of GOCs from its area of administration. I note that excluded from this bill are the entities that are covered by the asset privatisation. These entities are Queensland Motorways Ltd, the Port of Brisbane, Forestry Plantations Queensland, Queensland Rail's above and below rail coal business and the Abbot Point Coal Terminal. I thank Jessica in the minister's office for that clarification of which entities are excluded.

I question why they should be excluded. They could be included and there be a proviso in the bill that excludes them at that point in time that privatisation occurs. For some of these entities the privatisation process will be a long one. Therefore, I believe that they should be under the jurisdiction of the CMC in terms of misconduct and corruption concerns. As I said, they could easily have been included in the bill and then excluded as privatisation occurs. Indeed, once they were private entities the bill would cease to apply to them. That would be my only comment in relation to those exclusions.

I believe that for many in the community where a government owned corporation is still the recipient of public moneys they should be accountable on all levels to the Crime and Misconduct Commission as well as is currently the case to the federal Corporations Act. I commend the minister for including this amendment. I believe it will answer the concerns of many people in the community in relation to these publicly funded organisations. I certainly support the government's bill.

I turn now to the private member's bill. It is a bit novel having a government bill and a private member's bill being debated together. In reading the commissions of inquiry bill, it is obviously very political in the direction that the bill wishes the commission of inquiry to investigate. However, there has been a lot of concern in the community about the way positions are allocated. This has been a growing concern over time no matter which party is in power. As Fitzgerald observed, it happens the longer a political party appears to remain in power.

There is a growing concern in the community about cronyism, about unethical behaviour and about the increase in the number of people who have worked in high-level political positions, be they as elected members or as senior bureaucrats, who are touched by legal proceedings or involved in legal proceedings. In the last 12 months it has been highlighted, at least in the media, that when the FOI legislation was introduced—this was just after Fitzgerald—it was groundbreaking, but in the last five to seven years in particular the influence and the effectiveness of the FOI legislation has been undermined and watered down.

On the basis that many in my electorate feel disappointed and indeed cheated by this government in its lack of transparency—particularly in relation to the assets sales but also in relation to power pricing, the petrol tax and infrastructure provision for the region—I am supporting the private member's bill, although I have to say again that the wording of it is particularly political. However, I do believe that members in my community would like to see a commission of inquiry. I believe that, if everything is as well as the government says it is, it has have nothing to fear. There is a cost involved. I acknowledge that. However, the community deserves to know that the government of the day, which has considerable power in this unicameral system, is acting honestly, openly and transparently. On that basis I support both bills.

Mr CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (12.24 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate on the Integrity Bill and the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill. Firstly, I intend to deal with the provisions of the Integrity Bill introduced by the Premier in response to the questions that have been asked about the honesty, transparency and integrity of the current government both under the former Premier, Peter Beattie, and under the current Premier, Anna Bligh.

The response of the Bligh government has been underwhelming in a number of respects. The explanatory notes state that the actions in the Integrity Bill are intended to enhance the functions and independence of the Integrity Commissioner, including providing for the Integrity Commissioner to be an

officer of the parliament; create a statutory basis for the Register of Lobbyists and ban the payment of success fees to lobbyists; amend the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 to rename the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee the Integrity, Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee, with an additional area of responsibility of oversight of the performance and functions of the Integrity Commissioner; and amend the Government Owned Corporations Act 1993 to bring government owned corporations within the jurisdiction of the Crime and Misconduct Commission in relation to misconduct investigations.

In response to the contribution made by the member for Keppel during this debate yesterday, he failed to recognise that the LNP opposition has acknowledged the presentation of the provisions in the Integrity Bill. However, the LNP opposition has made the point that the government's bill is most notable not for the matters that are in the bill but for what has been left out. In that regard, the criticism levelled at the LNP opposition by the member for Keppel is without base.

The lack of public confidence in the parliament, and more particularly in the current government, is understandable when the government has acted without hesitation to protect its own without regard for longstanding arrangements in this place including removing original provisions of Queensland's Criminal Code for political purposes. We know that the government grossly abused its position and recalled parliament in December 2005 to protect one of its own—namely, the former member for Sandgate, Gordon Nuttall. The government recalled the entire parliament and used its majority to protect the former member for Sandgate from the consequences of his actions—knowingly misleading the parliament.

We also know that subsequently in May 2006 the Beattie government passed through the House an amendment to the Criminal Code which repealed a provision that prohibited members of this parliament from deliberately misleading the House and its committees. Since that time, the Labor government has stood in the way of efforts by the LNP opposition to restore that provision to once again make it an offence to knowingly give false evidence to the Legislative Assembly and the committees of the parliament in Queensland. The LNP opposition has tried to take a step forward to restore the integrity and accountability of the Queensland parliament in this regard, notwithstanding the cynical abuse by the Labor government of its position.

In respect of the provision to bring government owned corporations within the jurisdiction of the CMC in relation to misconduct investigations, I want to take a particular interest in why the recommendation of the Queensland Ombudsman—that the Queensland Ombudsman be given a similar capacity—is not also in the provisions of this bill. The Queensland Ombudsman's submission is very interesting in this respect and warrants noting in detail. The Queensland Ombudsman's submission to the government's integrity and accountability green paper had the following to say—

... entities that carry out public functions using public funds and public infrastructure are accountable to the public for the way in which they perform those services and spend those funds, and should be subject to all the usual accountability measures.

...

In respect of the jurisdiction of the CMC and my Office—

that is, the Ombudsman's office—

over government owned corporations ... the situation has worsened in recent years. Until recently, the Ombudsman Act had some limited application to statutory GOCs, but no application to company GOCs. However, by October 2008, the government had converted all GOCs into company GOCs. This has resulted in my Office—

that is, the Ombudsman's office—

having no jurisdiction to investigate complaints made about the administrative actions of these corporations; and the CMC having no jurisdiction in relation to official misconduct by officers of these corporations.

This situation is unsatisfactory from both an accountability and integrity perspective. Moreover, it is out-of-step with the community's expectations regarding the ability of independent bodies such as the Ombudsman and the CMC to scrutinise the government's performance of the functions it undertakes on behalf of the community, no matter the type of body that performs the functions.

The Queensland Ombudsman went on to note that there are generally two arguments advanced to try to justify why GOCs should be excluded from normal government integrity and accountability mechanisms. Firstly, it is often argued that GOCs must comply with the accountability, reporting and regulatory requirements of the Corporations Act 2001, which is Commonwealth legislation, and are subject to independent regulation by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission. Secondly, it is proposed that GOCs are corporatised entities that operate in a commercially competitive environment and therefore imposing obligations on GOCs that do not apply to their privately owned competitors would adversely affect their ability to compete on equal terms. The Queensland Ombudsman addressed these arguments with the following observations—

In respect of the first argument, I would expect the requirements of the Corporations Act, and potential regulation by ASIC, to have little or no application or relevance to the types of complaints received by my Office regarding the administrative actions of GOCs.

The Queensland Ombudsman went on to say—

... while it might be expected that the governance framework of ASIC under the Corporations Act would regulate serious misconduct on the part of board members and most senior executives of a GOC, it is highly unlikely that ASIC would ever become involved in the investigation of misconduct or maladministration on the part of staff of the GOC.

As regards the second argument, I take the view that it is unrealistic to expect that a completely level playing field is ever achievable as far as GOCs are concerned. At the end of the day, GOCs are not private sector bodies no matter how closely they may resemble them. Their expenditure of considerable public money and the regulatory privileges they enjoy set them apart from private bodies and give rise to a significant public accountability obligation as regards their use of that money.

I consider that the public interest in ensuring that GOCs are accountable should, unless exceptional circumstances exist, outweigh the public interest in protecting the commercial interests of GOCs. Accordingly, I am of the view that all GOCs (whether or not they operate in a competitive environment) should be subject to the jurisdiction of both the CMC and the Ombudsman. The CMC and the Ombudsman should have the ability to investigate matters within their respective jurisdictions, on complaint or on their own initiative.

The Queensland Ombudsman finalised his submission in relation to this issue with a formal recommendation that—

The Queensland Ombudsman and the CMC be given jurisdiction over GOCs, with the ability to investigate matters that fall within their respective jurisdictions, either on complaint or on their own initiative.

There you have a clear and compelling argument from a respected and independent office holder in the person of the Queensland Ombudsman, whose recommendation has been totally ignored by the Bligh Labor government. That recommendation does not figure in the provisions of this bill.

Interestingly, I heard the member for Murrumba during his contribution to this debate yesterday praise the Premier for the extension of the CMC's oversight to GOCs for exactly and specifically the reasons outlined by the Ombudsman, which I mentioned earlier, as to why the Queensland Ombudsman should also be given oversight for the conduct of GOCs in Queensland. Why was the member for Murrumba silent in respect of the failure of this bill to extend the same capacity to the Queensland Ombudsman? Surely, on the basis of consistency alone, the same capacity ought to be extended to the Ombudsman. What explanation can the Premier or the Attorney-General give for this oversight? I would be very interested to know why the CMC gets the nod in terms of oversight of GOCs but the Ombudsman is left out in the cold.

I turn now to the provisions of the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill introduced by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Surfers Paradise. The objective of the bill is to amend the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950 for particular purposes. This bill has been brought to the Queensland parliament because the Bligh government refuses to establish an independent commission of inquiry into allegations of corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour by the state government over the last 11 years.

Clause 3 of the bill outlines the extensive list of grounds on which the LNP opposition justifies the introduction of the bill. The litany of problems listed in clause 3 has plagued the government for some time now. Questions have been consistently asked about the state government's links with lobbyists, many of whom are former Labor members of parliament, and the extent of their influence over government decisions. The state government voted against a motion moved by the LNP opposition to establish a royal commission to investigate the culture of secrecy and allegations of corruption.

During this debate, Labor members have frequently referred to the Fitzgerald inquiry. Tony Fitzgerald did have plenty to say in his report that came out of the royal commission. Tony Fitzgerald has also had a bit to say in more recent times, including on 29 July 2009 when in respect of the current government, formerly led by Premier Beattie and now led by Premier Bligh, which has been in power for the last 11 years, he said—

Access can now be purchased, patronage is dispensed, mates and supporters are appointed and retired politicians exploit their connections to obtain 'success fees' for deals between business and government.

In 1987, amid allegations of a similar nature, the then Queensland National Party government had the guts to call a royal commission and appoint Tony Fitzgerald as the commissioner. The result of that royal commission is well known. It was a watershed for politics and public administration in Queensland. Two decades later, the Bligh government has demonstrated it does not have the same courage to open itself up to the scrutiny of a royal commission. The Labor Party may want to call up the ghosts of Fitzgerald from the 1980s but it wants to ignore Fitzgerald's words in 2009. The double standards are extraordinary.

There has been a claim made by the state government, and repeated during this debate, that the CMC has the powers required to investigate the allegations of corruption that are dogging the government and that a royal commission is not required. Labor says that the CMC is a standing royal commission. The state government is asking Queenslanders to believe that the CMC has made royal commissions redundant and that we will never need one again. The findings of the royal commission in relation to the Bundaberg Base Hospital shamed the state government for its mismanagement of Queensland Health. Does the state government really believe that we should have just left that inquiry to be undertaken by the CMC? If the CMC is a standing royal commission, why did the CMC not conduct the investigation into the Bundaberg Hospital? What are the Labor Party's criteria as to what should be investigated by the CMC and what warrants a royal commission? Again, the double standards are extraordinary.

Earlier in this debate I heard the Attorney-General offer criticism of the LNP opposition in respect of the issue canvassed in its issues paper regarding the Electoral Act and the fact that Queensland's electoral system is delivering results in terms of seats that do not reflect the results in terms of the relative share of the votes received. The Attorney-General drew a very long and unsubstantiated bow that discussion about this issue was somehow evidence the LNP opposition was launching an attack on the principle of one vote, one value. His comments were completely ridiculous. Not only is the Attorney-General wrong; he knew he was wrong.

The Queensland electoral system has a colourful history that is well documented. The former Hanlon Labor government introduced the zonal electoral system in 1949. The zonal electoral system was born of the Labor Party, and that is a fact. After a couple of decades of Labor complaining about the zonal electoral system and blaming the electoral system for its own failures, and after the former National Party government had the guts to call a royal commission, which was the Fitzgerald inquiry, one of the recommendations from that inquiry was implemented in the form of the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission. The report of that independent commission, EARC, born out of the Fitzgerald inquiry—although the National Party established the Fitzgerald inquiry, the Labor Party so keenly seeks to associate itself with it—recommended a one-vote, one-value electoral system in Queensland, except in respect of five extremely large seats covering Western and Far North Queensland. EARC's report took account of Queensland's particular geographic and demographic circumstances.

That recommendation was accepted and implemented by the Goss government in recognition of the massive disadvantage faced by Queenslanders in those areas in terms of accessing effective representation in our democratic system. The advantage is not significant for those Queenslanders who still have members that are required to cover massive electorates. I wonder how the member for Mount Isa felt yesterday when the Attorney-General was making his comments, given that her seat now covers more than 500,000 square kilometres.

If I were to draw a long bow, I could—in the same way the Attorney-General did during his contribution—allege that, based on his contribution, he was going to suggest we remove this minor protection of Western and Far North Queenslanders in the electoral system just because he canvassed the issue during his contribution. But I will not do that, because I do not want my contribution to be as silly as that of the Attorney-General.

The LNP opposition legitimately canvassed in its issues paper a range of matters including electoral matters, as did the people of Queensland in their submissions to the state government's integrity and accountability green paper. Surprise, surprise! These did not materialise in the government's bill before the House today. Where are the provisions dealing with the electoral matters raised by the Clerk of the Parliament in his submission? His comments in relation to the current Queensland electoral system are extensive. I wonder whether the Attorney-General harbours the same arrogant contempt for the Clerk's submission. Why didn't the Attorney-General try to ridicule the Clerk's submission when he canvassed similar and related issues?

This paltry effort by the Bligh government in respect of these four provisions is really only taking baby steps towards restoring the confidence of the people of Queensland in this parliament and public administration in this state. The bluster and mock outrage of Labor members indicate that the LNP opposition bill is cutting close to the bone and the truth.

Dr ROBINSON (Cleveland—LNP) (12.40 pm): I rise to contribute to the cognate debate on the bills titled Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill 2009 moved by the Leader of the Opposition and the government's Integrity Bill 2009. I welcome the opportunity to support the opposition's call for a royal commission to restore integrity and accountability to government. Ultimately, without a royal commission, corruption, cronyism and Labor mates' deals in Queensland will likely continue. Labor's new integrity laws will not bring to an end this government's culture of corruption and cronyism. Labor's bill simply sweeps the critical issues under the carpet. In fact, Labor's bill is a desperate attempt to give the impression that the Premier is fighting corruption when by her inaction she is ensuring it is not found.

This bill only deals with a few issues such as the role of the Integrity Commissioner and the banning of Labor's success fees instead of providing a wide-ranging investigation, despite the Premier's promises of widespread reform and the 200-plus submissions to the green paper. Queenslanders want to get to the bottom of the government's corruption, to raise the standards for the conduct of the state's political leaders and to restore decency in this chamber. Only the opposition's bill that calls for an independent royal commission will achieve what the community demands. Only a commission that is free to scrutinise and explore every aspect of government culture will bring secret deeds to light so that they can be purged.

The Westminster system that we have in Queensland is supposed to deliver high levels of integrity, accountability and openness. Sadly, this Labor government has found ways to get around these principles of accountable and integrity. Historian Lord Acton spoke truly when he said, 'Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.' British Prime Minister William Pitt, in a speech to the UK House of Lords, said, 'Unlimited power is apt to corrupt the minds of those who possess it.' How true. These timeless words ring true today of this Queensland Labor government.

What we have seen from this almost 20-year-old government is unchecked and unbridled power. The use of power has created an environment in which corruption has flourished. This excessive power has been used to push through legislation quickly, to stifle debate to silence critics and mislead the public. The opposition has limited real opportunities to scrutinise legislation and to contribute to laws. The Queensland Labor government has become its own judge and jury when it comes to the investigation of matters of official corruption and misconduct. How many times have substantive matters been referred to various bodies of inquiry under the Labor government to find that the terms of reference were too narrow or the investigative powers afforded those bodies were too weak? Further, the government has so used the CMC that now the CMC's independence has been brought into question. The guard dogs of integrity in this state have become toothless and powerless to deal with some more weighty issues.

Then there are the MEPPC changes. As someone who sits on the MEPPC, I find it a little disappointing that the changes were simply announced and my input was not sought. The name change of the MEPPC to insert the word 'integrity' does nothing in itself to increase accountability. The government's bill is all about image and appearances.

The government's integrity bill does not prevent ministers from lying to parliament or to one of its committees, nor does it stop the soon to be appointed new Premier, the member for Greenslopes, from deceiving the public at the next election, just as the current and outgoing Premier did at the 2009 ballot. Honesty in this House should never be an optional extra—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! Member for Cleveland, you have used a word in the last couple of sentences which is forbidden in the House, and I ask you to withdraw that word.

Dr ROBINSON: I withdraw. Honesty in this House should never be an optional extra. It has been said that honesty is the best policy. Can I suggest that in parliament, where standards should be the highest in the land, honesty should be the only policy. We have a responsibility to the constituents we represent to always uphold the highest standards of integrity. Unfortunately, under this Labor government we have seen the erosion of integrity in this House. The government's introduction of sanctioned deception is a major step backward in our society. It represents a devolution of values that are foundational to the effective operation of our society.

It comes down to a simple issue of trust. The members of this parliament should be trustworthy. The people of Queensland should be able to trust their state members. May I suggest, being a little cheeky, that regarding the next election Labor use an adaptation of the unions' 'Your Rights at Work' slogan and call it 'Labor: Your right to Lie'.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Cleveland—

Ms Grace: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will deal with this and then I will hear your point of order. I have already spoken to you in relation to using that term, and you deliberately went against my wishes.

Dr ROBINSON: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will ask you to withdraw and I will ask you not to take that matter any further. If you do, there will be further action. I will hear the point of order. Member for Cleveland, take your seat for the moment.

Ms GRACE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am happy with your ruling. It addresses what I was about to raise.

Dr ROBINSON: Electoral reform and truth in electoral campaigning are glaringly absent in the government's bill. The Integrity Bill does not tackle the critical issue of the government's conduct during elections. It has done nothing to stop Labor from accepting political donations from people before the courts on official corruption charges. It does not deal with the inappropriate level of influence that unions exert financially and otherwise over the preselection and election processes. Massive union resources of funding and manpower dominate election campaigns. Unions are playing an increased role in elections through large donations to Labor campaigns and by running parallel campaigns.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr Watt interjected.

Dr ROBINSON: It is interesting, the interjections from the other side of the House. One problem with the large donations from unions to Labor campaigns that is not addressed in the government's bill is that union members are generally not aware of the large scale of such donations—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Brisbane Central will cease interjecting.

Dr ROBINSON:—and have not given consent for their fees to be used for Labor campaigns.

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! That goes for the member for Everton as well.

Dr ROBINSON: I have had several union members in Cleveland express extreme disappointment that union executives spend large amounts of membership funds on Labor election campaigns without their knowledge or consent. In the previous federal election, it was reported to me in the seat of Bowman that combined unions—particularly the Electrical Trades Union, which practically owns the seat—provided in excess of $600,000 in direct donations and parallel campaigning to try to oust the federal member, Andrew Laming.

Regarding election donation reform, the government needs to have an approach that includes all forms of union involvement in elections, otherwise this aspect of the government's bill is nothing more than an attempt to rig elections further in its own favour. I challenge the government to adopt an opt-in policy for union donations in which members must choose to donate to election campaigns. If the Premier is serious about electoral reform, there needs to be provision for donations from union members to go to the political party of their choice, not just the Labor Party.

Electoral reform must also consider the issue of union control of the ALP preselection process. For example, in Redland city the Electrical Trades Union has practically bought out and dominates the preselection process. It appears that huge funding investment of the ETU in the seat means that the ETU controls who the candidate is. Through this process, a union literally buys a seat and with it the MP. To me, this is a most inappropriate process. A royal commission is needed to investigate these practices to ascertain if this is a fair and democratic process or whether unions have inappropriately taken over. I again call on the government to support the opposition's bill so that we get to the bottom of Labor corruption and union influence. In conclusion, an independent and wide-ranging royal commission is needed to clean up the state. I commend the opposition's bill to the House.

Ms DAVIS (Aspley—LNP) (12.50 pm): I rise to speak in the cognate debate on the Integrity Bill 2009 and the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill 2009. The stain of Bligh and Labor's mistruths, corruption and cronyism need to be rectified as accountability and transparency have become mere words for this government that lives and breathes spin, advertising and showmanship. Importantly, though, the provisions in the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill do shine a light on the litany of corrupt—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! Member for Aspley, did I hear you use the word 'lying' in your first sentence?

Ms DAVIS: No, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry. I thought I did. I apologise. Continue please.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Importantly, though, the provisions in the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill do shine a light on the litany of corrupt, unethical and questionable actions of this government. I believe that there has been a missed opportunity for real reform by this government through the Integrity Bill. Whilst it addresses some issues, it fails to address others such as electoral reform. There are four changes as outlined in the explanatory notes that are included in the Integrity Bill, and they are: to realign the Integrity Commissioner as reporting directly to parliament and extend the ability of the Integrity Commissioner to advise on issues of conflicts of interest; to put into legislation the lobbyist register; to prohibit the granting of success fees; and to amend the Government Owned Corporations Act to give the CMC the power to investigate them. All but one reform already exists in some form. The Premier promised reform and, despite more than 200 submissions to the integrity green paper, we get four amendments—three of which are already being done in practice.

I note in her second reading speech the Premier suggests that reforms regarding success fees for lobbying would hopefully—

> ... provide clear direction and oversight for the lobbying industry, establish a high standard of ethical practice within the industry and ensure the probity and accountability of interactions between government representatives and the lobbying industry.

The practice of business securing favourable treatment by paying friends of the Labor Party, including former cabinet colleagues of the Premier, has been perfected to a fine art. In January this year it was revealed that Labor Party mates, along with former cabinet and ministerial staff colleagues of the Premier, had been pocketing hundreds of thousands of dollars in success fees in return for securing government funding for private projects. In an attempt to conceal the culture of success fees, in August this year the Premier announced that she would look at banning these fees. Yet when in February, 10 months earlier, the LNP announced its plans to abolish these success fees, the Premier refused to give bipartisan support.

The response by the Premier earlier in the year highlights this government's ad hoc approach to accountability and integrity. While it is pleasing that the Premier now agrees with the LNP's initiative to ban success fees, the question should be asked: if the suggestion is good enough now, why the lack of support earlier in the year? Unfortunately, far from addressing the core structures upon which corruption has bred, the Integrity Bill only touches on a sprinkling of issues that suits the Premier's and the Labor

Party's agenda. The real murkiness of how Labor does business in Queensland must be revealed, with a tangled web of Labor mates on government boards working for lobbying firms and ensconced in ministerial offices. This highlights why a royal commission is needed to ensure that corruption and cronyism concerns are properly addressed.

There is an important difference between these two pieces of legislation, and that is action. The Integrity Bill falls short of addressing the broader issues and is a missed opportunity and the commissions of inquiry bill provides a concrete initiative to stamp out these sorts of practices and murky dealings. That is why I am happy to support the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill 2009. The lip-service of the integrity legislation has got to stop, and the only way to properly investigate corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour is a commission of inquiry. The amendment bill will amend the Commissions of Inquiry Act to oblige the Attorney-General to, within 21 days after the beginning of the bill, officially advise the Governor to create a commission of inquiry under the Commissions of Inquiry Act to investigate a number of issues relating to the executive government of this state since Labor took power 11 years ago.

It would see the commission of inquiry examine in detail many of the public controversies that this government and the Beattie government have swept under the carpet over the last 11 years—controversies such as those surrounding the former member for Sandgate, the transfer of $100 million from the management of the Queensland Investment Corporation to the Trinity Property Trust and the dealings between ministers, former ministers and ministerial staff with lobbyists. All of the terms of reference that the LNP have suggested go to the heart of how the people of Queensland want to be governed and want to trust that their government is focused on the interests of ordinary people. Unfortunately, the residents of Aspley still continually tell me that they neither trust this government nor believe the government is focused on their interests. With all the spin of the past 11 years regarding these deficiencies, it is little wonder that Queenslanders do not think this government is accountable and question its integrity.

It is a travesty that this bill is even required, but we know that the public expects its officials to do their duty diligently, obey the law, act fairly and honestly and resist corruption, and that is what the legislation proposed by the member for Surfers Paradise seeks to do. Many members of my electorate know that sunshine is said to be the best of disinfectants. Unfortunately, we may require a little more than sunshine on this occasion to remove the stains of 11 years of Labor government. A commission of inquiry is the best place to start.

Mr EMERSON (Indooroopilly—LNP) (12.55 pm): I rise today to contribute to the cognate debate on the Integrity Bill and the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill. It was Tony Fitzgerald who said that ethics are always tested by incumbency. There is no doubt that there is a crisis of public confidence in this Labor government. That crisis is not just because of the deliberate mistruths told by the government before the election. That crisis is not just because of the dishonesty when election promises are broken after the election. That crisis is not just because of the arrogance displayed when Labor broke those promises. That crisis has been fuelled by its record of corruption and cronyism.

At no time in the last two decades have we seen such a series of reports undermining the integrity of public administration as we have in recent years under this government. Every day in Queensland there is a new headline shaming this government. Every day there is a new headline underlining the need for greater scrutiny, accountability and integrity. Today there have been new reports further undermining public confidence in this government. Those issues of today and in recent months and years go to the heart of this government involving ministers, senior staff and former ministers. Is it any wonder that a poll in the *Sunday Mail* found that four out of every five Queenslanders do not trust Premier Anna Bligh?

These two bills deal with these issues of integrity and accountability, and I will be supporting both bills. But let me first turn to the Integrity Bill. It contains some important initiatives but falls short. It is not what is in the bill but what is not in it. The Premier promised a lot with this bill but, like other promises by Labor, that one has also been broken. What was needed were changes that dealt with the issues of corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour. Does this bill do anything to stop ministers not telling the truth to parliament or one of its committees? No. Does it increase ministerial responsibility from this Labor government? No. Does it contain electoral reforms and ensure truth in electoral campaigning? No. Does it stop Labor from accepting political donations from people before the courts on official corruption charges? No. Does it hold the Premier and the government to account over its misleading the people of Queensland through asset sales and fuel taxes? No.

The Premier promised widespread and comprehensive reform when she released her integrity green paper. The paper received 200 submissions. So what did we get from this outcome? What we got from this government was legislation with fewer than a handful of amendments. What we got from this government was legislation where the majority of those amendments are already done in practice. What we got from this government was what it specialises in—spin rather than solutions. What this bill fails to address is those activities and events that led to this loss of confidence in the integrity of this

government. That is what the commissions of inquiry bill put forward by the LNP deals with. It requires the Attorney-General within 21 days of the bill passing to advise the Governor to establish a commission of inquiry into corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour by the Labor government of Queensland between 1998 and 2009.

I heard a Labor MP on the radio news this morning claiming that such an inquiry would be a waste of money. Isn't that a stunning comment, because this is the government that has wasted $600 million on the Traveston Dam? This is the government that has delivered massive deficits. This is the government that produced record debt. This is the government that has been so wasteful and incompetent that the international judges on this, Moody's and Standard & Poor's, stripped the state of its AAA credit rating. Queensland is the only mainland state that no longer has a AAA credit rating, and that costs Queensland hundreds of millions of dollars—

Mr Shine interjected.

Mr EMERSON: It is interesting to hear that the member for Toowoomba North is not concerned about the hundreds of millions of dollars that could have been spent in his electorate. Sadly, they were not. That is why we need a commission of inquiry—to get to the heart of these issues, not just to paper over them, as this government does.

Sitting suspended from 12.59 pm to 2.30 pm.

Mr DOWLING (Redlands—LNP) (2.30 pm): I rise to speak to the Integrity Bill 2009 and the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill 2009 in this cognate debate. I will keep my comments brief. I thought I would look in the dictionary to find the meaning of the word 'integrity'—not that I did not know what the word meant; I just thought it was important to get back to tintacks. The *Macquarie Budget Dictionary 3rd Edition* 1993—an old dictionary that I had at home—states that 'integrity' means 'Soundness of moral principle and character; uprightness, honesty, sound, unimpaired or perfect condition.' The *Concise English Dictionary New Edition* 1998 states that 'integrity' means, 'Honesty, sincerity, completeness, wholeness, an unimpaired condition.' I undertook a Bing search of the word 'integrity' and found the word to mean, 'Adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honest, the state of being whole, entire, or undiminished: to preserve the integrity of the empire, sound, unimpaired, or perfect condition.' It is interesting to note that, throughout the years—from 1993 to 2009—and I am sure right back to the origins of time, the meaning of 'integrity' has not changed.

Integrity is a word that has tremendous power and tremendous value in any community, but it is a word that appears to have lost some of its currency in this place. The community has lost its faith in the government. The community has lost faith in the government because of its inability to be honest, especially with the people for whom it alleges to represent. The government lost that faith at a time when it was so vital to be honest—at election time.

The 2009 election campaign began with an untrue statement. That statement was, 'I will go full term.' Who said that? That is right; the honourable the Premier said that. Then a few days later the election was called—six months early. At election time we put forward a platform. We put forward a budget, we put forward all of the issues on which we want to lead our state forward. At that point in time there was a great opportunity. We put all of our plans forward and the community chose Labor—

Mr LANGBROEK: I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the House.

(Quorum formed at 2.34 pm)

Mr DOWLING: It is at that time in the electoral process that it is absolutely critical that we map out our future direction in terms of how we are going to govern the state. I suggest to members that the reason we have the Integrity Bill before this House is that when this Labor government went to the community it did not mention the planned asset sales and it did not mention the new fees or the increase in registration, the increase in the cost of electricity, the increase in the cost of water or the introduction of the sustainability declaration. When this government came into office, the very first thing it did was flip the entire state on its head. That is why I suspect we have this Integrity Bill before us. It is all about talking up integrity. It is certainly not about being true to the meaning of the word.

With all of the evidence post election, can we say that this government's integrity is intact? The community says that it is not. The community certainly tells me loud and clear that it does not have faith in this government or its integrity. If the government had mentioned the sale of the railways, the sale of the motorways, the sale of the ports or the sale of the forestry then we could honestly say that the government had won office fairly and squarely—that it had gone to the people and was given a mandate. Instead, the government has dreamt up things such as this Integrity Bill.

This government has been in office for 11 years. It is now pretending to stamp out the very culture that it fostered, the very culture that it has delivered to Queensland, the very thing that this government has entrenched in the Queensland parliament and in government in Queensland. Labor is responsible. It is not just former Premier Beattie who is responsible; current Premier Bligh is also responsible, as is

every long-serving member on that side of the House. It is ingrained, it is entrenched, it is the very fabric of the party. It is riddled with cancer. It has been the Labor government of these last 11 years that requires all of these amendments, all of these alleged calls for action and calls to arms to clean up government. The government should clean up its own backyard—the very mess that it made. It has become Labor's DNA.

I draw members' attention to part 2 of the bill titled 'Advice for designated persons on ethics or integrity issues'. Clause 14 states—

This part does not apply in relation to advice for a member of the Legislative Assembly on interests issues.

Clause 15, titled 'Request for advice', states—

A designated person (the ***advisee***) may, by written request to the integrity commissioner, ask for the integrity commissioner's advice on an ethics or integrity issue involving the person.

I suggest that an amendment may need to be made to that clause so that the clause states that members of government who are seeking re-election, as part of their campaign commitment, should go to the Integrity Commissioner and ask if mentioning the sale of assets is something that they should do up-front—mentioning the sell-off of rail, the sell-off of the motorways and the sell-off of the ports. Maybe if the members of the government had been up-front and gone to the Integrity Commissioner they might have been told, 'Perhaps, as we are in election mode, you might like to tell the people of Queensland that that is what you have planned for them—an increased cost for water and electricity and increases in registration and extra charges; every single thing that is going through the roof.'

Labor is rapidly becoming the fix-it party. All we keep hearing is, 'I'll fix it, I'll fix it, I'll fix it.' The government would not be so busy trying to cover up and fix things up if it were not so badly broken and so lacking in integrity. My colleagues have covered most of the issues in great detail. I will wind up my comments by reminding members of what I said back on 22 April 2009 in my maiden speech. These comments relate to the electoral system in Queensland.

Mr Watt: I just can't remember it.

Mr DOWLING: I will refresh the member's memory. I thank him for his interjection. I stated—

Another issue has been raised by Redlands residents who watched with interest the recent election and the system of voting, wanting to understand how it works. Members of this House should be concerned that there is no need for proof of identity—

And other members have touched on this—

when a person presents themselves at a polling station, other than your name and address.

That is why we are calling for electoral reform as part of a commission of inquiry into corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour. Electoral reform goes right to the heart of the issue. I stated further—

It has also been brought to my attention that it is more difficult to rent a video movie.

In Queensland, it is more difficult to hire a $5 movie than it is to prove who you are to take part in the electoral process, which is the cornerstone of our democracy, and to have a say in the future of Queensland. To my way of thinking, that has the potential to completely undermine our democratic process and our democratic system. It should sound alarm bells in a civilised, modern society. We need to ensure that our electoral process is robust and beyond reproach.

The reform that we are calling for in the honourable the opposition leader's private member's bill, the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill 2009, will get right to the heart of those issues. We need to ensure that our electoral system is robust and it is not a case of simply turning up somewhere to have your name ticked off the roll. It needs to be much more than that. I thank the Leader of the Opposition, John-Paul Langbroek, for bringing forward this private member's bill. I ask those opposite to see wisdom and merit in this bill and to support it as we will be supporting the Integrity Bill.

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—LNP) (2.40 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the Integrity Bill 2009 and the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill 2009. The Integrity Bill is an attempt by this government to save face with Queenslanders. It is not about addressing the issues that have plagued this government or the issues to do with honesty or integrity. If the government were serious about reform it would have addressed the legislation which allows lying by ministers to parliamentary committees.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! We have had a long and lengthy discussion about the use of that word in this place. You should be well aware that it is unparliamentary and I ask you to withdraw.

Mr KNUTH: I withdraw. I recall the Premier advising Queenslanders that it would not call an election. Yet six months short of the end of its term she called an election. Many people did believe that the Premier was telling the truth. She put her hand on her heart and told the people of Queensland that she was going a full term. What happened? She went to the Governor. This government had done everything in its power to send the state broke and it needed to find more money to satisfy its uncontrolled spending. Under the guise of the global financial crisis it called an early election asking Queenslanders to grant them another term to waste willingly the hard-earned taxes of everyday Queenslanders. Its lust for power and control could only be achieved by deceiving the people.

This government won the election by promising no new taxes and no privatisation. The photos of the induction ceremony of the 53rd Parliament were not even printed before Queenslanders had lost their fuel subsidy and QR was up for sale. This is deception of the highest degree and yet the government believes that it has done no wrong and does not need to be accountable for its trickery.

Its deception in the privatisation of electricity is another example of how devious the government is. 'Privatisation will reduce costs by allowing competition' was the mantra. Then when the costs were increased the government could do nothing but bleat incoherently about how inconsiderate the energy companies were and how it was going to get the energy companies. But it was the government, in a blatant grab for cash, that gave away the control. It was the government that set the perception that it was going to reduce the cost of electricity with its persuasion that electricity costs would come down. It was very persuasive. It was the government that caused endless financial pain to everyday Queenslanders.

It is a legacy of this government that legislation had to be introduced to protect people who told the truth. This is not China nor North Korea. People should not be punished or threatened for telling the truth; they should be punished for lying. The legislation does not prevent or deter members from lying and does not address the laws that the government had enacted to make it legal to lie. It does not address the capacity the government has for hiding information that it does not want to share.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have already warned you once during this address about the use of that word. I ask you for the final time to withdraw that word. It is unparliamentary.

Mr KNUTH: I withdraw. It is in Queensland where it is against the law to leave your windows down in the hot sun. It is in Queensland where the laws govern the choices people can make about the type of fittings they can choose when building a new home. It is in Queensland where flying foxes enjoy protection greater than humans.

Government members interjected.

Mr KNUTH: It is unbelievable, is it not? There is no other state where flying foxes are more protected than in Queensland. Only Queensland protects flying foxes over humans.

Government members interjected.

Mr KNUTH: Well, get up there and do something about it. It is in Queensland where revered leaders and elected representatives get the full protection of the law for lying and it is in Queensland where loyalty to the Labor Party is considered the only requirement for promotion. It is a disgrace.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr KNUTH: I withdraw that. I wanted to bring that to the attention of the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, resume your seat.

Mr MALONE (Mirani—LNP) (2.45 pm): I rise to speak briefly in the cognate debate on the Integrity Bill and the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill. I will speak briefly in support of the Leader of the Opposition's proposal for a full and independent inquiry into cronyism and other matters in terms of this government.

There is no doubt that there is a real need for integrity in government. Unfortunately, I am almost of the belief that those on the other side of the House really do not understand what integrity is all about. Indeed, it is quite laughable to see the attempt by the Premier to bring some integrity into this parliament in terms of the operation of government. When we look at the history of her time in parliament—she has actually been part of the executive government for many years—we see that one of the issues of concern is the way in which this government has operated. Particularly galling from my perspective was the way in which the Premier promoted her husband to the position of executive of the climate change department.

Mr WALLACE: I rise to a point of order. The member for Mirani is deliberately misleading the House. As has been explained previously in this place, the Premier's husband was appointed on merit, not by the Premier.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. If you believe that the member is misleading the House there are other processes to deal with that.

Mr MALONE: It is interesting to look across the range of decisions that have been made by this government, particularly in this term and during the election campaign. Others have spoken about the lead-up to the election and the promises that were made and indeed the promises that were not made. Quite frankly, the government went to the people of Queensland without any indication of the way in which it was going to address the huge debt that it was racking up over a period of time. Indeed, one would have to be blind Freddy to not realise there was going to have to be some mitigating circumstances under which this government, or any government for that matter, would have to address the issue of a quickly escalating debt load on the people of Queensland.

As the then opposition leader went into the election and talked about ways and means of minimising the growth and the costs of running government, in terms of trying to take a stronger role in actually being more efficient in government—smaller government and things that would actually go towards making government more efficient—we were criticised from pillar to post all the time by those knowing full well that they were going to the people of Queensland without any way of mitigating the horrendous range of debt that it had racked up over a period of time and were continuing to rack up. This government has been all about spin and media opportunities.

Mr Wallace interjected.

Mr MALONE: Whenever the government gets into trouble—and we have a prime example with the minister over there—suddenly a press release is published and another issue is thrown into the public arena. Only last week the government was in a bit of strife and suddenly a $3,000 incentive was offered to encourage people to move to country areas and an underground metro was suggested for Brisbane. The incentive is ridiculous. Three thousand dollars would get you only about halfway to Townsville and that is where you would have to dump your furniture. Most of the hospitals in towns outside the south-east corner of Queensland have closed down. The towns have no services. There is no public transport outside the south-east corner, yet the government wants people to move to regional Queensland. QR has rolled back its services. That has meant that most of the country roads are absolutely stuffed or unserviceable, frankly, because cattle and other produce have to be transported by road. Main Roads is not able to keep up with the maintenance of the roads. We have perfectly good rail lines, but QR is winding back its services and now most produce has to be transported by road. The government cannot see the benefit of utilising QR and the rail lines to move heavy materials across thousands of kilometres. Instead, the roads are being used and those roads are deteriorating before our eyes, and the government does not have the money to fix them. Despite all that, the government has the audacity to suggest that people should move to rural Queensland. I really do not want to dwell on this too much, but during—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Particularly as it is not relevant to the bill before the House, it would be good if you did not dwell on it for too long.

Mr MALONE: I am actually talking about integrity. I am sure that I can link that into some of the decisions made in this parliament. I turn to the government's Integrity Bill and the lack of electoral reform. The Attorney-General raised the issue of the number of people in electorates, et cetera. At the last election, the Labor government won 50.9 per cent of the vote and 51 seats in the parliament of Queensland; the LNP won 49 per cent of the vote, which is not too far away, and 34 seats in the house. Something really stinks under that system. Yesterday in the parliament the Attorney-General said that one vote, one value is equal for every person in Queensland.

I do not have a large electorate compared to some others, but the other night I made a 900-kilometre round trip to attend a speech night in Mount Morgan. How many city based members of parliament, particularly those from the other side of the house, would be willing to do that? We talk about one vote, one value. People who live in regional Queensland—and the government wants to move more people to regional Queensland—under this government will be regarded as second-class citizens, but it does not even realise it.

Mr Schwarten: Are you saying the people in Mount Morgan are second-class citizens?

Mr MALONE: I am saying that under the member's government people who live in regional Queensland are regarded as second-class citizens.

Mr SCHWARTEN: I rise to a point of order. I take offence at that. I live in regional Queensland and I do not believe I am a second-class citizen and nor are my constituents. The people of Mount Morgan are not second-class citizens. They are wonderful people and they do not vote for you. They do not vote for rotten tories like you!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Minister, please. There is no point of order. The member was not making a personal reflection on you. Member for Mirani, you have the call.

Mr MALONE: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will stick up for the people of regional Queensland, unlike the government. It ignores people who live in regional Queensland and the member for Rockhampton knows exactly what I am talking about. With those few words, I support the bill.

Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—LNP) (2.54 pm): I rise to support the leader of the LNP's Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill 2009 and offer some comments on the Integrity Bill. I ask the question: why is the Labor Party so scared of a royal commission? Former royal commissioner Tony Fitzgerald knows why. The introduction of the Integrity Bill by the Premier immediately should ring alarm bells for Queenslanders. It means that we have a problem with integrity. Finally, the reality of the crisis in the government's integrity has hit home and it is registering in the majority of Queensland households. The crisis in integrity is registering in the political polls, and that is the real reason that this legislation is before the House. The legislation is an act of

desperation on behalf of a politically mortally wounded Premier who, most probably, will be gone by February or March of next year. The members opposite who complain about her are out doing the numbers right now. Names like Kerry Shine and—

Government members: Ha, ha!

Mr MESSENGER: Do not knock Kerry! I think he is good. Neil Roberts, the minister for everything, is the go-to guy who has been talked about. The crisis in integrity is registering in the political polls. This legislation is an act of desperation. It is an attempt by the Labor Party to convince the public that the crisis in integrity, which is very real for a number of obvious reasons that members on this side of the House have elucidated well, is being dealt with by government. The government wants everyone to breathe a sigh of relief after this bill passes this place and say, 'The integrity crisis that we had has disappeared because we have passed this wonderful piece of legislation and we have an Integrity Commissioner.'

In reality, this is the best offering we have from the Labor Party spin machine. If the same Labor Party people who designed this legislation, that is, the Labor Party spin machine, were working for Dracula, this Christmas Dracula would be in the mall standing next to Santa Claus and flogging off a cookbook for vegetarians. The Premier's legislation is the equivalent of Dracula's cookbook for vegetarians. There are some great recipes in it, such as the expansion of the powers of the Integrity Commissioner, but one has to doubt the motive behind the document.

Les MucKan is a councillor from Hervey Bay. He is one of the highest ranking Indigenous leaders in our state. I can still remember Les saying, 'You can stand in a garage all day, but that still don't make you a car.' The Premier can introduce legislation into this place with the word 'integrity' in the title all she wants, but that is not going to undo her deceitful behaviour. There is no way that Queensland will be fooled by that. She can have the word 'integrity' tattooed on whatever body part she chooses, but that will not make the people of Queensland, including the unionists and the railway employees, forget that it was her decision to sell off our state assets. She can have the word 'integrity' sky written, but people will not forget that she was the one who seconded the motion to let her convicted and criminal Labor mate off the hook in this very chamber.

The Bligh government's Integrity Bill fails. It is weak. It fails in many areas. It fails to stop ministers from lie—I take that back; I almost said the magic word. It fails to stop ministers from deceiving people in this parliament or its committees. It fails to address issues of corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour among ministers and this Labor government. It fails to stop Labor from accepting political donations from people who are before the courts on official corruption charges. It fails to extend the powers of the CMC so that it can look at every financial decision made by former minister Gordon Nuttall and it does not provide any changes to the current lack of ministerial responsibility in this Labor government.

One of the main purposes of this bill is to give the CMC the power to investigate the government by amending the Government Owned Corporations Act. However, the CMC does not have the resources and investigators to fully investigate corruption and cronyism allegations. If this government really wanted to be an open, honest and accountable government, it would instead move to establish a commission of inquiry, as laid out by the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill 2009.

This bill is a very important bill which will establish a comprehensive, dedicated commission of inquiry into Labor government corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour between 1998 and 2009. When the bill is passed, the Attorney-General will have 21 days to advise the Governor to establish this commission of inquiry. It is what the people of Queensland want. It is what the people of Queensland deserve. Nothing less than an independent, comprehensive royal commission will suffice. A commission of inquiry has the full resources and powers needed to carry out a comprehensive investigation.

For 11 years the people of Queensland have watched this dysfunctional Labor government's corrupt activities, such as Gordon Nuttall's misconduct and subsequent jailing. Time and time again this government has refused to establish an independent commission of inquiry into allegations of corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour. What more has the government got to hide?

It is proposed that the terms of reference of the royal commission would include the circumstances surrounding Gordon Nuttall that led to him receiving payments while in the role of a government minister. This is a former—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! Please, honourable member, I refer you to the Speaker's statement yesterday regarding standing order 233. He urged members to be aware that their contributions here may be widely published in the media and may unnecessarily interfere in the matters currently before the courts. I refer you to the statement and caution you not to proceed down that line of argument.

Mr MESSENGER: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will merely point this out: that gentleman was able to control and influence the spending of billions of dollars—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. You have immediately gone on and continued down that line of argument. I ask you for a final time to change the course of your argument or I will sit you down.

Mr MESSENGER: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I take your direction. It is a happy hunting ground when it comes to allegations of corruption with this government. The commission would inquire into the allegations made by Jacqueline King that she and Mr Scott Zackeresen complained to the office of the former Premier, Mr Peter Beattie, in 2002 regarding misconduct; the dealings between ministers, formers ministers, ministerial staff, former ministerial staff or persons exercising delegated authority on behalf of the Queensland government, or government owned or controlled entities, with lobbyists concerning access to government, the granting or withholding of approvals, the awarding of tenders, the entry into contracts and other decisions; the relationship between members of the Queensland government and persons who have been appointed to the judiciary or magistracy; the termination of the employment of Mr Scott Patterson by the Labor government and the failure by the CMC to adequately address matters raised by Mr Patterson; the circumstances surrounding the superannuation fund Sunsuper Pty Ltd; and the adequacy of a number of legislation and government policies.

The CMC is a body that we rely on in Queensland to investigate allegations of corruption. I have referred a number of such allegations to the CMC. There is a question over the ability of the CMC to be able to properly investigate those investigations. There are suggestions today about the integrity of the CMC that need to be looked at closely, as well as the amount of resourcing and staffing available to the CMC.

For example, I referred to the CMC an incident that happened at the Bundaberg Base Hospital. I wrote to the CMC on 2 February this year with Christine Cameron's serious allegations of 100 PRIME critical incident reports that she submitted but received no feedback from the Bundaberg Base Hospital that action took place—allegations that nurses were asked to falsify computer records regarding patient waiting times and that admin officers were undertaking triage duties in the emergency department, and these are people without even first aid certificates. The CMC wrote back stating—

The CMC considers that it is appropriate for Queensland Health and the Queensland Quality and Complaints Commission to take responsibility for dealing with the concerns raised by you and Mrs Cameron. However, the allegations about the falsification of records will be subject to close monitoring by the CMC.

Accordingly, the CMC has directed Queensland Health to investigate this aspect of the matter. We will monitor the investigation by obtaining interim reports during the course of the investigation and before the agency makes a decision about what action to take.

Ultimately, Queensland Health was left to investigate Queensland Health. That investigation is nearing completion. Once again, we have an example of the CMC underresourced, undermanned, having to refer those allegations back to Queensland Health. Queensland Health has investigated itself. Normally the CMC gets the Ethical Standards Unit to investigate. Ms Cameron was under the impression that the Ethical Standards Unit was investigating the matter. But there seems to be a mistake because it was an Ethical Standards Unit investigator who was investigating the matter but that person was not really working for the Ethical Standards Unit. Apparently, it was directed by a manager of Queensland Health.

A report has come out about that investigation at the Bundaberg Hospital relating to those very serious matters of public health. Ms Cameron has asked that I table in parliament today her response to that report, and I do so.

Tabled paper: Formal response from Christine Cameron to Kevin Hegarty, District Chief Executive Officer, Sunshine Coast-Wide Bay Health Service District regarding the ESU interim report in relation to an investigation into complaints about Bundaberg Base Hospital [1485].

Ms Cameron would also like me to read into the *Hansard* her thoughts on that report that is being issued by Queensland Health. Her response stated—

In January 2009, I then attended the CMC to report concerns about the Bundaberg Base Hospital. These included safety issues, behavioural issues of certain staff, and particularly questionable—

Ms SPENCE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Can I ask your ruling regarding relevance to this debate in the House today?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! Yes, I was starting to wonder about the relevance of this particular matter. As important as it may be to the provisions of both bills currently before the House, I think it would assist us if in some way you could show that it is relevant to either bill.

Mr MESSENGER: The Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill 2009 has a number of clauses. I direct your attention to the explanatory notes, which state—

Clause 2—The Act amended is the Commissions of Inquiry Act.

Clause 3—Inserts a new section 35. Under this section once enacted the Attorney General has 21 days to advise the Governor to establish a Commission of Inquiry into corruption, cronyism and the unethical behaviour surrounding the Labor Government ...

I cite this example because it is a classic example of what the royal commission should be investigating. At the very least, this is unethical behaviour. At worst, this is corruption and cronyism in the Labor Party. I can understand why members opposite would rise to make points of order and want to stop me from tabling this information and telling the truth about the investigation and the lack of integrity that this investigation has. Ms Cameron wanted me to read out her response. She states—

The CMC delegated almost all of my concerns to QH to have its various bodies investigate and deal with the issues I raised. High among my claims was that staff were not given feedback on issues raised through the PRIME reporting system (hence giving no visible assistance to struggling staff), and that management had possibly—

I am quoting Ms Cameron here, but she uses the 'l' word—

or given misleading statements to the WorkCover investigation.

Several investigations and reports followed.

- February 2009—Patient Safety Centre report released, noting that Bundaberg Base rated poorly in relation to giving feedback to complaints/issues raised by staff in (PRIME) reports.
- February 2009—Ayre report released, which looked into problems and complaints about inaction and lack of feedback to concerned staff using the PRIME system of reporting.
- Following these reports, recommendations and some changes were made to the PRIME system.

I have to congratulate Ms Cameron because her disclosure meant that $250,000 was spent on the Bundaberg Base Hospital accident and emergency department straight off. This is a classic example of where we need to investigate. Ms Cameron continued—

March 2009—Brennan report released, finding many issues requiring addressing at the Bundaberg Base Hospital.

Following this report, considerable extra funding was given to Bundaberg Hospital.

This is what Ms Cameron said about the Ethical Standards Unit—

I find the ESU interim report to be erroneous on almost every issue. Almost none of the evidence I provided the ESU (or informed the ESU of) was quoted, but management's statements were taken as correct and reliable (without ever any documented evidence), even when directly refuted by my documented evidence. My successful QComp appeal is not quoted, except to paint me in a bad light, and even this quote is misused by the ESU. I believe the ESU has acted with absolute bias against me. The ESU interim report also conveniently and regularly quoted one particular expert report to support its erroneous findings, even though that report is fraught with obvious problems, and contains at least one monumental blunder—which was again used to wrongfully impugn my character and credentials.

What we have here is an attack on the whistleblowers—an attack by this government on the hardworking nurses, on the whistleblowers who know what it is like at the coalface. Ms Cameron continued—

Thus, in October 2009, I again requested CMC intervention, since the ESU interim report was rife with errors and what I believe to be blatant and consistent bias against me, and since ESU's own guidelines have been ignored and breached. The CMC refused to intervene, even though I informed it of what I believe to be official misconduct and bias by the ESU.

It is not good enough that the CMC refused to investigate these further claims. Once again, it supports our argument for the establishment of a royal commission into corruption and cronyism in this state. Ms Cameron continued—

All along the investigation had been purported to be an ESU investigation, with all documentation identifying it as the same. I even had to assert that I would not—

this is where she used the 'l' word again—

and would be penalised if I did. When I began to complain about the integrity of the ESU investigation, the ESU Director then informed me it was not actually an ESU investigation at all, but rather that an ESU investigator had simply been on loan to another QH department. Hence, it is my firm belief that having realised that the ESU could be exposed for this bungled and likely biased report, it has moved to distance itself from it.

Besides this—

here is where she used the 'l' word again—

to the ESU carries penalties. Hence, it is also my belief that by making the investigation nothing more than a departmental matter, serious retribution could be avoided by all, if indeed management responses and the investigation itself can be exposed as the cover-up and shambles I believe it is.

Ms Cameron continued—

Almost three weeks after sending my letter of complaint, the CEO responded formally to me, noting that he had already acted to have at least one major error in the ESU interim report fixed, by having the expert who made it amend his ludicrous, erroneous comments. I was mortified, since I had clearly made it known that I didn't want the interim report 'fixed', but rather those people who had given false, misleading or blatantly wrong information properly investigated.

Hence, what was purported as an ESU investigation from the outset, has been seriously interfered with by the very CEO who the investigation supposedly now belongs to. Moreover, the investigation is fraught with errors, bias and an almost total absence of consideration of my documented evidence (which I supplied)—even though management could supply almost no evidence to refute my claims.

I table the 'Interim report response summary'.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Interim report response summary' [1486].

I have referred many things on to the CMC.

Mr Schwarten interjected.

Mr MESSENGER: One of the issues that the member for Rockhampton would know about is the Building Services Authority and the meltdown of Coral Coast Homes. The CMC wrote back to me recently, and the letter is actually a scathing indictment of the management of the BSA. The CMC said that there is—

- a lack of policy and procedure to guide decision-making processes under relevant Acts ...
- deficient and/or inconsistent record keeping practices;
- the retention of staff lacking financial qualifications to carry out compliance investigations;
- a lack of structured staff training programs;

However, the minister is quite happy for the BSA, which did not have an internal investigation, to hire a Mr Frank King of Corporate Success Group. The report was received by the CMC—

Mr SCHWARTEN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The point of order is that the honourable member is misusing parliamentary privilege here most seriously. Mr Frank King is a former ombudsman of Queensland, so before we go any further with this defamation the parliament needs to understand that this personal attack on Mr King and on the CMC is nothing but a contrived effort by this gentleman.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Burnett has the call.

Mr MESSENGER: The minister does not like me examining it. If the minister really wanted to be open and accountable, he would tell us how much they paid Mr Frank King for this independent report. How many times have they used Mr Frank King from Corporate Success Group? Is it good enough that someone who is hired by the BSA comes in to investigate itself? There is a world of difference between being investigated by someone you hire and a CMC investigator—

Mr SCHWARTEN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Mr Frank King was actually reporting to the CMC. If there were some problem with him, then this is a very thinly veiled parliamentary attack upon the CMC of Queensland. I ask it to be seen in that light.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Burnett has the call.

Mr MESSENGER: There is a big difference between being investigated by Mr Frank King and CMC investigators.

(Time expired)

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South—LNP) (3.16 pm): We have had a very long debate on the Integrity Bill and the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill, with many speakers from the LNP as well as the Independents. It indicates the strong feeling that exists in the state about the culture that has crept into our single tier of government here in Queensland. Whilst the system of government in Queensland is part of the Westminster system, it varies from almost every other Westminster system of government in that we do not have an upper house. To put it colloquially, an upper house acts like a handbrake. It provides a house of review, a house of checks and balances. Very often, the decisions by the lower house have to be modified, adjusted or amended in some way.

But in Queensland, with a single house, if you win the election, basically what you decide to do in parliament or outside of parliament in terms of appointments and so forth is what happens—that is what goes. What we have seen in Queensland is almost 20 years of Labor government, with the exception of 2¼ years in the period from 1996 to 1998. When Tony Fitzgerald spoke about good governance and systems of good governance, he spoke about the need for change, the need for balance, the need for review, the need for refreshment. That applies no more than here in the Queensland parliament with our unicameral system of parliament.

This government has been in power under Premier Beattie and Premier Bligh since 1998, just over 11 years. In that time, the public of Queensland has got used to a continual litany and diet of ministers being jailed, Labor members of parliament having to resign from parliament, referrals to the CMC, investigations, whistleblowers, appointments of concern to do with the number of ex-Labor members and ministers of parliament on boards, lobbying, success fees and so on. It has been building up and building up all the time. No doubt, much of it has been emanating from the massive majority that the government had after the 2001 election, when it had a huge majority in the parliament. That is the sort of thing that concerned Tony Fitzgerald about complacency coming into government.

As a result, we have seen things build up. If you were drawing the situation on a whiteboard, you would have 'complacency' in the middle, an arrow leading out to the left to 'culture' and an arrow leading out to the right to 'debt'. The complacency has led to the mismanagement of the finances of this state, and on the other side it has led to corruption, allegations of cronyism, favours and all the rest of it that has built up over a long period in government, starting with the biggest majorities this parliament has ever seen three years after the government was last elected.

That is why the LNP has put forward, through the Leader of the Opposition, a bill to allow for a royal commission of inquiry because only that can deal with this culture. You can deal with some specific things through the CMC or through some form of inquiry, but you cannot deal with everything. You cannot deal with a culture. It was a previous royal commission by Tony Fitzgerald that dealt with the culture that had developed in Queensland over a long period of time of government by one party. That is what we are seeing now, in the same type of vein. We are seeing this culture that has developed. We have seen the entrenched practice of looking after mates and favours.

Despite the gloss and spin that the government has attempted to put forward, the public of Queensland knows that exists. Finally, everybody came to that conclusion after the deceit of the last election earlier this year in which the government did not reveal the true extent of the debt and the financial mismanagement. The government in its campaigning did not reveal its plans to introduce a fuel tax. It did not speak honestly about its plans to deal with the massive debt and the burgeoning mountain of interest through a system of asset sales—selling off assets which earned this state an income. Some 18 or so months earlier the government sold off the income-earning assets of the Cairns Airport, the Mackay Airport and I think a 16 per cent share of the Brisbane Airport. The income from those assets is lost and gone forever.

Only a royal commission as proposed in the opposition's bill can get to the bottom of the culture that has developed in Queensland under the Labor government for 11 years and a unicameral system of government, where the checks and balances of the parliament are limited to what can happen here. In here, on this floor, the numbers have always been against—and always will be—the opposition of the day. As I said, the people of Queensland have seen the deceit and they have come to a conclusion that the deceit is endemic and that it is part of Labor's DNA. That can be seen in the polls, particularly the polls for the Premier. Only a royal commission will clean that up.

Good, decent people get deeply hurt and deeply offended by deceit. People approached the election seriously. They thought about it. They took the time to digest the various messages, media releases, ads and comment. They took the time on Saturday to vote and did so after thinking carefully about what they are doing and understanding the importance of their vote. They do not like being deceived, and they will not forget it. The example set by the Labor government in the conduct of the last election should never be followed by any other party in contesting an election. The people of Queensland certainly will never forgive this Labor government for the deceit that was heaped upon them during the election.

I have gone through some of the litany of things that have occurred. We have seen at times members of parliament who were under investigation and court processes stay here because the government of the day had a margin of one and needed that person. We have seen all sorts of referrals. To sum it up, there is a spider web throughout this state that has developed over 11 years of favours, of cronyism, of corruption, of 'scratch my back and I'll scratch yours'—all sorts of decisions being made about who gets grants and who does not get grants. It always occurs with a bit of spin on it. 'We are giving one to an electorate of the opposition, but there are seven or eight going to government electorates.'

People are starting to see through all of that. They have seen through the process that has led to this particular bill. They saw the process of the green paper, which was only a response to the massive criticism that was occurring throughout the media and public commentary about the spider web of corruption, cronyism and favours that had developed in this state. In response to that, the spin doctors put out the green paper and then a bill following on from that green paper. Much of the submissions, particularly from very important organisations and institutions, has been completely disregarded. We are supporting this bill in the parliament today because the small number of things that it will do will make a difference, and we agree with them, but it does next to nothing.

Other speakers have spoken about all the things that it does not do. It has four major pillars to it, three of which are either fully or partly in place at the moment, and it introduces only one new area into the legislation. On that basis we are supporting it, but, as other speakers before me have said, it is notable not for what it does but for what it does not do. Once again, it is a part of this whole spin process that the Labor government has become accustomed to doing, thinking that people will fall for it. They have woken up to them and people will no longer fall for it.

Not only have we ended up with this culture that has become endemic in this government and which people are sick of; complacency has led to financial mismanagement. Once you get complacent and you start to treat people as fools, all of these other problems come cascading down. As a result, we have seen the government deliver some massive budget overruns—a lack of financial oversight that would never be tolerated in private organisations. We have seen debt and an accompanying interest bill that our children and our grandchildren will never be able to pay off. It is a massive debt, far bigger than the basket case of New South Wales—in fact, probably 40 per cent bigger than the debt of New South Wales. It is a massive debt compared to the debt of Australia, which has ballooned from zero to somewhere around $150 billion already under Prime Minister Rudd, who inherited a $21 billion surplus that he spent very quickly.

This mountain of debt will mean that important day-to-day operational services will not be able to be provided because the government of the day will have to find billions and billions of dollars necessary just to pay the interest, let alone make a commitment towards reducing that mountain of capital debt which is so important to get our AAA rating back so that we are paying a lesser amount of interest and so those local governments who are tied to that would also pay a lesser amount of interest.

It means less money for the important services that we need to provide during the year. That might be services to people with a disability. It could be health, education, police, roads—the whole gamut. The spending that has occurred and the waste that has come from the complacency is a great lesson to the people of Queensland and future governments about how you need to be not only tight in your systems of ethics but also tight and careful in dealing with people's money. We are really dealing with people's trust and with people's money. The people's trust has been shattered by this government. This government will always be remembered and known as a government of deceit and a government that has been there too long. People cannot wait for just over two years time when they can throw them out.

Ms JARRATT (Whitsunday—ALP) (3.28 pm): I rise in support of the government's Integrity Bill and to oppose the amendment bill that has been brought to the House by the opposition. This debate has consumed many hours of this House's time, and that is quite fitting because it is a cognate debate and it does go to the heart of maintaining public confidence in the institution of governance in this state. But I have to say that it does nothing for the notion of integrity to have member after member of the opposition stand in this place and spruik their credentials as ethical cleanskins while indulging in the classic tactic of smear and innuendo about the government and its members to justify their place amongst the angels.

All the while not one skerrick of evidence has been put forward to support the notion that the government's integrity and accountability framework is inadequate to ensure the level of transparency that those opposite say they crave. In contrast we have a Premier in this state who, having been elected in her own right only in March of this year and for the first time having the opportunity to set out her own agenda for this state, acted to establish a public conversation about expectations held for elected and public officials. On 6 August the government released the Integrity and accountability in Queensland discussion paper and, following more than 200 formal submissions and the state-wide consultation process, the Premier released the government's response, part of which has been placed in a legislative framework for debate this year. Other measures have been foreshadowed for introduction next year.

That is a pretty good record in anyone's book, and I am proud to support these measures as introduced in the Integrity Bill because they represent a significant and necessary step towards emphasising the government's expectation of high standards of integrity and accountability from everyone in public office. There is no doubt that the measures introduced in the Integrity Bill will place new obligations on members of parliament, senior members of the Public Service, GOCs and lobbyists and that some of these obligations are onerous and leave little room for innocent oversight, but this is the standard demanded of us by the citizens of this state and this is the standard which will be implemented.

It is comforting to know that all members of parliament will have access to the Integrity Commissioner. I have in the past sought the advice of the Integrity Commissioner on matters requiring clarity and found the experience most satisfactory. I am sure that even the Integrity Commissioner would agree that not all cases are black and white and, human nature being what it is, none of us are immune from genuine oversight. But this bill provides both the standard and the support mechanisms to ensure that we do get it right. The public are tough taskmasters and have demanded stringent standards of public officials. The Integrity Bill is another step forward in the delivery of these standards, and I am very happy to commend it to the House.

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (3.31 pm), in reply: I rise to sum up the debate on the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill and want to reflect on what has brought us to this point. I note the contribution of the member for Whitsunday, who does not want the issues raised by this side of the House raised. Clearly, the member is caught up in the same spin cycle that the government is caught up in. I heard the honourable member standing up for the Premier and say that she was elected in her own right. We all know about the circumstances of that election and what has happened since—that is, that this Premier went to the electorate with a manifesto—

Ms Jarratt interjected.

Mr LANGBROEK: It is very clear that the Premier was elected with a manifesto that has changed completely since the election, and that is a point that no-one can deny and that the electorate clearly sees through. Very obviously we have had 11 years of a government that has come to treat this place as if it owns it. It has no regard for the rules, rights and obligations placed on it as a government. Public confidence in the political system is fundamental to the operation of government. Low levels of confidence and trust in government lead to dissatisfaction and a diminishing respect for the role of governments and the institution of parliament. In Queensland we can thank the Labor government for rubbishing this institution.

I introduced this bill to provide for an opportunity for a broad sweeping, independent inquiry into the past 11 years of Labor rule to sweep aside any hangover of corruption that will haunt it now for the rest of its days and to dismiss allegations of cronyism that, with every new Labor mate appointment, will go on haunting it and to expose every dodgy deal, questionable public expenditure and backdoor deal that this government has done and will go on doing. It is a sad fact that this government clearly has got something or a whole number of things to hide if it is not willing to open the books to a whole-of-government, warts-and-all examination of the last 11 years of its questionable rule.

The Premier was sworn into this House in 1995 and since 1998 has sat around the cabinet table with the likes of Gordon Nuttall and Terry Mackenroth. Clearly, the Crime and Misconduct Commission is a watchdog designed to uphold public accountability and integrity. It is not designed to act as a full-blown royal commission inquiry into this Labor government. No-one inquiring into an individual will ever expose the widespread allegations of corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour that spawns from this government on a daily basis. It seems with each new day it is a new Labor mate, another Labor government member or some other dodgy Labor link that is exposed.

Let us have a look at the performance of the CMC in this last financial year. In 2008-09 the CMC did not use one power to enter. It used 80 notices to discover information, which is almost 75 per cent less than the number used three years ago. This year the CMC has made only 44 notice to attend hearings, down from 121 two years ago. What is concerning is that, despite the fact that the CMC now refers most matters back to the department the complaint came from for investigation, some 29 per cent of all matters are still not finalised within 12 months. If we cast our minds back to the Davies royal commission of inquiry, the facts are that this came about because of the capacity of the CMC being greatly stretched, and that was just to look into one hospital. How on earth can anyone expect the CMC to get to the bottom of 11 years of this government's dodgy dealings?

This government has a great opportunity today to clear the stench that follows it, but it has instead chosen to run and hide and allow its own skeletons to fester. I want to go back to the words of the Clerk of the Parliament in his submission to the green paper in which he said—

In considering ethics and integrity, it must be appreciated that the perception of ethics and integrity in a system of government is as important as the reality. Indeed, perceptions are reality.

The reality is that the great majority of public officers, including the great majority of members, are hard working and have the public interest as their priority. The great majority are honest, ethical servants of the public. Unfortunately, the actions of a few harm the image of all public officers.

Let me touch briefly on what some members had to say during the debate. In keeping with his recent contributions, the Attorney-General did not really give us much at all in the way of trying to defend his own government. He provided us with a rant on his role and the role of the Attorney-General in general, and I thought I would comment on that first. The Attorney-General at the Commonwealth and state level occupies in effect two offices—a common law office of Attorney-General and a ministerial office. The incumbent is therefore subject to at least three potentially conflicting responsibilities: as Attorney-General, as a minister of the Crown and as a member of parliament. The duties and responsibilities of the two latter positions are well known. Less clearly understood are the duties and responsibilities of the common law office of Attorney-General.

According to Carney in the *Bond Law Review* Volume 9 Issue 1, it is apparent that the role of the Attorney as the guardian of the public interest is not as far reaching as that noble title might suggest. The functions outlined by Edwards in both his texts are quite specific and there is no acknowledgement of some all-encompassing responsibility to take positive steps to protect the public interest whenever it is threatened. Certainly, as the title to chapter 6 in Edwards's 1984 text states, the Attorney has a 'leading role but no monopoly as guardian of the public interest'.

The Attorney made it clear in his contribution to the second reading debate that his independence could easily be compromised when he said—

I stand behind the Premier on this very significant process to reform integrity and accountability in Queensland. The Integrity Bill 2009 is a very significant bill.

Based on these remarks, it is apparent that the objectiveness of our state's first law officer could be compromised in his willingness to hide behind the skirt tails of the Premier instead of doing his job as protecting the process of justice.

I found an interesting article out of the University of Adelaide recently. The title was, I think, fitting for our current Attorney: 'The split personality disorder of Australian Attorneys-General'. After yesterday's colourful and all over the shop contribution where he accused this side of the House of potentially taking bribes from motorcycle gangs, one has to ask whether the Attorney-General has any real grasp on what his role is, and that is something that the Attorney should answer. He also came in here and questioned whether members remembered the first bill that I introduced. He said—

Do members remember the first one? The first one was the disgraceful 'integrity' bill that he tried to put through the House amending the Criminal Code about misleading parliamentary committees. There was nothing new in that.

Once again he attempts to mislead the House. I clearly presented a bill that had significant changes in the way it was written from our previous bill. It shows that he failed to even read the bill, and it is a further indication that he supported his parliamentary colleagues when they exonerated corrupt Labor mate Gordon Nuttall. The Attorney-General has a short-term memory. He failed to acknowledge the litany of Labor mates—D'Arcy, Rose and Nuttall—who all committed criminal offences when he spoke about former National Party ministers who went to jail 20 years ago.

The member for Toowoomba North and the member for Brisbane Central in their contributions seemed to make the point that there was no need for a royal commission. It begs the question as to whether there is so much corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour that it would potentially cost too much to have an investigation. The member for Barron River made a similar contribution.

I thank all of those members who spoke in support of this bill and say to those opposite that the stench of corruption, cronyism and unethical behaviour will never escape this Labor government. With each new day and with each new Labor scandal—and I understand there is an unfolding Labor scandal coming out of today's evidence at the CMC hearing and we will hear more about that—the already irreparable reputation of a government with no integrity is being further destroyed.

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (3.40 pm), in reply: I start by thanking all members for their contributions to this debate. The job of ensuring that we are working to the highest standards of integrity and accountability is work that must always be done. This is why the Queensland government will, over the next 12 months, implement the most comprehensive suite of integrity and accountability reforms that Queensland has seen in more than two decades. Today, we demonstrate our commitment to integrity reform through this bill. This bill builds on the integrity reforms that we have undertaken under my premiership over the past two years.

However, before I turn to the bill, let me make some comment on the private member's bill that we are also debating in cognate with the government's bill. The opposition's bill is further evidence of the opposition's complete abdication of the policy field. Instead of offering any policy solution, any legislative reforms to the people of Queensland, we have a concocted, ill-conceived and unsound effort of political grandstanding. This afternoon, the attempts by the Leader of the Opposition to dress up this bill in noble terms were nothing short of fraudulent. Each and every member who attempted to justify the opposition's bill failed to demonstrate why it is necessary and why the existing standing commission of inquiry is not capable of addressing the supposed ills that they assert to exist. Moreover, this is a bill that has sought, once again, to shamelessly politicise the independent inquiry process that exists in Queensland to address these concerns.

Smears are not facts. This bill, like the LNP submission to the government's green paper on integrity, has been fuelled by bile and bitterness. It is not surprising that we would see another move to undermine the integrity and independence of the CMC by a party that tried when it was in government to dismantle the CMC, which used the resources of the public purse to undermine it by holding a commission of inquiry which was then struck out by the Supreme Court.

This morning in this House we again saw the opposition members quite shamefully use the parliament to undermine the independence of the CMC. Amazingly, the opposition's bill, at new subsection 7(g), seeks this so-called commission of inquiry to inquire into the alleged failure of the CMC to adequately address matters raised by Mr Patterson. So this bill sets up a commission of inquiry to inquire into the CMC. It has an awfully familiar ring to it.

Of course, we have just heard the member for Surfers Paradise at it again in his summing-up on his bill—taking every opportunity to attack the CMC. Instead of our standing independent commission, possessed of an extensive set of powers to pursue and punish corruption and other criminal activity, the opposition has proposed that an ad hoc, politically motivated, mysteriously resourced and entirely superfluous commission of inquiry be created. In my view, this bill is nothing short of an abuse of the parliamentary process. The establishment of a commission of inquiry is a serious matter. As the minister for families in 1998, I presided over the establishment of the commission of inquiry led by Leneen Forde. So I know exactly what it takes to set up one of these inquiries and I know exactly the resources that are involved.

A commission of inquiry in any system of government should be utilised only when the justice system has comprehensively failed to enforce a matter or is inadequate to do so. Hence the Fitzgerald inquiry was necessary, because the justice system under the previous government had collapsed and there was no CMC. Why was Tony Fitzgerald's inquiry necessary? Because those arms of government that were charged with enforcing the law had themselves collapsed and there was no watchdog, the CMC.

The Forde inquiry was established because the justice system was not established to deal with matters that are 40 or 50 years ago old and which delve into history. In that case it was the government's view—and I think the view of those who were to appear before the inquiry—that it did not want the adversarial nature that you would see in a more formal hearing of the CMC.

So we know that it is a serious matter to establish an inquiry. It requires, where necessary, significant public resources. On the one hand we have the opposition railing against the government being in deficit and on the other it seeks to borrow money to add to the deficit for a commission of inquiry, the purpose of which it has yet to establish. Not once in this very lengthy debate have we heard one shred of evidence. We have not even heard an unsubstantiated allegation that would require the powers beyond those of the CMC. Not one matter referred to in this bill, other than the matter related to the Trinity organisation—which has absolutely nothing to do with government—is a matter that could not be sufficiently investigated by the CMC. In fact, a number of the matters raised in this bill put forward by the Leader of the Opposition have not even been referred to the CMC—not even by the LNP. So that is how seriously the opposition is concerned about those matters. It has failed to refer the matters to the CMC, which has the powers to investigate them, and yet it wants taxpayers to fork out for a whole commission of inquiry. So I think the opposition's credibility on this issue does not stack up.

In contrast, the government's Integrity Bill will implement significant reforms as a first step in a very comprehensive process. Let me highlight briefly some of the key provisions of the bill. Firstly, the Integrity Bill will further strengthen the independence of the Integrity Commissioner by elevating the status of the office to be an officer of the parliament and provide that the Integrity Commissioner will report to a parliamentary committee. Members of this House will recall that we made amendments to the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 in August this year to allow the Integrity Commissioner to give advice to any member of the parliament. The bill builds on those amendments and will additionally provide that the Integrity Commissioner may now be able to give advice to members about any ethics or integrity issue, including providing advice to members of parliament on the completion of declarations for the register of members' interests.

In that regard I want to address an issue that was raised by the member for Gladstone in relation to the Integrity Commissioner's powers. The member raised her concern that it would be inappropriate for the Leader of the Opposition to be able to seek the Integrity Commissioner's advice about members of the government and inappropriate for the Premier to seek the Integrity Commissioner's advice about members of the opposition. Can I reassure the member for Gladstone that I concur with her views and that the bill satisfactorily ensures that that would not be possible.

I have committed to requiring that all government members meet with the Integrity Commissioner annually on the completion of their pecuniary interest register. I note that, to date, despite many opportunities in this debate and in other forums, the Leader of the Opposition has failed to match this commitment on behalf of his own side. The Integrity Commissioner will also be provided with additional responsibility for the administration of the register of lobbyists and for developing a code of conduct for the lobbying industry.

Further, Queensland will be the first state to introduce a legislative scheme for the regulation of the lobbying industry and the first state in Australia to ban the payment of success fees. With this bill, Queensland leads the country when it comes to integrity and accountability and reform. Finally, the bill will amend the Government Owned Corporations Act 1993 to extend the jurisdiction of the CMC to allow investigations into government owned corporations.

The bill before the House is only stage 1 of our legislative reforms. We will move to implement the other matters that I have given commitments to over the next six months. They are, by their nature, more complicated and require careful and rigorous drafting. The reforms contained in this bill are also only the legislative reforms that are part of our white paper. The members who criticised what was in this bill have obviously not bothered to read the white paper. Otherwise, they would know that there are many other reforms that will be implemented by the end of this year and then further into the next six months, including changes to the gifts policy, new legislation regulating the employment of ministerial staff and a review of the whistleblower legislation to name a few.

Let me now address the matters that have been raised by some of the individual speakers. I am pleased to note that the Leader of the Opposition has indicated that he will be supporting the bill. I was, however, disappointed to hear the somewhat tired refrain from member for Southern Downs—one that he and other opposition members have continued to promote ad nauseam—that somehow we are back in the 1980s, in the final decaying years and months of the former National Party government. That is an insult to all of those who have spent two decades making a difference. It is an insult to all those officers of the Police Service who have worked to ensure that we have a Police Service with a reputation for integrity. It is an insult to all of those who established the Crime and Misconduct Commission and who have worked for it in those two decades to become a well-respected watchdog. It is an insult to MPs from all sides of politics who have sat on the PCMC as members of that parliamentary committee overseeing the work of the watchdog and making a difference. It is an insult to all those people with the courage to become whistleblowers who have stood up when they saw wrongdoing and were prepared to address it.

The member for Southern Downs referred to the speech made by Tony Fitzgerald in July of this year. He paraphrased the message of the speech as being that not much has changed. Of course, he is engaging in that old National Party trick of verballing. The reality is that Tony Fitzgerald concluded his

speech with the statement, and I quote accurately, 'Matters are much better than they were but it is a mistake to take that for granted.' The bill before the House today demonstrates that our government is not taking these matters for granted. Rather, we are continuing our process of reform with a new wave of reforms.

In addition, the member for Southern Downs raised the issue of the appointment process for the Integrity Commissioner and requested that I address the issue of whether future appointments would be requiring bipartisan support. If the member for Southern Downs had bothered to read the bill he would know that the bill strengthens the appointment requirements for the Integrity Commissioner to a level befitting an officer of the parliament by requiring that the position be nationally advertised and that the parliamentary committee be consulted prior to the appointment. This process is the same as the prerequisite process for appointment of the Auditor-General, the Information Commissioner and the Ombudsman. I note that the member for Southern Downs just could not help himself by adding another slur to the current Integrity Commissioner. I think that the contribution of the member for Southern Downs to this debate was one of his most appalling and I concede that it is a very low bar.

The member for Gregory raised a specific query about an issue raised by the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee in its report on the bill regarding the application of the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act to the requirement in the bill that lobbyists declare their criminal histories when applying to be registered. I have written to the committee about this issue. I think it is important that I make it clear to the House, and for the benefit of the member for Gregory, that the bill specifically provides for the application of this act—that is, the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act—and that lobbyists will not be required to declare any convictions which are no longer considered to form part of their criminal history under that act.

A number of speakers today referred to the repeal of section 57 of the Criminal Code and the importance of ensuring truth in our parliament. I remind members of the House that the repeal of section 57 of the Criminal Code was done on the recommendation of the CMC and that punishment for this behaviour can include a suspension from the parliament, a fine, or imprisonment if the fine is not paid. The current laws send a clear message in relation to honesty in parliamentary dealings and is consistent with every Westminster parliament in the world.

Several of the speakers today talked about how the government's integrity reforms fail to pick up on all of the suggestions put forward as part of the consultation process. The Leader of the Opposition, for example, among others, specifically mentioned the submissions made by the Clerk of the Parliament. In response, I would point out to the House that we are implementing or have committed to implement a number of the suggestions put forward by the Clerk including compulsory ethical training in the public sector, establishment of a network of ethics advisers across the public sector, a review of the adequacy of the Whistleblower Protection Act, a review of the adequacy of disclosure of interests of public officers who make important decisions in the public sector, as well as the establishment of a select committee of the parliament to comprehensively review the legislative process and the parliamentary committee structure.

It is important that members understand that the discussion paper process was about instigating input and debate from the Queensland community so that our greatest resource, the ideas and beliefs of Queenslanders, could be harnessed in strengthening our integrity system. When the people of Queensland answered this call, as they did, it was the responsibility of my government to refine the broad range of input and integrity policy that served the best interests of Queensland. That is what we have done with this bill.

An examination of the bill before the House today demonstrates it to be the product of a process by which the people of Queensland contributed ideas which were then given sincere and detailed consideration by both the round table and my government. While not every suggestion received in public submissions has been instituted, this bill reflects the ideas, aspirations and interests of the people of Queensland.

This bill is an important step forward in delivering greater public sector integrity and accountability, but it is not our last. I believe that government has a duty to continually reform and adjust to meet new challenges. As I have outlined, there will be a second round of legislative reforms in the first six months of next year and there will be a range of administrative reforms that will also change practice and culture.

A government has to work hard to ensure that it is meeting the highest standards of integrity at all times. This ongoing mission is what Queenslanders expect of their government and this is what we are committed to delivering. Our next round of reforms will go much more to the question of the relationship between political parties and the electorate who support those political parties and how that support should be manifested. I believe that the next wave of reforms gives us an opportunity to work in a way that will completely change the way that politics is done in Queensland and in a way that then inspires those changes across the country. I would hope that the capacity for bipartisan support on the second round of reforms is much more forthcoming than what we have seen in the debate in the last two days. I commend the bill to the House.

Question put—That the Integrity Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Division: Question put—That the Commissions of Inquiry (Corruption, Cronyism and Unethical Behaviour) Amendment Bill be now read a second time.

AYES, 37—Bates, Bleijie, Crandon, Cripps, Cunningham, Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Foley, Gibson, Hobbs, Johnson, Knuth, Langbroek, McArdle, McLindon, Malone, Menkens, Nicholls, Powell, Pratt, Rickuss, Robinson, Seeney, Simpson, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Wellington. Tellers: Horan, Messenger

NOES, 49—Attwood, Bligh, Boyle, Choi, Croft, Darling, Dick, Farmer, Finn, Fraser, Grace, Hinchliffe, Hoolihan, Jarratt, Johnstone, Jones, Kilburn, Lawlor, Lucas, Male, Miller, Moorhead, Mulherin, Nelson-Carr, O'Brien, O'Neill, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Reeves, Roberts, Robertson, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Shine, Smith, Spence, Stone, Struthers, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Watt, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson. Tellers: Keech, Kiernan

Resolved in the negative.

Debate, on motion of Ms Spence, adjourned.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Documents Sought To Be Tabled, Referral to Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, in question time today the Deputy Leader of the Opposition attempted to table in the House documents allegedly provided to him by a Dr Christine Jane Eastwood. On the face of it, at least some of these documents appeared to be copies of documents provided to the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee. Therefore, I ruled that the documents not be considered tabled until such time as there is a determination that there has been no breach of standing order 209. I sought the urgent advice of the committee on the status of these documents.

The committee has now advised me that four of the seven documents constitute correspondence between the committee and the complainant, which the committee has not given its consent or authorisation to release. Another document, the covering statutory declaration in its latter portions, contains notes that refer to other documents and exchanges with the committee. I find that the tabling of these five documents would offend standing order 209 and I will not allow documents contravening standing order 209 to be tabled.

Furthermore, I have decided to refer this matter to the Members' Ethics and Privileges Committee in accordance with standing order 268(2) as a possible contempt. I have instructed the Clerk to forward all the documents attempted to be tabled to the Members' Ethics and Privileges Committee.

INTEGRITY BILL

Resumed.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—

Mr LANGBROEK (4.07 pm): I note the Premier has said that she will not hesitate to act when the CMC provides a report on corruption in Queensland. I note that clause 4 states that the purpose of this act is to encourage confidence in public institutions in relation to ethics and integrity issues. Clause 4(b) specifically states—

Regulating contact between lobbyists and State or local government representatives so that lobbying is conducted in accordance with public expectations of transparency and integrity.

I also note the recent CMC report into the South-East Queensland regional plan, including land at Palmwoods. At page 12, the conclusions and recommendations state, 'The CMC is concerned, however, at the department's general lack of record keeping, particularly as to representations involving lobbyists.' I ask the Premier to tell us what the government is doing about those recommendations from the CMC?

Ms BLIGH: I know that the question has nothing to do with this bill and would be more appropriately asked in question time, but I am more than happy to answer it. The government will do with this recommendation what we do with every recommendation from the CMC. A formal response will be brought to cabinet. Cabinet will consider it. Cabinet will resolve what we will be adopting, how we will resource that and what action we will be taking to implement it. We will make that public, we will table it in the parliament and then we will get on with doing it.

Mr LANGBROEK: The second part of that question is about the submission by Professor Patrick Weller and Patrick Hogan which recommended that the government investigate the establishment of a permanent bipartisan committee of the parliament along the lines of the UK model whose task is to articulate a central set of values to oversee general ethical issues and standards and to report annually to parliament on the status of the ethical standards regime. I ask: what consideration did the government give to that particular submission?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member. As he might recall, I telephoned him during the last sitting week and put to him that we should establish a committee of the parliament to look comprehensively at the committee system with particular reference to the legislative process and the role of the committee system in that process. The role of overseeing the Integrity Commissioner in this framework has been given to the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee because it is that committee that determines members' ethics.

It did not make any sense to me to have two committees—(1) an integrity committee and (2) a privileges committee. They are, by and large, dealing with very similar, if not identical, matters. The MEPPC is a bipartisan committee, which in all of my time here I have found to work with a great deal of bipartisanship. There have been some very difficult issues that have had to be dealt with by that committee over the years, and I have always known that committee to work effectively. I would be more than happy to see the select committee look at this matter and others. In the meantime, we need to get on with the business of transferring the role of the Integrity Commissioner to that of a parliamentary officer. For the immediate term, having the MEPPC adopt this extra function is appropriate.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—

Mr LANGBROEK (4.11 pm): I note that this clause is about the Integrity Commissioner. My question is about the appointment process. Again, why has the government chosen to ignore the Clerk of the Parliament's recommendation that public officers in whom bipartisan confidence is vital should be appointed only after a selection process run by a parliamentary committee and recommended by a majority of that committee?

Ms BLIGH: It is my observation again over a long period of time that the appointment of parliamentary commissioners or officers such as the Auditor-General and the Ombudsman has been done on a bipartisan basis. The committees have been consulted prior to the appointment. There is ample opportunity for those committees to make their views known, if they believe the proposed appointment to be unsuitable. I have never known that to be the case. I think, as I said, that the parliamentary committees are more than capable of being involved in the selection process through the method that is established that works effectively. This will ensure that the Integrity Commissioner requires consideration and endorsement by the relevant parliamentary committee. As I said, these committees have delivered us people who are fiercely independent in roles of the Auditor-General, the Information Commissioner and other relevant parliamentary commissions, and I have no doubt that they will do the same in this regard.

Clause 6, as read, agreed to.

Clause 7—

Mr LANGBROEK (4.13 pm): This clause is to do with the functions of the Integrity Commissioner. I note that the Integrity Commissioner has responsibility for the registration of lobbyists. The question is: does the Integrity Commissioner also have the corresponding responsibility to monitor unregistered lobbying activities? Who is charged with monitoring government activities to ensure that no unauthorised lobbying takes place?

Ms BLIGH: The answer is yes.

Mr LANGBROEK: The second part of the question is about monitoring government activities to make sure that no unauthorised lobbying takes place. I presume from that answer that the Integrity Commissioner will be doing that as well.

Ms BLIGH: Yes.

Clause 7, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 8 to 15, as read, agreed to.

Clause 16—

Mrs CUNNINGHAM (4.14 pm): I thank the Premier for her response to my questions in her summary of the second reading. I want to put clearly on the record the fact that the bill allows the Premier to seek information from the Integrity Commissioner on members of her party. A subsequent clause allows the Leader of the Opposition to ask for information on non-government members. Can the Premier clarify what the status of information on Independents is—that is, that nobody other than the Independent can get information on themselves and that will there be appropriate mechanisms within the parties respectively to respect the natural justice of the member about whom a leader is inquiring?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the member for her question. In clause 16 she will see that the Premier is restricted to asking questions only about members who are not non-government members. In clause 19 the Leader of the Opposition is restricted to asking for information only about a non-government member who is a member of the political party to which the Leader of the Opposition belongs. So neither the Premier nor the Leader of the Opposition under this bill has any authority to make any inquiry of the Integrity Commissioner in relation to Independent members. I hope that puts that genuine concern to rest.

In relation to the natural justice issues, clearly this authority is provided here because both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, as leaders of their political parties, have obligations to ensure that members of their parties are adhering to the requirements of the parliament. I think at some point you have to have a common-sense approach to this. I am confident that anybody who held the position of Integrity Commissioner, if they believed that an inappropriate request was being made, would take appropriate action.

Clause 16, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 17 to 40, as read, agreed to.

Clause 41—

Mr LANGBROEK (4.16 pm): My question here is: why is the government specifically excluding from its reforms the practice which is becoming more and more frequent, and that is for lobbyists to shift in-house?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the member for the question. There have been a number of questions about this, and I am pleased to have the opportunity to put this on the record. I think we need to be clear about what the purpose of the register is. The purpose of the lobbyists register is to make transparent who is acting as a third party lobbyist and on whose behalf they are acting. So the register includes not just the name of lobbyists and their companies but also the names of their clients. That means that, if you are a minister or a senior government representative and you have a meeting with a lobbyist, you can check the register and you can know on whose behalf they are acting and from which clients they may well be receiving financial reward for the propositions that they are putting to you and the representations that they are making.

This is in stark contrast to someone who is an in-house external affairs representative for a company. If the government relations officer of BHP comes to see me, I know on whose behalf they are acting. If the external affairs director of the ANZ bank comes to see me, I know they are operating on behalf of the ANZ bank. There is no need for that to become transparent. It is on their business card. While I do appreciate that there are particularly some lobbyists who are putting this point of view, I think that we need to be clear about what the original intention and purpose of the register was—and it was to make transparent a practice that was, I think, quite opaque without it.

It generally is the big companies who have lots of relations with government at different levels. Mining companies are a good example where they are constantly dealing with governments about legislative issues, royalties issues et cetera. They are entitled to have a member of staff whose job is to maintain a discussion with government about matters that affect them. As I said, there is nothing opaque about it. When a government relations officer of BHP comes through the door, I know they are talking on behalf of BHP.

Clause 41, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 42 and 43, as read, agreed to.

Clause 44—

Ms BLIGH (4.18 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 44 (Meaning of *government representative*)

At page 28, lines 8 to 11—

omit, insert—

‘(b) a Parliamentary Secretary;

(c) a councillor;

(d) a public sector officer;

(e) a ministerial staff member;

(f) a parliamentary secretary staff member.’.

I table the explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Integrity Bill, explanatory notes for Ms Bligh’s amendment to be moved during consideration in detail [1487].

This is a technical amendment that clarifies the definition of ‘government representative’. It was always intended that that definition would include reference to parliamentary secretaries. That category of officer was left off the list inadvertently, and this amendment seeks to include it.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 44, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 45 to 115, as read, agreed to.

Schedules 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (4.21 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (4.21 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

CRIMINAL ORGANISATION BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 29 October (see p. 3031), on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hoolihan): I call the honourable member for Southern Downs.

Mr O'Brien: The bikies' friend.

Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (4.22 pm): I am sorry, the honourable member for Cook was saying something?

Mr O'Brien: I said 'the bikies' friend'.

Mr SPRINGBORG: I would love for the honourable member to point out where the bikies are actually mentioned one single time in the bill that we are debating here today. The Criminal Organisation Bill is not an anti outlaw bikie bill. This bill is not an anti criminal organisation bill. This bill is fundamentally an anti freedom bill. This bill tears apart the foundation of the rule of law, which has guided us and protected the basic rights and liberties—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Southern Downs has the call. I ask members to be quiet so I can hear what he says.

Mr SPRINGBORG: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. I look forward to honourable members opposite atoning for the desertion of their fundamental ideology and civil libertarian principles as we go through this debate over the next day or so. This bill tears apart the foundation of the rule of law, which has guided us and protected the basic rights and liberties of citizens since King John was forced to cede the absolute power of the crown some 800 years ago.

It is unfathomable and beyond comprehension that we are in parliament today debating a bill which gives absolute power to the state to limit the rights of association of its citizens through a closed court process—a process where the accused and their legal counsel has a limited right to test the evidence against them, let alone see the evidence against them. Yet based on this secret, untested, undisclosed evidence, they will live in a state controlled cocoon of restriction akin to walking around in a personal veil of razor wire. Based on evidence given in secret, an organisation can be declared criminal and a person can be subject to a control or anti-association order for a period of up to two years. This bill is a repugnant attack on the rights and liberties of individuals and will not be supported by the LNP. It should not be supported by the Labor caucus either. How this bill ever got into the parliament, given the plethora of pronounced civil libertarians in the Labor caucus, is quite staggering.

In reaching the decision to oppose this bill, the LNP has consulted with the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties, the Queensland Law Society, the Queensland Bar Association and the Queensland Police Union. We also had a meeting with members of the United Motorcycle Council of Queensland. What is apparent to us as a consequence of these meetings is that the Bligh government has not even listened to, let alone heard, the concerns of these various organisations. The Bar Association, the Law

Society and the Council for Civil Liberties have justifiable and fundamental objections to this bill, including its attack on the freedom of association and the application of a civil standard of proof in what is otherwise a criminal proceeding, and they do not support the low standard of proof required for an organisation to be declared criminal and for control and anti-association orders to be applied to individuals. Surely, if this parliament moves to restrict the liberties of individuals and declares an organisation as criminal, this should only happen in the most open way, with the highest standards of proof being fundamentally enshrined.

The Queensland Police Union is supportive of some aspects of the legislation, such as its antifortification provisions. The LNP is also very supportive of antifortification laws. Antifortification laws should not, however, be part of a bill such as this which is so contaminated by fundamental abuses of natural justice as to make it absolutely unsupportable. The Queensland Police Union is also supportive of provisions that allow for the identification of criminal organisations. However, it expressed less enthusiasm for control orders, as it knows that monitoring of such individuals is very challenging, requiring significant resources and oversight. The inevitable failure of control orders can be evidenced by the failure of this government to ensure the reporting provisions applied to the state's increasing number of declared paedophiles. Even the Bligh government is now proposing to reduce the reporting requirements for these paedophiles because the government cannot properly watch them. But that is the subject of an upcoming debate in this House.

In the course of my discussions with the Bar Association, the Law Society and the Queensland Police Union, there seemed to be a unanimous view that tracking the money trail and confiscating the proceeds of crime is the most effective way to deal with organised crime. These laws, generally known as RICO laws, had their genesis in the USA and have proved most effective at getting at the source of the illegal money which drove, in particular, the Mafia. They have also been very effective in Australia, particularly in Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Only this morning, I launched a draft exposure bill that will do just that. Under the LNP's proposed laws, declared drug traffickers will automatically have their assets confiscated. Elsewhere, a reverse onus of proof would be placed on individuals to prove unexplained wealth, and if they cannot it will be confiscated by the state. These people would be subject to the oversight and support of the Public Interest Monitor—something this government is not prepared to do in a proper way with this repugnant piece of legislation before the parliament today. Later I will outline in more detail the importance of identifying and confiscating the proceeds of crime as the best way of tackling organised crime. If the Bligh government were serious about combating organised crime, it would use the plethora of current laws in Queensland that could ensure the identification and prosecution of organised criminals, but the Bligh government has pressure sores from sitting on its hands for so long.

Other than identifying the money trail, the next most effective way to attack organised crime is criminal intelligence and, in particular, telephone interception powers. The tools to do the job are there, but they are locked away in the toolbox. It is like fighting with one hand tied behind your back. After 11 years of denial and arguing against telephone interception powers, the Bligh government has only just been dragged to supporting them. However, in the ultimate act of spite, this government has strangled them at birth by not properly resourcing them. Neither the CMC nor the Queensland Police Service has been given independent resources to properly set up a functioning telephone interception regime. Subsequently, the Premier is still the pin-up girl of Queensland's organised criminal groups because her laws are no effective threat to them.

Queensland's law enforcement authorities also have the power to gather effective criminal intelligence by planting listening devices under the watch of the Public Interest Monitor. Task Force Hydra, the anti-outlaw motorcycle gang arm of the Queensland Police Service, has been starved of resources by the Bligh government and exists in little more than name only. The absorption of the Queensland Crime Commission into the then CJC watered down the organised crime-fighting capacity of the combined entity that we now know as the CMC. One has to wonder as to the motivation of the former Beattie government when it killed off the Crime Commission under the guidance of Tim Carmody. The Crime Commission had proven itself very effective as a stand-alone organised crime-fighting body, and its abolition was a dark day for effective organised crime fighting in Queensland.

I repeat: this bill subjugates established, centuries-old principles of natural justice to a closed-door court process in which accused people have little, if any, right to defend themselves against spurious and anonymous allegations. Let us look at some recent examples of where the government and the system have got it horribly wrong. We all remember the case of Dr Mohamed Haneef, who had terrorism allegations made against him leading to the cancellation of his visa and detention without charge. Following intensive pursuit of documents and their discovery by his legal representative, it was found that there were serious errors in fact in the Australian Federal Police case. Haneef was later cleared and his visa reinstated, but it was all far too late and his life was torn asunder.

In the last month we have also witnessed the overturning of the conviction against an Australian pilot for raping a child in Papua New Guinea. In that case the accused person had been prevented from gathering evidence which he could use in his defence to categorically prove his innocence. As a result

of this collusion and departure from natural justice and the rule of law by the Australian Federal Police and the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions, this person was convicted in the absence of all of the facts and spent more than two years of a 5½ year prison term in jail. Expect to see a lot more of these miscarriages of justice if the Bligh-Dick anti-freedom of association bill passes through this parliament.

Indeed, I remind honourable members opposite that only a few years ago at the height of the concern after September 11, this parliament debated tough new anti-terrorism mechanisms which would have seen people identified and held without charge for a particular period. I stood in this place and I expressed very serious concerns about departure from natural justice and about whether those particular laws were actually needed as opposed to wanted. Sometimes we can want something but not necessarily need it and in getting it we can abrogate the fundamental rights and liberties of our citizens. Those people who doubt what I am saying can go back and read the transcript of the debate in this place. This is a position on which I have been very consistent over a number of years in this place.

I have a view that an accused person deserves every reasonable right to defend themselves in a court process. If a person is accused and then charged and convicted of particular crimes, I really do not have much time for them and the consequences thereof. If the crimes are of a heinous nature and they are then locked up, they should be locked up for a long period. If the government is going to seek to subjugate or extinguish the fundamental base rights and liberties and the natural justice rights which have been built up over decades, generations and centuries allowing people to see the evidence against them and to be able to defend themselves, that is a fundamental potential miscarriage of justice. We have to make sure that people have every right to properly defend themselves. If they get through to the other end of the system and their liberties are constrained and they have not had the chance to properly defend themselves, we should not be able to live with ourselves because of that miscarriage of justice. It has to be front-ended very much in favour of natural justice.

Mr Finn: Front-ended?

Mr SPRINGBORG: This bill will not tackle organised crime because this government has had 11 years to do something about organised crime and has done absolutely nothing. I note that the member for Yeerongpilly was a part of that government that sat mute and impotent for years and did absolutely nothing in response to the concerns of the Queensland Crime Commission and the Queensland Police Service and what they put forward, in particular, in Project Krystal—and I will come to that in a little while.

Recently the Australian Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Crime Commission looked into legislative arrangements to outlaw serious and organised crime groups. Its report said—

Although this inquiry initially focussed on the effectiveness of association-type offences to prevent organised crime groups from committing criminal offences, the committee heard repeatedly, from almost every law enforcement agency with which it met, that one of the most effective ways of preventing organised crime is by 'following the money trail'.

Australian Crime Commission representative, Mr Kitson, said to the committee—

... organised crime is for the most part about profit. They are not generally about a better quality of firearm or a better quality of drug. Perhaps there is something of that in there but by and large it is about the balance sheet for them. Our focus then is not necessarily about the predicate activities or even some of the individuals involved in it, but recognising that, wherever the criminal activity takes place and whatever crimes are involved in it, if we can take away the profit benefit then we are having more impact than we would through any number of—and I hesitate to use this term—minor charges. If we drive at what is the profit motive here, I think we will be more successful in unpicking and deterring—and perhaps even in the crime prevention area.

Does this bill before the House deal in any way with strengthening the ability of our law enforcement organisations to get to the money or assets of major criminals and organised crime groups? The answer is no, it does not. The purpose of the legislation before the House today has the government claiming that it tackles organised crime by giving the court the power to declare an organisation as criminal and allowing a court to make a control order on certain members of the group. The bill also allows for the making of public safety orders, banning certain members of a criminal organisation from public events as well as making any fortification orders. The bill is divided into 12 distinct parts that deal with different elements of the overall objectives of the bill to combat organised criminal activity.

No public exposure draft was ever put out for community consultation and there was strong opposition from within the Labor Party, indeed, in its own caucus. As I understand it, only recently there was a knock-down, drag-out brawl in the caucus when this bill only narrowly passed with the Premier having to invoke absolute quasi cabinet solidarity utilising the numbers of the parliamentary secretaries. A number of people there, particularly those who have a civil libertarian bent such as the member for Murrumba and the member for Toowoomba North, rallied most extensively against this legislation but to no avail as this Labor Party sold out its principles.

It seems that the Attorney is all too happy to have draft exposure bills for everything about the place with the exception of this bill now before the House. These laws are Labor's last ditch attempt to look tough on crime when it has failed for the last 11 years. What our police and the CMC need are resources to combat organised crime. We need to improve funding and staffing to Task Force Hydra as well as the crimes confiscation unit within the CMC so as to properly tackle organised crime.

I turn specifically to certain aspects of the bill. The cornerstone of the bill is the ability of the Supreme Court to make a declaration that an organisation is a criminal organisation. For such an order to be made, the court must be satisfied that the organisation associates for the purpose of engaging in serious criminal activity and that the organisation is an unacceptable risk to the safety, welfare or order of the community. Once the declaration is made, the court can impose a control order against a person. This can have the effect of restricting certain activities. An order remains in force until it is revoked. A controlled person may appeal the decision of a court in relation to the granting of a control order, but they can only do this once. A controlled person may apply to have the order revoked after two years.

Control orders fit better with dictatorial regimes in Eastern Europe, South America or even the less democratic nations of South-East Asia. They have little place in a modern democracy like Queensland. The South Australian Supreme Court recently declared that state's so-called anti bikie laws as invalid. In the early 1950s during the anti-Communist sentiment of the day, the Menzies government attempted to ban the Communist Party of Australia. The High Court declared those laws unconstitutional. Under those laws, a member of the Communist Party could repudiate his membership and no longer be subject to the privations of that act. A Communist Party or a former Communist Party member had far more rights under those unconstitutional laws than a person has under the laws we are debating here today.

Under Attorney-General Dick's attack on Queenslanders' right of free association, even if a person has been expelled from an organisation for their criminal behaviour, that person's behaviour and past membership is still considered when an application is made to declare that organisation a criminal organisation. If a person has renounced his membership of a criminal organisation, then that person can still be subject to a control order and of a control order. One of the world's greatest statesmen and practitioners of reconciliation, Nelson Mandela, was offered release from prison if he renounced the ANC's armed struggle against Apartheid. He refused.

Under the Bligh government's laws, active repudiation and renunciation of one's past associations and beliefs do not quarantine an individual from the application of a control order based on those prior associations and/or beliefs. Even the rehabilitation of offenders act, a great and far-sighted legislative initiative of the Bjelke-Petersen government, allowed a person to walk away from their criminal past after the expiry of a period of time, and again this is a piece of legislation which has been watered down, set aside and subjugated more and more year after year after year. Earlier we saw a bill introduced into this place which will again attempt to set aside the provisions of a person to be able to walk away from their criminal past. Under the draconian Dick laws, a person's past will always haunt them even if they have well and truly moved on.

The next part of the bill deals with public safety orders. The Supreme Court may make a public safety order when it is satisfied that the presence of the respondent at particular places poses a serious risk to public safety or security and making such an order would be appropriate in the circumstances.

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr SPRINGBORG: A further addition to the bill is the inclusion of a fortification removal order which the Supreme Court may make upon application. I note that the member for Everton is smirking and giggling. He thinks that it is a wonderful thing and believes that it is fine to have privation in Queensland and does not believe that that is an issue. He is certainly smirking and giggling now about this bill, which fundamentally subjugates and tears apart the rights of natural justice of people who are going to have to try to defend themselves in a court process. That is what it is about.

A government member interjected.

Mr SPRINGBORG: We have the Premier's shoulder parrot over there rabbiting on again. Everything in Queensland is all right according to him. We have the Attorney-General over there who picked up his insight into law and natural justice in Tuvalu. He obviously did not pick it up here in Australia; he did not pick it up here in Queensland. He is happy to throw away the foundations of legal precedent and of natural justice. He is not even prepared to properly take on board the concerns of the likes of the Council for Civil Liberties, the Bar Association, the Law Society and a whole range of people who have raised serious concerns about this. Even former commissioners of the CJC in Queensland have actually described these laws as draconian as well and certainly not a part of the grab bag that many of them want to fight organised criminal activity with in Queensland.

As I was saying, a further addition to the bill is the inclusion of fortification removal orders which the Supreme Court may make upon application when it is satisfied excessive fortification exists at a premises used in connection with serious criminal activity or premises owned or habitually occupied or used by a criminal organisation or a member or associate of a criminal organisation. The court must fix the time or the period within which the fortification must be removed or modified. The bill establishes an enforcement regime for the various orders: one, contravention of a control order or registered corresponding control order, with a maximum penalty of three years for the first offence and five years maximum for latter offences; two, contravention of a public safety order, with a maximum penalty of one year; three, hindering removal of modification or a fortification, with a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment; four, unlawful disclosure of criminal intelligence or information in an informant affidavit, with a maximum penalty of one year's imprisonment; five, two new offences of obtaining or disclosure of

secret information about the identity of an informant, both of which are in the Criminal Code and both of which carry a 10-year maximum penalty; six, various changes involving insertion of a circumstance of aggravation, intimidation and violence against potential witnesses and law enforcement investigators.

The major legislative issue arises with the use of what is termed 'secret criminal intelligence evidence'. The bill provides for the use of criminal intelligence in civil proceedings which involve the withholding of admitted evidence from another party, which raises serious issues about natural justice. The view of the government is that the withholding of criminal intelligence is necessary on the basis that disclosure of such information could reasonably be expected to prejudice a criminal investigation, lead to the identity of a confidential informant or covert police officer, or endanger a person's life or physical safety. This provision is opposed by all legal stakeholders.

The government claims that the bill inserts particular safeguards that are designed to address the significant abrogation of natural justice such as the following: the Supreme Court determines whether certain information should be treated as criminal intelligence and is afforded full discretion in making such a determination. In the event the court declares information criminal intelligence, it is a matter for the courts as to how much weight is placed on such evidence. The bill establishes a Criminal Organisation Public Interest Monitor, otherwise known as a COPIM, who will be present at all hearings under the bill and will have access to all information before the court with the exception of identifying information of informants. The COPIM role will be independent and assist the court in decision making as an impartial participant.

Under the provisions of the bill, an informant will not be called to give evidence at a proceeding. The respondent in each matter will also be denied access to criminal intelligence. The major issue with this part is that the court or the COPIM cannot call an informant or operative for the purpose of testing the veracity of the informant's evidence. Indeed, this COPIM is much weaker than the Public Interest Monitor which was put in place by Russell Cooper in the Borbidge-Sheldon government in consultation with the Council of Civil Liberties, which sought to ensure access to all identifying information when it came to planting of listening devices. Given the serious breach of natural justice and procedural fairness, the bill requires that, where the Commissioner of Police seeks to rely on information provided by an informant or operative as part of the criminal intelligence, an affidavit from the police officer who handles the information from the operative must be filed with the court.

When filing an affidavit, it must contain details of the full criminal history, including charges pending of the informant/operative; details of any allegations of professional misconduct against the informant/operative; details of any inducement or reward that has been offered or provided to the informant/operative in return for their assistance; and the grounds on which a police officer's honest and reasonable belief that the information provided by the informant/operative is reliable. The police officer who swears the affidavit must be available for examination and cross-examination. These provisions are similar to the provisions for a drugs search warrant, where the officer must make such a declaration based on informant information and it is them and not the informant who is answerable to the information provided. The bill makes it clear that the court retains the full discretion to determine what weight to give to any such evidence before it, including informant evidence.

The bill also establishes new provisions within the Bail Act 1980 for the displacement of presumption to bail. A breach of a control order is a serious matter which, according to the bill, warrants requiring the individual to show cause why bail is justified. A breach of a public safety order will require the respondent to show cause as to why bail is justified. Under section 359 of the Criminal Code titled 'Threats', where there is an offence with a circumstance of aggravation that the defendant has threatened a law officer or person helping an enforcement officer, when or because the officer is investigating the activities of a criminal organisation, the defendant will also have to show cause as to why bail is justified.

Let us look at what the former Attorney-General and member for Toowoomba North said on 31 October 2007 about a private member's bill that set out to prosecute people based on their potential association with or knowledge of organised criminal activity, even though those laws proposed a criminal standard of proof and sought to prosecute people in accordance with established rules of natural justice. This is what the member said—

> The government opposes this bill as it is ill conceived, unnecessary and aims to extend the basic principles of criminal liability to guilt by association. The fundamental right of freedom of association is potentially eroded by this bill because even innocent participation in an organised criminal group as defined may, in some way, contribute to the occurrence of criminal activity by the group. No specific act or omission by the accused is necessary and no specific criminal act or activity need be contemplated by the accused for the offence to be committed.
>
> The bill will not assist in the investigation of organised criminals who operate in secret with a high degree of technological sophistication. In fact, there is a real risk that such a law would be counterproductive by driving gangs and similar organisations further underground. The only effect of that will be to reduce the flow of information about crime to the police, making it extremely difficult for the police to bring offenders to justice.
>
> ...
>
> A one-size-fits-all response is therefore not the answer to this complex problem. In any event, such an approach is unlikely to be effective in targeting organised criminal groups which may operate under the cover of legitimate business enterprises and with a high degree of sophistication. For those reasons, the government will oppose this bill.

And how things change. Two years further on, we have a bill that goes further than that bill even envisaged to a situation where now a civil standard of proof is applied in a court with an alleged criminal activity and a person has little right to be able to fully discover the evidence or information being used against them, a situation where a person can have a control order placed on them, a situation where a person can have an anti-association order placed on them and a situation where an organisation can be directly declared a criminal organisation based on alleged or potential activities—something which that particular private member's bill could not even envisage with regard to the extent of the abrogation of natural justice and guilt by association and criminalising people's freedom of association.

The Council for Civil Liberties stated its total rejection of this repugnant bill. This is what it said, and it is extensive—

One looks in vain for any research based evidence justifying the concepts underlying this Bill let alone any research based evidence demonstrating that existing Queensland criminal laws and police powers are inadequate to deal with any organised criminal activities of so-called Criminal Organisations generally, or so-called outlaw motorcycle gangs in particular.

It is to be noted that the violent brawling between rival groups of bikies at Sydney Airport which resulted in the death of one man did not come about because of the inadequacy of existing criminal laws in that state. That incident was purely a failure in policing and, more particularly, a failure by the AFP and the New South Wales Police Service to be sufficiently organised and proactive to deal with a situation which, according to flight attendants on the relevant flight from which at least one of the bikie groups was leaving, was already brewing before one of the bikie groups disembarked from the plane.

We see this legislation as being rooted in sheer political opportunism.

The proposed legislation is so radical and far reaching that it should have been subject to the stringent Law Reform Commission's process of an Issues Paper, a Discussion Paper, and then a Final Report.

There is no urgency that justifies the incredibly radical proposals as are contained in this Bill being rushed through parliament without the public policy benefit of the concept being the subject of a rigorous Queensland Law Reform Commission examination.

We make the further introductory point that we are making a submission in respect of this Bill in the hope of ameliorating some of its worst provisions.

Did the government listen to the Council for Civil Liberties? No, it did not. The Council for Civil Liberties went on to state—

It should not be considered that our participation in the consultation draft signifies this Council's agreement with the philosophy behind the Bill.

As ought to be obvious, we are totally opposed to the Bill. It is a Bill of which the former Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen would have been proud introducing as it does concepts of terrorism law controls in the general criminal law, reviving the much discredited law of consorting and introducing the thoroughly obnoxious concept of secret evidence which effectively cannot be challenged in court.

...

The concept of a serious criminal offence is said to be an indictable offence punishable by at least 7 years imprisonment or an offence against the section of the Criminal Code mentioned in Schedule 1.

As is increasingly the case, the definition of serious criminal activity in the Act is a prostitution of the popular meaning of the word 'serious'. Some of the offences described as serious criminal offences include operating a place for unlawful gaming, possession of a thing used to play an unlawful game, stalking, obtaining goods or credit by false pretence, cheating and impersonation.

These excerpts from the Bill show that yet again in Queensland legislation the term 'serious criminal activity' is so defined downwards in terms of what the public would regard as serious as to result in a complete mangling of the concept.

Most of the offences in the Criminal Code carry a maximum sentence of at least 7 years and accordingly most criminal offences in Queensland are covered in the definition of 'serious criminal offences' in this Bill.

The Council for Civil Liberties states further that the bill—

... provides that a court may make a declaration that a group is a criminal organisation if members of the organisation associate for the purpose of engaging in or conspiring to engage in serious criminal activity and the organisation is an unacceptable risk to the safety, welfare or order of the community.

It follows that, since only one of these descriptive categories has to be met for the organisation to be declared a criminal organisation, an organisation can be so declared if a court finds it is an unacceptable risk to the 'welfare' or 'order' of the community. In this regard it is noted that neither 'order' nor 'welfare' is defined in the act.

Further, contrary to the public imagery the Premier and the Police Minister have engaged in concerning the legislation it is to be noted that for an 'organisation' to be declared a criminal organisation the Act defines 'organisation' to be a group of three or more persons! Part 2 of the Act dealing with criminal organisations provides that a court in deciding whether to label a group of three or more people a criminal organisation must have regard to information 'suggesting' even former members of the group of three or more have been involved in serious criminal activity (defined to include gaming) whether or not this involvement resulted in convictions.

The council says in relation to control orders—

To lift a concept such as a control order from terrorist legislation and insert the concept into the general criminal law of Queensland is obnoxious and objectionable.

When the concept of control orders were introduced into the federal terrorism law post 2001 Australians were given solemn assurances that such a concept would be restricted to terrorism only.

Only a small number of years after the concept of Control Orders was introduced into Australian terrorism related criminal law we now see it lifted from terrorism law where we were promised it would be quarantined and it will be part of the Criminal Organisation Act.

Part 3 provides that a court may make a Control Order in the following circumstances:

- if the court is satisfied (on the balance of probabilities) that the Respondent is, or has been, a member of a criminal organisation.

...

It is ludicrous to pretend that the COPIM is able to play a meaningful role in identifying and bringing to the court's attention excesses or even downright lies of an informant if a COPIM cannot inspect any part of the documents that could (not would) lead to the disclosure of an informant.

One can readily predict that the COPIM will regularly be restricted from inspecting documents on the untested say so of a police officer who is either bringing a criminal intelligence application or a substantive application on the supposed basis that inspecting a particular document merely could lead to the disclosure of an informant.

If the objectionable part 6 division 2 is to proceed at least section 67(4) should be amended to delete the word 'could' and insert the word 'would'.

The Council for Civil Liberties also states that the bill—

... contains a curious and in our view unjustified provision that if a court on a criminal intelligence application is not satisfied information is criminal intelligence, the court must give the commissioner an opportunity to withdraw the application. What the COPIM does in relation to this act is attempt to respectableise a regime of secret evidence and unaccountable informants by involving a new structure called COPIM.

Having COPIM perform this role is a quantum leap from the role which the PIM has heretofore performed in relation to listening device applications or the more recent telephone tap legislation.

We have made our objections to the entire act clear...

Mr Johnson: Where is the JP? Where is the clause for that?

Mr SPRINGBORG: Exactly as the honourable member for Gregory said, and as I indicated earlier on. Telephone interception powers that were introduced grudgingly by this government after 11 years of fighting against them, remonstrating against them, were strangled at birth because of the lack of funding. Again, to quote the Council for Civil Liberties—

We have made our objections to the entire act abundantly clear in this submission and we again assert that the bill should not be introduced into parliament.

There is no demonstrated deficiency in the existing criminal law which justifies the introduction of the act.

The act has been introduced for base reasons of law and order populism as a reaction against the fight between two groups of bikies at Sydney Airport in March of 2009 which was a fundamental failure of policing as opposed to inadequacies in the criminal law.

What did the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee conclude about these laws? The committee was highly critical of this bill. It raised serious issues about almost every element of it. The explanatory notes provide little or no insight into the implications of how these laws will work or why they are being proposed—in particular, the ridiculous bans on post employment. The committee states—

Matters relating to employment have the potential to affect rights and liberties of individuals in the practice of their professions as lawyers, legal representatives and security providers. Clause 90 would prohibit the COPIM (including a past COPIM) from acting as a lawyer for certain organisations or individuals. A failure by a lawyer to comply with these restrictions would be capable of constituting unsatisfactory professional conduct or professional misconduct under the Legal Profession Act 2007.

The bill would prohibit a person who had been a police officer from acting as a legal representative for certain organisations or individuals. A failure by a lawyer to comply with these restrictions would be capable of constituting unsatisfactory professional conduct or professional misconduct under the Legal Profession Act 2007. A failure by a legal representative, other than a lawyer, to comply with these restrictions would be a suitability matter for section 9 of the Legal Profession Act 2007.

The committee also states—

This bill would prohibit a person who was a police officer (including a former police officer) from acting as a security provider under the Security Providers Act 1993 for certain organisations or individuals. A failure by a person to comply with these restrictions would be capable of constituting evidence that the person was not an appropriate person to hold a licence under the Security Providers Act 1993.

It also states that the explanatory notes provide little justification for the restrictions imposed by these clauses, as I indicated. I want to now read into the record the view of two prominent academic criminologists. The first is an article in which Professor Paul Wilson, a criminologist at Bond University, warns the Queensland government against introducing and imposing tough new laws on biker groups in Queensland. The warning follows the Queensland cabinet's decision to approve the preparation of laws based on South Australia and New South Wales antibiker legislation. Again, despite this government trumpeting much about this being anti organised criminal bikie gang laws, not once does it mention in the legislation that it is about them. It is about being anti association. Any organisation, if it triggers a particular set of qualification criteria, can be declared such an organisation. Professor Wilson states—

Alarmingly, as in South Australia and New South Wales, these laws might also lower the criminal burden of proof on bikie gang related crimes from 'beyond a reasonable doubt' to 'on the balance of probabilities'.

The introduction of draconian laws governing demographic groups is a breach of civil liberties and an infringement on the right of all Queenslanders to live in a democratic society.

The Queensland government's proposal to impose tough legislation on bikies sets a dangerous precedent. It opens up the potential for government to arbitrarily apply these criminal association laws to any political opponents or religious groups to whom it takes a dislike.

In a submission given today to the Queensland government, Professor Wilson draws relevant comparisons to Canada, Scandinavia and the United States where laws targeting groups rather than individuals have failed to significantly reduce crime rates, particularly in outlaw motorcycle groups. Professor Wilson warned—

International evidence indicates that laws which criminalise groups as a whole, such as bikies, increase the probability of more public violence from these groups.

...

In Canada, laws that ban outlaw motorcycle gangs and clubs led to the institution of the state coming under attack in 1997 and again in 1998. During a series of riots in Quebec, two prison officers and an innocent bystander were killed, two persons who were believed to be prison officers were seriously injured by automatic pistol fire, and seven bombs were placed under police stations.

...

According to Quebec's Minister for Public Works and Government Services, there have been 85 murders and 92 attempted murders related to Quebec's biker laws since 1992, together with 129 arson attacks and 82 bombings.

According to Professor Wilson, these figures indicate the effectiveness of legislative measures to control outlaw motorcycle gang related crime which, by the admission of the Royal Canadian Police, indicate no change in crime rates post implementation of related legislation. The Hells Angels Quebec, and similar groups in other provinces, were later jailed in 1998 and yet they remained 'Organised Crime—Enemy Number 1' throughout Canada through to March of 2009. Professor Wilson further states—

There is no domestic or international evidence that indicates that the relevant Canadian legislation the Queensland government may model itself on, such as the C95 bill passed in 1997 and more recently the C25 bill passed in 2006, will diminish violent gang related activity or organised crime.

In Australia recent figures issued by the Law Enforcement Assistance Program reveal that gang related violence, including violence generated by street, ethnic and biker groups, represent just 0.6 per cent of all crime with biker gang related violence only amounting to 0.3 per cent of crime in total. Professor Wilson continued—

In deciding how to deal with any type of organised crime, including biker crime, modern democratic governments should not be persuaded by political propaganda or lobbying by interest groups, but rather, by evidence-based research and best practice.

Rigorous investigation of individual offenders and effective crime-prevention schemes should be encouraged.

There is no evidence that supports the effectiveness of tougher laws targeting groups rather than individual criminals.

Dr Andreas Schloenhardt, Associate Professor of the University of Queensland's TC Beirne School of Law, criminologist and researcher, said that the anti-organised crime law proposed by Queensland's Premier and Attorney-General is counterproductive and may make the suppression and prevention of organised crime more difficult. He said that the proposed law attempted to prevent and suppress organised crime, simply by banning unwanted organisations. He stated—

This system is designed to outlaw groups and individuals that are seen as dangerous, violent, or as otherwise constituting a risk to public safety.

He said—

This approach of simply labelling certain groups shares similarities with laws dealing with terrorist organisations in that it creates lists of proscribed organisations and criminalises support of, or other associations, with them.

Dr Schloenhardt said he had concerns about the elements, indicia, standard of proof and other methods proposed to outlaw organisations. He said—

The labelling of an organisation as criminal effectively prohibits the very existence of a group on the basis of conduct in which that group may engage in the future.

He said—

The administrative processes proposed in Queensland lack clarity, consistency, and safeguards, and create a risk of collusion between different branches of government and the judiciary.

There is also concern over the use of classified information in the labelling process which prevents groups from knowing the reasons why they have been banned.

Dr Schloenhardt said that while this approach may be helpful in identifying and labelling some criminal organisations, it was of no use against flexible criminal networks that did not carry a particular name and had no formal organisational structure. He said—

It also creates the risk that outlawed groups will consolidate, move further underground, and engage in more clandestine, more dangerous, and more violent operations.

He said—

This has clearly been the experience in Japan, which has taken a similar approach to Queensland.

Furthermore, other groups may simply resurface under a different name, thus circumventing the legislation altogether.

If we look at the evidence behind these laws that have been tried in other jurisdictions around the world, most notably, as I pointed out, in Canada, they have been an abject failure. The more they have sought to criminalise particular organisations, the more they have strengthened those organisations, the more militant they have made those organisations and the more murder, death and mayhem have been created in those societies.

Let us go back to June 1999, 10½ years ago, when the Queensland Crime Commission and the Queensland Police Service—and I am sure the honourable Minister for Climate Change will remember reading this because it is salient reading that is very relevant today—released *Project Krystal: a strategic assessment of organised crime in Queensland*. That report made certain suggestions about the organised activities of certain groups in Queensland, such as South-East Asian organised crime groups and what they were involved in. At that time they were involved in a range of criminal activities including drug trafficking, illegal gambling, prostitution, extortion, credit card and social security fraud, property offences and money laundering. The report looked at Romanian organised crime groups and identified that they were involved predominantly in drug trafficking, particularly involving heroin but also amphetamines and cannabis, and had associates in Sydney and Melbourne.

The report made some reference to Italian organised crime groups which operated in a most sophisticated way and were involved in activities such as money laundering practices, including the extensive use of cash for purposes such as airfares, motel bookings, hire cars and the purchase of new vehicles, and there was some indication of involvement in cannabis production and distribution. The report went on to talk about Russian organised crime groups and indicated that that was an emerging trend that needed to be dealt with. The report commented on the Columbian cocaine syndicates and how certain South American and United States nationals were involved in the cocaine market in Australia and said that something needed to be done about that. The report made reference to Lebanese and Arabic organised crime groups and the range of criminal activities they were involved in, including drug trafficking, evasion of tobacco excise and money laundering.

The report commented on so-called outlaw motorcycle gangs or OMCGs. These are very important points. The report states—

With few exceptions, a review of significant national and state assessments of the alleged criminal activities of OMCGs indicates that what has, in fact, been brought to light are the criminal activities of individual members of OMCGs rather than the activities of the group as a whole. In other words, the assessments suggest that OMCG memberships include individual criminals and not that OMCGs commit offences as a criminal group.

It indicates that some of those groups do benefit from the involvement, fortuitously or otherwise, of individuals but that that is the case with regard to any particular groups. The report goes on to talk about the limitations of the ethnic/ethos based assessment. It states—

The ethnic/ethos based assessment of organised crime in Australia has led to the association of particular types of criminality with specific identities and/or groups. This has included associating cannabis production with persons of Italian origin, amphetamine production and distribution with persons associated with or members of OMCGs, and heroin distribution with persons of Vietnamese or Romanian origin.

Of course, that is not necessarily exclusive.

Page 66 of the report says it all. That page contains much of what this government has rallied against. If some 10 or 11 years ago this government had followed the recommendations outlined on this page we would have seen effective crackdowns on organised criminal activity in Queensland, the confiscation of a greater amount of proceeds of crime and, indeed, more of these villains in jail. Four recommendations were made. Recommendation 3 states—

That law enforcement agencies seek legislative changes—particularly in the areas of telecommunications interception, civil based recovery of proceeds of crime, and covert operations/witness anonymity—and appropriate resources to support them.

How much of that has this government provided to crime-fighting organisations? Very little! Nowhere did they actually ask for laws that would seek to declare a particular organisation a criminal organisation based on spurious grounds and little intelligence. Nowhere did they suggest the subjugation of natural justice or the abrogation of centuries of the rule of law that an accused individual has the right to be proved to a criminal standard if accused of a criminal offence. They talked about an enhancement of civil confiscation of the proceeds of crime, they talked about telecommunications interception powers, they talked about covert operations and witness anonymity and they talked about appropriate resources to support all of those things. While we have some of those thing, obviously we have very little of what is truly needed.

Also, we need to look at what the Premier said in her maiden speech in this place some 14 years ago. The Premier said—

... politicians must also bear the responsibility that we, as community leaders, have to conduct debates about law and order in a manner which is not calculated to maximise political point scoring. This approach is irresponsible and serves only to maximise community fears. During my time in this House, I will not be indulging in sensational and histrionic debates on law and order which ultimately serve only one purpose—to limit unnecessarily the freedom and opportunities of many vulnerable people in our community.

I would have thought that that was the fundamental basis of our objection today. Oh how the Premier has thrown away those particular views over the last few years!

In conclusion, it is clear that there is no evidence that the laws being put forward by the government will in any way stop organised and serious crime in Queensland. There is no support from the Queensland Law Society, the Queensland Bar Association or the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties and at best there is limited support from the police. The government has not allowed for any public consultation on this bill. Members of this Labor government do not support this bill. The former Attorney-General, the member for Toowoomba North, does not support this bill. I look forward to him and the member for Murrumba crossing the floor on this bill because I know that they could not possibly support any such legislation and betray their legal profession and core ideology.

This legislation fails in every way to tackle the scourge of organised crime. It does nothing of the sort. It will not stop the flow of money from serious crime into crime groups—the real area that governments should be focused on. It is for these reasons that the LNP could not support such flawed, ineffective legislative spin. This is nothing more than another desperate Labor government, much like the Rees Labor government in New South Wales, scrambling for a headline. The laws were thrown out in South Australia, they have never been used in New South Wales and they should be thrown out here. The LNP has a real plan. Through strong, tough criminal proceeds confiscation laws we will attack crooks where it hurts them most—their pockets. Unlike this government, we have listened to key stakeholders.

Members of the LNP will sleep better tonight knowing that we have fought against this government's draconian laws—laws which extinguish centuries of established natural justice rights which have guaranteed an accused person access to the evidence against them. We will also sleep secure in the knowledge that we fought to maintain the fundamental right of free association. Labor members by contrast should be haunted by the spectre of their bans on free association. Labor members should be condemned to the eternal nightmare which follows their trampling of centuries of established legal rights of every Queensland citizen into the dirt as they are doing today.

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—LNP) (5.21 pm): I rise to participate and put forward my objection to this proposed Criminal Organisation Bill. I feel strongly that this government has been very careless, if not reckless, in introducing this legislation and I fear that the consequences for Queenslanders, innocent Queenslanders, will be devastating.

This legislation has been drafted and introduced without any deliberation or consultation with the wider public. The Premier, when announcing the introduction of the proposed bill, stated clearly that there would be wide consultation. However, only a few carefully selected groups were ever invited to give input.

This proposed bill will possibly have the most impact on restricting civil rights of any legislation that has ever been put on paper in this parliament. Yet where was the consultation with the groups that will be affected the most? Did this government ever meet with any of these groups to get their feedback, views or participation in bringing Queensland the most balanced and achievable law?

I would like to make it clear to this chamber that I and many others want a peaceful society free from bullying, gang violence, organised crime and dangerous drugs. I strongly agree with the government's purpose for getting tough on organised crime. But I feel that from the outset this bill will impact upon many good citizens, particularly the biker fraternity, who through association will be declared criminals because their right to freedom of association is being taken away. Even with the personal relationship clause, families will be torn apart by this legislation. Nieces and nephews will not be able to associate with their aunts and uncles or cousins with cousins if control orders are enforced. Ex-spouses are awarded more freedoms than blood relatives. The reality is that all of the laws needed to target organised crime are already in existence. What is missing are the resources the police require to enforce these laws.

I know that this bill will impact on many innocent law-abiding bikers. One biker and his wife who are close to me are members of the well-respected Harley Owners Group, or the HOGs as they are known. This group has Australia's largest Harley membership. They take pride in their bikes and pride in their membership. The couple were recently on a ride to a national rally in New South Wales. When approaching Brisbane they were pulled up by police. The single police officer simply could not accept that when checking their registrations and historical data no criminal history could be found upon their good names.

Frustrated by this, and doubting that anyone riding a Harley Davidson could be a model citizen, the police officer proceeded to hold the couple up in the hot sun for 40 minutes checking tyres, helmets, labels, indicators, engine modifications and serial numbers, gave breathalyser tests and asked questions about which gang they belonged to. Becoming seemingly more frustrated that he could not pin anything on the couple, he had no choice but to eventually let the couple proceed on their way. I mention this because many bike clubs are full of ordinary everyday people and I believe that this proposed legislation will give police unprecedented power to come down heavy on these people simply because of a perception that to ride a bike implies criminality—just like what happened to this couple but worse.

This bill has been hastily put together so that the Premier could look exceedingly tough and cooperative to the rest of the states that have enacted already partly declared illegal laws. Cracks have already appeared in section 14 of the Rann government's Serious and Organised Crime (Control) Act where the full court of the Supreme Court has ruled that preventing named bikers from associating with each other is invalid and unlawful. This government is proposing the same invalid law under its control orders within the Criminal Organisation Bill. I believe that much of the proposed law will fail because it breaches natural and common law. There will no longer be the presumption of innocence but guilt by association.

The government has ignored the many Christian motorcycle clubs who associate with known outlaw clubs. Some of whom have past criminal records yet have changed their lives through Christianity and are now seeking old and new members of these outlaw clubs that they once belonged to, endeavouring to bring their faith and life change to these people. The government's proposed law prevents this association despite the positive potential.

Once again, I will clarify my position on the certain few who have been giving the motorcycle fraternity a bad name. I have talked with many people who would gladly see the law come down as heavy-handed as possible to rid society of this minority and to disrupt their unlawful activities. However, many of the targeted clubs have very decent hardworking taxpayers who will be unfairly targeted because of club association, and this is where I believe this bill is unjust. While this proposed bill makes claims of judicial discretion and independent and impartial tribunals, I still believe that much blind faith will be needed to believe that impartiality will suffice.

Let me be clear on my sceptical outlook of this bill. How can the people of this state take this government seriously when this proposed bill clearly states that secret court hearings will not allow defendants or their legal representatives to hear of the allegations against them. This government cannot be serious that this is workable law. Neither can I believe that our national judicial system can accept this proposal. What is lacking in this bill is a provision made for an independent tribunal to review the decisions made by others, whether it be definitions of who and why that group was declared a criminal outfit or why a decision was made.

This bill is doomed to failure because the government simply did not consult with the affected groups including bikers and ask them to put forward a united plan to fix a festering problem—a problem that most law-abiding people agree needs fixing but not at the expense of their civil rights. The government should go back to the drawing board and consult with all the Queensland law-abiding motorcycle clubs and come up with a common-sense plan to tackle the problem at hand. Maybe this government would be pleasantly surprised at the high degree of cooperation and common sense that will come from these open meetings instead of the tripe conceived from the secret squirrel type gathering that has put this paper together. If this government wants to follow similar already failing legislation of the other states, then it will go down the same embarrassing path of the Rann government. I cannot support this bill.

Debate, on motion of Ms Bates, adjourned.

MOTION

Crime and Misconduct Commission Inquiry; Government Grants

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.28 pm): I move—

Following revelations at the CMC inquiry into Labor's rorting of sports grants, this House calls upon the Attorney-General to sufficiently resource the CMC so that the current inquiry can be expanded to look at the awarding of all grants, from all departments where staff from a ministerial office have been involved.

The Premier claims that the Labor sports rorts are limited to one grant in one office by one staffer. Once again, it now becomes another issue where every time an issue of probity gets investigated by one investigative body or another, the Premier says, 'Oh, well, that's only an exception,' but we on this side of the House claim this is a culture that is a part of this Labor Party which has been in government for almost 20 years.

We heard at the CMC inquiry today that public servants have admitted they are intimidated by what they think the minister wants—that they write what they believe the minister wants as an outcome. That means there will be grants given in other departments that are obviously a reflection of what they believe the minister wants; it is an abrogation of what the Public Service is all about, according to the model that most of us understand the Public Service to be. That is exactly what was identified this morning when the Premier refused to tell the House about the 2009 guidelines. I quoted this morning from page 42 of yesterday's CMC hearings, when Ralph Devlin SC asked the member for Sunnybank about an audit report. He said—

I'll just read this to you to see if it rings a bell about Warrigal Road State School.

As I understand it, these were hundreds of thousands of dollars of grants that were given to this state school. Mr Devlin continued—

"No reason was provided to support the school's inclusion although it should be noted that schools were a targeted group per the 2009 guidelines." Does that ring any bells with you?

The witness, the member for Sunnybank, said—

Not particularly. I mean, I guess Simon and I, and maybe even Craig MATHESON—

who I think is the deputy director-general—

had discussions about these issues but that doesn't particularly ring a bell.

This morning we asked the Premier about the 2009 guidelines to see whether they were potentially guidelines that might have been something to do with an upcoming election. The Premier ruled out that any of these guidelines existed or that they had come from her office. Once again, we have a sense of this culture that pervades this government, a government that thinks it knows best and that says that whenever there are inquiries they are one-offs and are not repeated anywhere else. Yet more and more information is coming to the fore to prove that serious questions need to be asked and that therefore the CMC needs to be properly resourced to be able to investigate these matters.

In the debate on the Integrity Bill which has just concluded, I made a point about the CMC not conducting as many investigations as it has. That was not to point out that the CMC is not doing fearless investigations; rather that potentially it might not be as well resourced as it should be to investigate the things it needs to. There is no doubt the CMC would be looking with one eye at its budget as well as the outcomes it needs to achieve, because that is how all agencies including public sector agencies have to work. They have to make sure they stick to their budgets.

The bottom line is that we will never know the facts about all the other agencies of government and all the other public servants who may have been intimidated by ministerial staff. This is a culture that I hear constantly from public servants: the fact that ministerial staff with new ministers are more concerned about their minister's media profile than what their department is actually achieving. That is what the government needs to deal with here in terms of funding the CMC so that we can check all grants and all staffers.

Clearly, the people of Queensland have seen a culture develop that we have identified a number of times and that other Queenslanders identified in their submissions to the government's green paper, which of course the government conveniently neglected to include in the Integrity Bill just concluded. The bill included things to improve integrity provisions, but they are ones that really do not go to the heart of many of the 224 published submissions. The purpose of the motion is to require the Attorney-General to provide enough funding to the CMC to slide the ruler over every grant that has been across every Labor ministerial desk.

The government forgets that outside these walls there are over 4.4 million Queenslanders who see the reports in the media that there is more corruption. With every day and every new report of corruption, the public confidence is eroded and those 4.4 million Queenslanders lose another bit of respect for this Premier and this corruption riddled government. We have seen numerous items identified in the discussion paper that was put out by the Premier. A culture amongst government was identified at the CMC hearing yesterday, when Mr Pearce said to the witness, the member for Sunnybank—

Is there any formal training that is given to ministerial advisers, to your knowledge?

The member for Sunnybank said—

Yeah. Ministerial advisers get formal training by the Premier's office on a fairly regular basis.

Again, there is a question there of what sort of formal training they get in terms of how grants are to be given. As I said, questions were raised today at the hearing that we intend to further probe. There will also be more probing by the CMC as to these sorts of activities and whether public servants are stood over by ministerial advisers. They are the questions that have been very seriously asked in this House and they are a continuation of the culture of this government that Tony Fitzgerald spoke about in July this year. I know I have quoted this a number of times, but this is what Tony Fitzgerald said about this Labor government in July this year—

Access can now be purchased, patronage is dispensed, mates and supporters are appointed and retired politicians exploit their political connections to obtain success fees for deals between businesses and government.

That is exactly what the Premier has been trying to say that she will stop through success fees. She refused to rule it out in February during the election campaign, but now she has belatedly moved to stop it, following on the lead from the then opposition leader who proposed this on 9 February 2009. They are the commitments that we have made.

I would also like to remind the Premier and members opposite that when there were controversial issues when the coalition was in power between 1996 and 1998—such as the gun laws—there was a bipartisan effort to take Labor MPs around Queensland to make sure these very difficult provisions that had to be brought in had maximum support from both sides of the House. Yet, in this case, we see

parliamentary committees being overridden along party lines, and that is why the inquiry is needed. It does not mean we have given up on our calls for a royal commission. We still maintain that such an inquiry is desperately needed.

In the meantime, we have serious queries about what has happened, in terms of the green paper from the Premier, with the Public Service Act. In the green paper, there was a one-paragraph overview of the Public Service Act. Clearly, in section 3.5.2 of the Fitzgerald report, Fitzgerald observed—

... there does not appear to be any reason why there should be power to make exemptions from the requirement to advertise public service vacancies, and why all vacancies should not be advertised.

Yet obviously we know that the Labor government routinely ignores advertising. We know about the Premier appointing her husband to a top public sector job without the position ever having been advertised. Fitzgerald also recommended a process for special appointments such as directors-general, commissioners and other similar appointments. The point is that any CMC investigation may well go to these sorts of issues as well, because of the Labor process of appointing their mates and Public Service hangers-on into positions where they know they will potentially be intimidated—and those are not my words but the words of a public servant today at the CMC inquiry.

There are members on the government side who maintain that I am just referring to some part of the Fitzgerald report that does not apply to them, but that just shows their attitude after 20 years. They think Fitzgerald does not apply to them. They have set their own rules. They are so arrogant. They come into this place and think they own it after 20 years, and they have no regard for the people of Queensland.

We on this side are determined to restore honour and integrity to the political process in Queensland. We promise that we will consult with the people of Queensland about the issues that we take to the election—unlike that lot opposite, who come into this House and thumb their noses via the decisions of their executive. We are determined to change the attitudes of this House. The government maintains that it is providing sufficient funding to the CMC, but of course we know that the equivalent cost of the Fitzgerald inquiry in current dollars is about $170 million per year. Clearly, that is a significant impost. No-one is suggesting it should be that much, but the current allocation to the CMC needs to be adequate to ensure that it is able to do a frank and fearless investigation of all of these matters so that we can make sure that our levels of Public Service and life are as good as they can be in this great state.

Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (5.38 pm): I rise to second the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition to properly fund the CMC so that the current inquiry into alleged official misconduct of a former senior ministerial adviser to the former minister for police, corrective services and sport can be expanded to look at the awarding of all grants in all departments where staff from a ministerial office have been involved.

For the past two days members of this place have been involved in a debate about integrity. In fact, we have just passed a bill providing for greater integrity in government as well as the LNP arguing for the need for a commission of inquiry into the Labor government's failures and activities over the past 12 years. The bill proposed by the LNP calling for a commission of inquiry was voted down by the government. So much for openness, accountability and honesty in Queensland! Queenslanders are now left to turn to the existing activities and investigations of the CMC.

Let me make it quite clear that we support the CMC and its investigation into allegations of official misconduct by Mr Simon Tutt in his role as the senior ministerial adviser to the then minister for sport, Judy Spence, like we supported the investigation into the former member for Clayfield and her problems declaring what happened at Lockhart River and paying for the airfares of people to Palm Island, like we supported the investigation into Gordon Nuttall and what he had said. We support the CMC and its investigations because, predominantly, the CMC is investigating misbehaviour and malefactions by the Labor Party. It is important that the inquiry be conducted because our system of democracy is based, as Tony Fitzgerald QC put it, on the proposition that government is answerable to the people to decide policy and the public servants are there to implement it.

Mr Fitzgerald went on to further comment and made reference to the existence of ministerial advisers as well as bureaucratic advisers. He said—

... but that is not the job of the bureaucracy—

to give political advice—

Its role is to provide independent, impartial expert advice on departmental issues. Public officials are supposed to be free to act and advise without concern for the political or personal connections of the people and organisations affected by their decisions.

Those words were quoted at the opening of the current inquiry into the latest rorts set to engulf the Labor Party and the Labor government. It is increasingly the case that the line between appropriate actions undertaken by the bureaucracy in fulfilment of policy is blurred with actions that the bureaucracy is directed to undertake by a ministerial adviser or advisers in our system of government, purportedly, by these gatekeepers at the direction of the relevant minister to achieve political outcomes.

Let us make no bones about it. This is occurring increasingly frequently and it occurs on all sides of politics but particularly here in Queensland. The opening statement of the current CMC inquiry made by counsel assisting went on—

It is envisaged that this investigation will expose an episode in which public servants, and indeed very senior public servants, allow themselves to be unduly influenced by a Ministerial Adviser. The advice ultimately delivered to the Minister was neither impartial nor in accordance with applicable policy and guidelines.

We have an inquiry that was established to inquire into Mr Tutt based on information provided to the CMC about a grant of over $4 million made to the Queensland Rugby Union and subsequently to Mr Tutt's rugby club, the University of Queensland Rugby Football Club. It has heard revelations over the past two days of how a minister's adviser used his position to influence not only the granting of the award but also the manner in which it was paid. That influence was described by the then senior bureaucrat and now member for Bulimba as being 'an instruction'. In fact, in evidence the member for Bulimba said—

He just wanted me to do it and he wasn't going to brook any further discussion about it.

She goes on to say—

It was not ... my opinion was not accepted and I was told to just do it or words to that effect.

We have a senior executive director level operative being told what to do by a ministerial adviser, and it is not the first time. We had the gravy train affair of blessed memory, and you, Mr Speaker, will recall that. We had an inquiry into that by the CMC which found that the then minister obviously had no knowledge of the affair and was cleared, but it did make some very stinging comments. It stated—

This is not the first complaint that the CMC has received alleging that ministerial staff may have engaged in behaviour that entailed the use of government resources for non-official purposes, such as promoting the interests of a political party ...

This government in Queensland treats the assets of the people of Queensland as its own assets to promote its own political purposes. This inquiry needs to be expanded.

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (5.43 pm): I move—

That all words after "Following" be deleted and the following words inserted:

"the establishment by the Crime and Misconduct Commission of an inquiry into sports grants, that this House:

- notes that no requests for additional resources have been made to the government in relation to this inquiry;
- notes the government's significant financial support for the CMC, including record funding of $43.2 million this financial year;
- notes the independence of the CMC and its capacity to initiate its own inquiries, and
- reaffirms its support for and confidence in the important role undertaken by the CMC.

Let me start where the member for Clayfield finished. He wanted to talk about ministerial advisers. Let us talk about the daddy of them all. Let us talk about Miles Jordana. I read from an article published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 19 August 2004. What did it say about Miles Jordana, the senior adviser on international affairs to the then Prime Minister, John Howard. It states—

A senior adviser to the Prime Minister, Miles Jordana, was told in early October 2001—almost a month before the last election—that photographs purporting to show asylum seekers throwing their children overboard were misrepresented.

That is the sort of stuff we get from the opposition. What did this government do? This is the government that referred this matter to the CMC. We respect the CMC; we respect its processes; we respect its independence and its ability to investigate misconduct. That is what we do on this side of the House.

The motion moved by the opposition is, frankly, a disgrace. Once again, the opposition has demonstrated that the independence of public office in this state means nothing to it. The Crime and Misconduct Commission is an organisation tasked to be the independent watchdog over public office and the conduct of public officers in Queensland. The importance of the independence of that role is clearly stated in the Crime and Misconduct Act in section 57. It states—

The commission must, at all times, act independently, impartially and fairly having regard to the purposes of this Act and the importance of protecting the public interest.

The establishment of the Crime and Misconduct Commission and its predecessor, the Criminal Justice Commission, was a direct response to the cronyism and corruption that infected this state under the corrupt leadership of the National Party when those members opposite were in government. What did they do when they came back? As soon as they came back into government under the Borbidge government—and a number of members of that government now sit in this parliament—they nobbled the CMC; they set up the Connolly-Ryan royal commission, a commission that was struck down for ostensible bias. That is their attitude to the CMC. The minute they get back on the treasury benches they will do it again. They cannot wait to nobble the CMC. It is in their DNA. It has been 20 years and they have never respected the independent watchdogs in this state.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: It is too much for those opposite. They want to turn the intelligent, vigilant watchdog into a mindless, rabid attack dog for their own political purposes. For them, independence is a dirty word that stops them getting their grubby hands on the levers of the political influence to perpetuate their own soiled scheme. They do not want independence; they want rank and rotten partisan dependency. That is the only way they can prove their allegations. They do not want facts, due process, proper investigations or common sense. They do not want any of those things getting in the way of their fairytale of spin.

What do we see in this motion? It is a fairytale; that is all it is. Where are the allegations of misconduct in respect of other grants in other departments? Where is the allegation? Not one matter has been brought before this parliament. Not one matter has been referred to the CMC, yet they say the CMC needs money to further expand its investigations. This is a body that has the full support of this government. We give it whatever resources it needs to do its task. It is a fairytale that those members opposite perpetuate. What would we expect? They come in here day after day perpetrating fairytales and fantasies and dropping smears on individuals and organisations—smears on the member for Bulimba and smears on the member for Sunnybank, who are giving evidence before the CMC as all people should quite properly and quite rightly do. They have no respect.

Let us look at the confiscation of profits of crime. This year the CMC has passed an important milestone. That body has recovered $100 million through the confiscation of profits of crime. You would not believe that if you listened to those members opposite, including the ridiculous speech—the fantasy perpetrated by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in his response to the bill before the House relating to bikie gangs—and I will have more to say on that at another time.

This is an incredible motion that the opposition has put before the parliament. This government stands in the House tonight to support the CMC, congratulate it on its work and reassure all Queenslanders that we will resource it as necessary and let it get on with its important and independent work.

(Time expired)

Ms MALE (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.48 pm): I rise to second the amendment moved by the Attorney-General. Members opposite have a single ambition that becomes more and more clear with every passing day in this House: they want the power to use the Crime and Misconduct Commission as their own personal star chamber to pursue and prosecute matters on political grounds. They want to turn the intelligent, vigilant watchdog into a mindless, rabid attack-dog. The CMC is designed as an independent commission tasked to pursue criminal activity and official misconduct where it may find it, triggered by complaints, investigated by experts and prosecuted by evidence. A misconduct investigation is not a political tool to be used capriciously by politicians as part of a baseless smear campaign. What faith could the people of Queensland have in such a body if that were the case? None, and yet that is what the opposition wants to do—to direct the CMC, in the absence of any specific current allegation, to go on a fantasy fishing excursion, trawling for problems in the vain hope that something exists where no complaint has been made.

The CMC is well resourced to conduct misconduct investigations. Had the Liberal National Party taken the time to read the CMC annual report it would have noted that no comment was made by the commission that its misconduct function was in any way compromised by a lack of funding. The commission notes that it finalised 80 misconduct investigations in 2008-09, including a number of large and complex issues. It is important to note that it is in this same report that the chairperson of the CMC states that 'Queensland now has a strong ethical framework which is capable of preventing and detecting most official misconduct'. This is a framework that the opposition would unravel through politicising the role of the commission and providing funding where none has been requested. The commission and its predecessors have been funded to the tune of more than $570 million, with the funding for 2009-10 being a record $43.2 million. That is how important we on this side of the House think the CMC is.

It should be remembered that the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee, which oversees the CMC, does a review each term of the CMC and makes recommendations to parliament. The PCMC tabled a report earlier this year, and what have we seen come out of that? Telephone intercept powers, additional crimes of misconduct in public office being made, and the bill that has just gone through the House to allow the CMC to deal with misconduct in government owned corporations. The powers of the CMC are continually under enhancement to ensure that it can best serve the people of Queensland. This government has a demonstrated commitment to the CMC—not only to its financial security but, moreover, to its independence.

Those opposite have sought at every possible opportunity to nobble the organisation, to establish its own political commissions. Who can forget the doomed and disastrous Connolly-Ryan commission? Let us not forget that the Carruthers inquiry, which was set up to investigate the LNP's disgusting MOU with the Police Union during the Mundingburra by-election, was effectively nobbled by Connolly-Ryan. The Carruthers inquiry expressed a view that there was 'enough evidence' against then police minister Russell Cooper to support a charge against him. Mr Cooper sought legal advice from Peter

Connolly QC that was contrary to this and it was tabled at the Carruthers inquiry. Lo and behold, Denver Beanland, the then Attorney-General, announced an inquiry into the CJC just a couple of days later to be headed up by—you guessed it—Peter Connolly QC and Dr Kevin Ryan QC. And we should not forget that this is the Attorney-General who did not have the confidence of the parliament.

This biased inquiry was finally overturned and the whole Connolly-Ryan inquiry was seen to be the corrupt and biased vehicle of the Liberal and National Party coalition government of the time. And here today we see the current Liberal National Party again trying to politicise the CMC. What faith can the people of Queensland put in a political party that works so feverishly to undermine the ethical framework of the commission? Put simply, none! The people of Queensland can have no faith in the Liberal National Party and its unethical and ultimately party political intimidation and its almost pathological hatred of the CMC. This is a disgusting motion that has been moved tonight. It was done for a political purpose and for no other reason. It does not support the work of the CMC. It does not support the work of decent bureaucrats across the Queensland government. I find it quite reprehensible that those opposite would move such a motion in this parliament. I support the amendment moved by the Attorney-General.

Ms SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (5.53 pm): I think the Labor members protest too much! Our motion is actually supporting the CMC to have the resources to get on with the job and investigate Labor corruption. Yet we hear members opposite trying to verbal us—trying to verbal the written word in fact—and claim that we are attacking the CMC when in fact we are upholding the rights of the CMC to have the resources to do the job—to look into the corruption which is clearly becoming systemic in this government. The government claims to be as pure as the driven snow but, like a glacier, the closer you get and the more you examine it it is awfully dirty, and this is what we are seeing in Queensland.

I dispute the facts of the Labor members who have claimed that the CMC does not need more resources and has not asked for them. In fact, the annual report of the CMC says—

The CMC will have to seek further funding for these areas to continue to cope with this increasing demand.

If that is not a case of an organisation that is under pressure which has difficulty in undertaking its core responsibilities, then I do not know what is. This is a government that says, 'There's no problem, but just don't look too closely!'

After 20 years in government Labor is like a rotting barrel of apples with a Premier swimming in the soup, pretending nothing is wrong. You would think that if rotten apples kept on bobbing up to the surface in the Labor government administration something was wrong; it was not just a one-off event. Well, no! According to the Premier, the system is working yet still she is swimming through the soup of all of these rotten apples as they keep bobbing to the surface. She says, 'No, nothing's wrong in Queensland. The system is working.' But tonight we have Labor members who are in fact denying the opportunity for a motion that would in fact seek to empower the CMC with the appropriate resources to crack down and to fully investigate issues of systemic corruption.

We have just heard the tip of the iceberg with regard to matters that are currently before the CMC. We have just heard the tip of the iceberg into matters which clearly indicate that there is more than just a one-off rotten apple bobbing to the surface. There is a pattern that has been emerging with this Labor government in recent years, but how can anyone trust that the Premier has a desire to clean up the mess that is there when in fact she employed an electoral rorter as her chief of staff? This is not modelling the highest levels of ethical care for the rest of the public sector and for senior political staff where there is now this question that they are abusing their power with regard to what they are trying to extort out of the professional public sector. We want a public sector that is not compromised by an abuse of power, and this is a form of corruption—an abuse of power seeking to subvert the rules with regard to how funding is allocated.

We have already heard from the CMC hearing that there have been claims made that ministerial staffer Tutt asked for a grant to be allocated and he said, 'Just do it' to a public servant. There was no regard to the guidelines as to how that money was to be spent. We see evidence before the commission hearing that this is something that goes beyond just one staffer, yet once again we have a government that is in denial. But there is a pattern with this government beyond just Mike Kaiser. The Premier went to the election and promised that she was not going to sell the assets of Queensland. She said that there would be no petrol tax in Queensland. In fact, she is a Premier who has made many promises and seen them broken. She is not standing on very solid ground for people to believe her now that there is not more corruption in this government.

It is time to get to the heart of this matter. It is not time for a denial by this government and this state that there is not something far worse than just a few people who keep coming before this commission of inquiry. This afternoon a bill has been voted down by Labor members with regard to establishing a commission of inquiry to investigate these matters, and tonight we have another disgraceful example of Labor members wanting to deny the opportunity for the CMC to have the funding to ensure that appropriate investigations are undertaken into this government.

Something is rotten in the state of Queensland, and for the government and Premier Bligh to continue to deny it is truly a disgrace and for members opposite to indicate that they will not vote for this motion is tainting them with the very problem we saw when this Labor government corrupted the process that let Gordon Nuttall off the hook and changed the Criminal Code to absolve him of matters which were potentially criminal in nature. Shame on those new Labor members who have come into this place! They have an opportunity to exonerate themselves from the sins of those they joined on the opposite benches, but from the interjections we have heard tonight they are just as bad as those on the Labor side who have served here for 20 years!

(Time expired)

Ms GRACE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (5.58 pm): I rise to oppose the motion and support the amendment. The motion states that the current inquiry needs to be expanded to look at the awarding of all grants from all departments where staff from a ministerial office have been involved. This motion is preposterous and fails to have any regard for the important work that is undertaken in this state by the Crime and Misconduct Commission, and it is an old trick. When you want to nobble an organisation and when you do not want to support them, what do you do? You tie them up. You let them run around in cycles. You take them away from the duties that they are supposed to perform and get them concentrating on nothing more but witch-hunts and nothing more but preposterous allegations. Rather than allowing the CMC to go about its important business of combating serious crime and misconduct in Queensland, members opposite prefer to seek to divert it into politically partisan investigations where there is no suggestion of any misconduct or impropriety at all.

Once again, this side of the House is forced to remind the opposition that the CMC is independent. It does not, nor should it, take direction from the parliament, particularly when there is no evidence and when those who are proposing to refer this stuff lack any credibility and are interested only in embarking upon yet another witch-hunt.

I can only assume that the members opposite are not aware of the important work that is done by the CMC. So I will take this opportunity to put on the record, and acquaint the opposition with, some of the activities that the CMC has carried out in the past year. Under the category of preventing and combating crime, the CMC carried out no fewer than 17 investigations into organised criminal groups and paedophilia rings, all of which resulted in arrests and charges. Investigative hearings were conducted in relation to 31 major crime investigations, with 157 days of hearings in Brisbane and throughout Queensland. The proceeds of crime team obtained 78 restraining orders over property valued at more than $24 million.

In promoting high standards of integrity and reducing misconduct in the public sector, the following activities were undertaken. Following a complex investigation by the CMC, former Queensland government minister Gordon Nuttall and Queensland businessmen Kenneth Talbot and Harold Shand were committed to stand trial. Did anybody ever suggest that because of that every minister, every member of parliament, every businessman throughout Queensland now needed to be investigated? Of course not. The motion is preposterous and it makes absolutely no sense.

Over the course of Operation Capri, some 25 police officers were referred to the QPS for disciplinary action. The CMC also conducts a witness protection service and in that has been 100 per cent successful in 21 years of service. The CMC has also produced a number of publications and investigative reports into a number of areas to prevent crime and misconduct—publications such as *Managing public records responsibly* and *Blowing the whistle in Queensland* and research reports such as *Interactions between police and young people* and *Perceptions of misconduct in Queensland correctional institutions: a survey of custodial officers.*

Only just last week the chairman handed down a report on policing in Indigenous communities. The CMC is also continuing its ongoing work with the QPS on the use of tasers. All of this work is important. All of this work is based on evidence and there are substantial reasons for it to be undertaken. That work deserves the full attention of the hardworking officers of the CMC. They do not need to be distracted by references from a beleaguered opposition that is bereft of policy initiatives and which seeks to waste the time and the money of not only the parliament but also the independent statutory agencies of government to trawl for anything that they can come up with. The CMC through its misconduct jurisdiction has more than enough investigatory powers—search, surveillance and seizure powers—to investigate issues and to carry out its important work.

It is not as though the opposition has a scintilla of evidence upon which to base an investigation. It just blindly wants to refer to the CMC the awarding of all grants by all government departments in the vain hope that it may uncover something. In the words of the member for Southern Downs, I say that this motion is ill conceived and 'de-necessary'. The CMC has better things to do with its time. It does not need to waste money on what is contained in this motion. It is preposterous and it is a disgrace. We will vote for the amendment and vote down the opposition's motion.

Dr FLEGG (Moggill—LNP) (6.03 pm): The previous speaker talked about evidence. There is ample evidence in the public arena from a high level to establish that every grant by this government is now in question. When it comes to dishing out grants, there is a serious question mark over the level of political interference in the proper operation of the Public Service in this state.

When it comes to grants that have been rorted by political interference, the issue is not just about who gets the money as part of a pork-barrel or some other rort; the issue is about who misses out. I developed an interest in this matter. As every MP knows, you have a pretty good feeling about—

Mr Reeves interjected.

Dr FLEGG: I will get to the minister in a minute. You have a pretty good feeling about the quality of the groups in your electorate. The people involved in Akuna Oval handle 2,000 kids a year. Those people have years and years of experience in delivering services. When two clubs can work together and when people of the quality of Sally Johannsen are there, I knew that something smelt wrong.

The minister, who has verbal diarrhoea and who does not want to hear anything, wrote to me on 11 June this year and stated—

The Major Facilities Program was heavily oversubscribed ... As result, only those EoIs that fully met the program criteria were invited to stage 2.

There is now tonnes of evidence that that is not right.

Mr Reeves interjected.

Dr FLEGG: He does not want to hear it, but he ought to get online and read the evidence that is being given. It smelt wrong to me, but the public servant who assessed the Akuna Oval criteria came to me and said, 'I recommended that and we were overruled.' We now know why they were overruled. They were overruled because those at a political level wanted to direct the funds into their own seats.

A career public servant with no political background and who is likely to—and, in fact, did—lose his job is unlikely to be making it up. That heroic public servant who blew the whistle has been interviewed by the CMC and, as a result, is no longer a part of the Queensland Public Service.

On 28 August on the front page of the *Courier-Mail* investigative journalist Des Houghton had the courage to blow the whistle on this matter. For his trouble he was vilified in this place by the then minister Judy Spence, but subsequent events and subsequent information shows that it was the minister who should have been vilified. The *Courier-Mail* and Des Houghton have been vindicated. They have been shown to have acted in the public interest of this state to reveal the rorts and the political interference as money was doled out on a political patronage basis and as our own professional Public Service was overruled.

Evidence given to the CMC by Craig Matheson—a very senior public servant—and reported publicly shows clearly that there was direct political interference, and not just political interference but political interference at a ministerial level, to direct these grants into those other areas. Clearly, the whole relationship between political advisers and the ministers whose political interest they represent and their activities in bullying public servants to get political outcomes brings all of these grants into question.

This is an important motion for the people of Queensland. If the department of sport stinks right to the top, you can bet your bottom dollar that it is not the only department where political interference influences the making of grants. This is a rare insight by the CMC into the machinations of this government.

(Time expired)

Mr WETTENHALL (Barron River—ALP) (6.08 pm): I rise to oppose this motion and support the amendment. All week we have heard opposition members engage in a low-rent debate about integrity and accountability issues in this state. The parliament has just passed laws to enhance the integrity and accountability framework in Queensland and the parliament has rightly rejected another attempt by the opposition to amend the Commissions of Inquiry Act for its own base political purpose—a purpose that is inherent in the motion before the House this evening.

All citizens have a right to expect the highest ethical standards are set and observed by members of parliament, public officials and government agencies and corporations. The CMC is an independent statutory authority with a mission to combat crime and promote public sector integrity. Its operating principles state that it will act with independence, impartiality and fairness in the public interest.

Yet again this motion demonstrates the complete failure of the opposition to understand and accept that our independent statutory authorities must be allowed to operate free of political influence. Yet again the opposition seeks to debase and demean the institutions of government by subjecting them to political whims and purposes. This motion is yet more evidence that the opposition is recklessly, if not purposefully, determined to undermine public confidence in our system of justice, undermine public confidence in the Crime and Misconduct Commission and demean this parliament with spurious claims that it will not back up with one skerrick of evidence.

One of the significant roles of the CMC is to investigate misconduct by public sector officers. If there is any evidence of misconduct by ministerial staff or former staff in the awarding of grants by any government department, this government would welcome and expect that matter to be referred to the CMC. It is ridiculous to contemplate that the CMC would be tasked to waste taxpayers' money on what is nothing more than a fishing expedition.

This motion reveals a lot about this opposition. It proves that it is not interested in due process, evidence or fundamental principles of justice. Members of the opposition are not interested in the reputations of highly experienced public officials to whom this parliament has entrusted the carrying out of important public functions. No-one who carries out public duties in this state is safe from the scurrilous attacks of this totally unscrupulous opposition. The parliament has become a place which opposition members think gives them the green light to make wild allegations, cast slurs and trash reputations. Even the independence and integrity of the judiciary comes under continual and cowardly attack as they go about their difficult task of ensuring that justice is done in our civil and criminal courts.

By contrast, the Bligh government respects the institutions of government and the independence of the CMC. Day after day we hear members of the opposition carp, criticise, denigrate and degrade, but when are we going to hear their policies? We should not hold our breath. The LNP can berate but it is bereft. It is bereft of ideas, bereft of principles, bereft of leadership, bereft of policy fire power—a complete and tragic political wasteland.

As I have said in debate on legislation this week, Queensland's integrity and accountability framework is the most comprehensive, robust and well resourced of any state in Australia. I have confidence in the CMC to carry out its functions, not only because of the legislation, the systems that are in place and the resources that are provided to support its functions but also because of this essential fact: if the CMC were unable to carry out any important investigation into crime or misconduct, I have no doubt it would have no hesitation in approaching this government and make a case in the appropriate way for additional resources. I note that no such request has been made in connection with the current inquiry mentioned in this ridiculous opposition motion. Not only do I have confidence in the independence and integrity of the CMC to ask for additional resources if they are needed; I have confidence in this government to give proper and thorough consideration to any such request, as it has done in the past and as it will continue to do in the future.

Mr SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.13 pm): Is it any wonder that the Attorney-General is having trouble winning appeals? The Attorney-General cannot even read the transcript of what is going on up the road. The transcript absolutely indicates the depth of patronage and looking after of Labor mates that we are seeing here in Queensland. In Tuvalu they might write it down on a slate with a slate pencil or they might resort to a quill and a piece of parchment, but in Queensland we have the availability of modern technology. Fortunately for the Attorney-General I will quote from that modern technology. While he is sitting there in denial, some very interesting things are happening with regard to the CMC. Let us look at what one of the operatives from within the department of sport said yesterday in relation to a special little deal that was done in the member for Sunnybank's electorate with regard to the Warrigal Road matter. As I understand it, that was money for the MacGregor State School as well. This is what this particular witness said—

Well, I knew in terms of the assessment that had been done by my officers that the project did not meet the criteria and therefore we were not satisfied that it should be recommended. So it was not included on our list.

Counsel assisting went on to say—

Did Mr Matheson, who was the acting director-general, explain to you why the application had to be included?

The witness said—

My recollection is that related to where—the location of that project. It was going to be in a new electorate and that new electorate was Sunnybank and it was going to be in the electorate of Judy Spence.

That is at least an iota of evidence that the Attorney-General, the person who has been sent to us from Tuvalu, is not even prepared to acknowledge. There we have some evidence of political interference. It was reported in the transcript today—when the then acting director-general was in the witness box—that the person that Mr Klaassen referred to, Mr Matheson, took an initial set of recommendations to the pair on 23 January but they were changed to a week later. The advice was conveyed by the minister and Mr Tutt. Also, Mr Matheson said Mr Tutt told him that the minister wanted to be able to announce that she was giving the QRU a grant of more than $4 million for the upgrade of its Ballymore complex. That is pretty substantive evidence.

Again we have a situation where this government did not volunteer this evidence to the CMC. As the member for Moggill has pointed out, this information was dragged out by forensic analysis by the likes of himself and the *Courier-Mail* in Queensland. Again, the government is pretending that it is all chaste and above board, whiter than white, more virginal than a virgin and it did all this itself. It did not. It was dragged kicking and screaming.

That is why the motion moved tonight by the Leader of the Opposition is so important. What we have here is just the tip of the iceberg. We need to get to the bottom of what is happening with grants and mateship. In Queensland we have a pandemic of amnesia from government members opposite and an epidemic of favouritism for Labor mates that is permeating through the grants process in

Queensland. It is not until something actually finds its way through to the CMC because of some very courageous whistleblower informant who often loses their job that there is an inquiry. It is not put there by the Premier or anyone else. Then it starts to scratch the surface of the whole cancerous regime.

In the time left to me I want to correct one thing. We have heard a whole lot of nonsense in this place about the Connolly-Ryan inquiry. What we have not heard from honourable members opposite is that which actually motivated the Carruthers inquiry into the so-called MOU in Townsville with the Queensland Police Union. Do members know what the first piece of evidence was that the Connolly-Ryan inquiry found when it opened? It found a piece of secret legal advice that had been tucked away in the safe of the CJC that actually exonerated Russell Cooper and Rob Borbidge and that had been written by Cedric Hampson QC. Those opposite do not want to talk about that. That was being hidden so they could set up—

(Time expired)

Mr WATT (Everton—ALP) (6.18 pm): I also rise to speak against the motion.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr WATT: It is always good to be welcomed by such close friends on the other side of the chamber. I also speak in favour of the amendment.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Stop the clock. I will wait for the House to come to order.

Mr WATT: The opposition's motion seeks the expansion of the current inquiry that it is being held to investigate all government grants where staff from a ministerial office have been involved. To me, all this motion reveals is how little the opposition knows about how government works and how unfit it still remains—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Stop the clock. I will wait for the House to come to order again.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have called for order, honourable member for Gregory. The honourable member for Everton.

Mr WATT: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. That is the second time I have called order, member for Lockyer. There will not be a third time. I will take action under the standing orders.

Mr WATT: Thank you, Mr Speaker. To respond to the opposition, my predecessor, the previous member for Everton, certainly did teach me a lot about good governance and integrity in government, something that, unfortunately, people on the other side of the parliament have yet to learn.

All this motion reveals is how little the opposition knows about how government works and how unfit it is to hold government. I can only assume that this is a reflection of how long the opposition has been out of government. The first point is that every day, every minister in this government and probably every government in the world approves grants—grants to schools, grants to community organisations, grants to businesses, grants to local governments and even grants to farmers. An important link in the chain leading to ministerial approval is the advice of ministerial staff. Therefore, by seeking a CMC inquiry into grants where ministerial staff are involved, the opposition is seeking an inquiry into the entire workings of government.

Indeed, the member for Moggill has claimed that there is a smell over every grant issued by the Queensland government. I wonder how the many hardworking community organisations that have slaved over grant applications and received government grants would feel about having their efforts impugned in this disgraceful way? Leaving that aside, given the number of grants issued and the involvement of ministerial staff in the approval process, does the opposition have any idea how huge an inquiry into this subject would be? In the same breath, the opposition complains that the CMC is underresourced. The opposition really has no idea. It is so long since it has been in government, it has no understanding of how government works.

The second point is that right now the CMC has every right to investigate government grant processes and the involvement of ministerial staff. There is nothing stopping the CMC from launching such an inquiry if it so desires. It may well choose to do so at the end of its current inquiry and, if it does, the government will support it. There is a key difference between the CMC and the opposition on this subject. Unlike the opposition, the CMC requires evidence to launch an inquiry. As usual, tonight opposition contributions have involved much in smear and little in fact. They make repeated generalisations that there is a smell around the grants process in the Queensland government. The one thing that they do not do is make a complaint to the CMC, the body with the powers to investigate, because they do not have any complaint. They have no evidence. I say to the opposition again, 'If you have a complaint, take it to the CMC.'

I cannot fail to mention the supreme irony inherent in the LNP opposition calling for this inquiry and an inquiry into anything involving integrity in government. As I said yesterday in the debate on the Integrity Bill, I think the opposition's obsession with inquiries into government is due to its guilty conscience over the number of inquiries held into its actions when it was last in government. Who can forget the Fitzgerald inquiry's findings of deep corruption rife through the Queensland government led by Joh Bjelke-Petersen? One would think that the opposition—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr WATT: They get very touchy whenever one raises Joh Bjelke-Petersen. One would think that the opposition, and especially the former Liberals in the opposition, would be ashamed of that period in Queensland history. But, no! A number of members of the opposition have pledged their undying commitment to the values and policies of Joh Bjelke-Petersen—the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Kawana to name but two.

Just before this debate began the Treasurer reminded me that it is ironic that we are debating this motion today, because today the *Courier-Mail* revealed that the next series of *Underbelly* will focus on the 1980s period of National Party government in Queensland. The *Courier-Mail* article stated that it is expected—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr WATT: Again, they are very touchy about the 1980s. The article speculated as to who would be in the cast of the miniseries. It suggested that Vince Colosimo could play Gerry Bellino and Gerry Connolly could play Joh Bjelke-Petersen. Of course, a number of other characters appear in that miniseries. Given the level of commitment to Joh Bjelke-Petersen by members of the opposition, there may even be roles for some of them. It is an obvious choice as to who would play the Leader of the Opposition. We will call David Hasselhoff and see what he is up to. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is a little bit harder to work out, but I reckon Sylvester Stallone could be tempted out of retirement. Members can make their own choice about whether that would be based on build or diction. The only choice for the member for Kawana is Macaulay Culkin—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: I say to people in the public gallery, it is called Christmas.

Division: Question put—That the Attorney's amendment be agreed to.

AYES, 47—Attwood, Boyle, Choi, Croft, Dick, Farmer, Finn, Grace, Hinchliffe, Hoolihan, Jarratt, Johnstone, Jones, Kiernan, Kilburn, Lawlor, Male, Miller, Moorhead, Mulherin, Nelson-Carr, O'Brien, O'Neill, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Reeves, Roberts, Robertson, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Shine, Smith, Spence, Stone, Struthers, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Watt, Wellington, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson. Tellers: Keech, Darling

NOES, 36—Bates, Bleijie, Crandon, Cripps, Cunningham, Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Foley, Gibson, Hobbs, Johnson, Knuth, Langbroek, McArdle, McLindon, Malone, Menkens, Nicholls, Powell, Pratt, Rickuss, Robinson, Seeney, Simpson, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Tellers: Horan, Messenger

Resolved in the affirmative.

Division: Question put—That the motion as, amended, be agreed to.

AYES, 47—Attwood, Boyle, Choi, Croft, Dick, Farmer, Finn, Grace, Hinchliffe, Hoolihan, Jarratt, Johnstone, Jones, Kiernan, Kilburn, Lawlor, Male, Miller, Moorhead, Mulherin, Nelson-Carr, O'Brien, O'Neill, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Reeves, Roberts, Robertson, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Shine, Smith, Spence, Stone, Struthers, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Watt, Wellington, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson. Tellers: Keech, Darling

NOES, 36—Bates, Bleijie, Crandon, Cripps, Cunningham, Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Foley, Gibson, Hobbs, Johnson, Knuth, Langbroek, McArdle, McLindon, Malone, Menkens, Nicholls, Powell, Pratt, Rickuss, Robinson, Seeney, Simpson, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Tellers: Horan, Messenger

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

Following the establishment by the Crime and Misconduct Commission of an inquiry into sports grants, that this House:

- notes that no requests for additional resources have been made to the government in relation to this inquiry;
- notes the government's significant financial support for the CMC, including record funding of $43.2 million this financial year;
- notes the independence of the CMC and its capacity to initiate its own inquiries, and
- reaffirms its support for and confidence in the important role undertaken by the CMC.

Sitting suspended from 6.33 pm to 7.30 pm.

CRIMINAL ORGANISATION BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3604, on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Ms BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (7.30 pm): I rise tonight to contribute to the Criminal Organisation Bill 2009. The bill seeks to disrupt and restrict the activities of organisations involved in serious criminal activity and to disrupt and restrict the activities of the members and associates of such organisations who are involved in serious criminal activity.

The preamble of the bill states that it is not intended that the powers under the bill will be exercised in a way that diminishes the freedom of persons to participate in advocacy, protest, dissent or industrial action. However, this draconian legislation, designed to cast the net to capture illegal activities in organised groups, has the potential to affect many other law-abiding organisations such as sporting clubs.

The Liberal National Party proposes to move amendments which are designed to tighten the operation of this bill. Whilst the amendments do not change the overall objectives of the bill, they do provide some clearer definition and strengthen the standards of proof that should be met before provisions within the act can be used.

This legislation is yet another example of a knee-jerk reaction from this Labor government, who has so far been soft on crime throughout its tenure. The long-awaited introduction of the Telecommunications Interception Bill 2009, which was passed earlier this year, could and should have been employed to intercept illegal activities in organised groups previously. I draw parallels with the introduction of the rock-throwing offences legislation, which will never capture the offenders who are mainly juveniles and was just more smoke and mirrors and this government's attempt to appear to be tough on crime. Similar legislation in South Australia was overturned given that it had restricted the rights of individuals, and there are serious doubts that this legislation will in actual fact ensure that organised criminal activities move underground.

An article from the Civil Liberties Australia website clearly demonstrates that this law will be tested in the future and stands a very good chance of being defeated in a court of law given the precedent already set in South Australia. It states—

The Supreme Court of South Australia has put the skids under the State's bikie laws in a ruling that will reverberate throughout Australia.

The ruling late in September 2009 puts in doubt virtually all the hastily-passed, 'me too' bikie laws founded on the extraordinary SA legislation produced under Attorney-General Michael Atkinson*.

...

In simple terms, the court ruled that:

- the legislation involves secret intelligence and secret administrative decision-making on questions which should be judicially decided—on appeal to a superior court, at the very least;
- a person accused has a right to know that he/she has been accused, and what he/she is accused of; and
- courts have the right to question whether 'criminal intelligence' is in fact criminal, intelligent or, most importantly, factual.

Dr Andreas Schloenhardt, Associate Professor of UQ's TC Beirne School of Law, stated—

The administrative processes proposed in Queensland lack clarity, consistency, and safeguards, and creates a risk of collusion between different branches of government and the judiciary.

There is also concern over the use of classified information in the labelling process which prevents groups from knowing the reasons why they have been banned.

Dr Schloenhardt said that, while this approach may be helpful in identifying and labelling some criminal organisations, it was of no use against flexible criminal networks that did not carry a particular name and had no formal organisational structure. He said—

It also creates the risk that outlawed groups will consolidate, move further underground, and engage in more clandestine, more dangerous, and more violent operations.

This has clearly been the experience in Japan, which has taken a similar approach to Queensland.

Furthermore, other groups may simply resurface under a different name, thus circumventing the legislation altogether.

The structure and methods of organised crime indeed poses a challenge to the criminal justice system. A successful prosecution of one or even more members of an organisation may have little effect on the criminal operations of the organisation as a whole. Further, successful prosecutions of organised criminal groups may be hindered by intimidation and violence towards witnesses and investigators.

The bill creates a civil regime which allows the Supreme Court, upon application by the Police Commissioner, to make orders aimed at disrupting and restricting the activities of criminal organisations and preventing the expansion of such organisations. The bill allows for organisations to be declared 'criminal organisations' by the Supreme Court and to set the terms of the declaration, and members of these groups will be subject to control orders. These orders are meant to reduce the capacity of members of criminal organisations and their associates to carry out activities that constitute serious criminal behaviour. Activities that may be controlled by an order include: associating with other persons; possessing stated weapons and other things; carrying on or applying to carry on certain prescribed activities—for example, in the gaming, liquor or security industry; entering or being in certain places; and recruiting new members into a criminal organisation.

The bill allows for the issuing of public safety orders. A public safety order can prohibit an individual or group from entering a premises, specified area or attending an event. The Supreme Court may make a public safety order for any period it considers necessary but at this stage no longer than six months. The purpose of a public safety order is to reduce the risk posed by criminal gangs to the public through their attendance at events or venues.

A fortification removal order can require an individual or organisation to modify or remove fortifications from particular premises. The purpose of a fortification removal order is to ensure that police are not impeded from investigating serious criminal activity by fortifications around clubhouses or other premises used or occupied by criminal organisations and the members and associates of those organisations.

The Liberal National Party, who does have a record for being tough on crime, supports legislation which makes illegal activities in any group subject to prosecution. However, with the South Australian judgement, alternative methods are required to ensure that these activities are subject to the full force of the law.

On 26 September 2009, the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, which has been tough on crime relating to organised bikie gang activities on the coast, said—

Thankfully there are successful models at work overseas that might be used as a template.

In Canada a jury determines whether to outlaw a group after hearing evidence, putting the evidence into the public arena where it can be challenged.

In the United States the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organisations Act 1970 empowered law enforcement agencies to go after the money criminal gangs generate, rather than outlawing organisations, a tool that helped dismantle the Italian Mafia in the 1990s, as well as targeting bikie and Asian gangs.

In my electorate of Mudgeeraba I have many sporting groups including the Gold Coast MG Car Club, the Gold Coast Model Flying Club, the Gold Coast Motorcycle Enthusiasts Club and the Gold Coast Antique Auto Club.

The Gold Coast Motorcycle Enthusiasts Club hosts the annual Winter Sunshine Rally at the Mudgeeraba Showgrounds. This group of 'bikers' are retired, successful business owners who meet as a group and donate funds to charities around the Gold Coast. Are groups such as these going to be snared in the net? This group was most concerned with the legislation being brought in and was very concerned about being tarred with the same brush as organised criminal bikie gangs.

The Winter Sunshine Rally is funded under the Q150 Community Funding Program. This program was introduced to help communities plan and stage their own celebrations to mark Queensland's 150th anniversary. In total, $4 million in grants has been allocated to 500 community activities. Funding of $10,000 was granted by the state Labor government to the Gold Coast Motorcycle Enthusiasts Club to go towards the 2009 Winter Sunshine Rally, promoting Queensland's 150th anniversary and historic motorcycling.

If implemented, these proposed laws could also apply to churches, sporting clubs and trade unions—wherever two or more members are suspected of engaging in criminal activity. An example of this could apply to a church where two or more members have been investigated for crime. The entire church could be declared a criminal organisation, preventing parishioners from gathering to celebrate their faith. This is particularly disconcerting given that the electorate of Mudgeeraba is heavily populated with places of worship including Catholic, Adventist, Jehovah's, Anglican, Presbyterian, Uniting, Baptist, Christian and even a Buddhist place of worship—all of which I have visited since becoming the member for Mudgeeraba.

In addition I have numerous Christian, Anglican and Catholic schools such as Hillcrest Christian College, Gold Coast Christian College, Emmanuel College, King's Christian College, Somerset College, All Saints Anglican School and St Michael's College. Whilst these and the following are extreme examples of this legislation, the proposed laws could be applied and, as examples, they are entirely feasible.

The proposed legislation could also apply to sporting clubs where two or more members have been investigated for crime. The sporting club and associated team could be prevented from gathering for training and competing and club fans could be prevented from attending games. Imagine if that happened to the sporting club in my electorate in the suburb of Robina, the home of the mighty Titans at Skilled Park!

The Liberal National Party proposes amendments to the government's bill in line with the key recommendations from the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties. Make no mistake, this LNP is against any form of organised crime, but this bill has already failed the test in a court of law in other states and has the potential for wide-ranging consequences to innocent groups.

The LNP has already moved to break the back of organised crime by introducing tough new measures to seize the unexplained wealth of criminals by releasing a draft private member's bill for public consultation, with the final laws to go before state parliament in early 2010. A press release issued earlier today by my colleague and shadow Attorney-General, Lawrence Springborg, states—

... the Bligh Labor Government was totally on the wrong track in pursuing more anti-association laws to deal with rouge bikie gangs and other organised crime syndicates.

"No amount of new laws dealing with association will stop criminal activity. But giving police and public prosecutors the power to seize all unexplained assets will.

"Organised and serious drug crime is about profiteering. Labor's anti-association laws do nothing to stop organised crime groups from racketeering and drug-pushing …they don't work and will be thrown out of court."

...

"To break the back of organised crime in Queensland our crime fighters must have the power to seize assets."

Mr JOHNSON (Gregory—LNP) (7.40 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker—

Mr Wilson: Speak the truth, Vaughan.

Mr JOHNSON: You only get the truth from me, brother. I rise to speak on the Criminal Organisation Bill 2009. We have been waiting a long time for this legislation to be introduced and debated in this parliament, but I am sad in some ways to see that it does not have the teeth that I thought it would. The opposition is opposing this bill and certain aspects of it because it does not have those teeth. The explanatory notes start by saying—

The structure and methods of organised crime pose a challenge to the criminal justice system which is generally designed to prosecute and punish isolated crimes committed by individuals.

Intimidation by standover thugs will exist no matter what the criminal activity is or where. One of the most important things in this state is not only having a justice system that will be severe on this criminal activity but also giving our police the resources they require to be able to shut down this activity or apprehend these culprits and bring them to justice. While you can talk about motorcycle gangs and motor clubs that may be of a questionable nature, there are many other organisations out there that fall under the banner of this legislation.

The prime objective of this legislation is to create a civil regime which allows the Supreme Court, upon application by the Police Commissioner, to put in place orders directed at the disruption and restriction of activities of criminal organisations to prevent the growth of this culture of organised crime. We all support that aspect of it. Thus, the bill will allow the Supreme Court to declare some organisations criminal organisations. This will give the commissioner the power on application to have control orders imposed on them as they reduce further promotion of criminal activity. This could mean associating with another person, possession of stated weapons or carrying out suspicious activities in areas of potential criminal activity—for example, the gaming industry, security or even recruitment of new members to operate in these criminal activities. Public safety orders can be put in place for up to six months.

I note here the bill provides for the use of criminal intelligence in civil proceedings. The court determines whether information should be treated as criminal intelligence, and the Criminal Organisation Public Interest Monitor, COPIM, will be present in the court system or wherever. Where is the strength in this, as compared to the Public Interest Monitor? I believe the Public Interest Monitor had those powers before, but in this situation here if the court is not happy about the outcome it can overrule the police in this matter. I hope the Attorney will mention this in his summary in relation to the very important issue of police.

What we are talking about here most of the time is organised crime. In organised crime, these blokes play for keeps. The police have the ability to track down the bloke out there who is the petty criminal—whether he is a one-off armed robber or maybe a one-off murderer—but the technology and equipment that organised criminals have at their disposal means that in a lot of cases they can outsmart, outrun and outmanoeuvre our law enforcement authorities. I hope that is something we will not see happen in this state.

I have studied the situation in western Sydney with the gangs that have sprung up there over the years. I have seen with my own eyes those clusters of people from foreign countries who do not integrate into the system as we would like to see, and we are seeing that activity spring up—whether they are running with drugs or participating in some other type of illegal activity. It means that it is not an environment that people want to live in or be a part of.

Mr Wilson: And that is why we need this tough legislation.

Mr JOHNSON: I take the interjection from the honourable education minister. Yes, we do need tough legislation, but I have read this legislation very closely and I believe there are a couple of weaknesses here where the police could be chewing their fingernails wondering how they will bring some of these people to justice through the court system. I will wait for the honourable the Attorney to make mention of that in his summary. The COPIM will be a very integral part of this legislation, and it will oversee the whole operation virtually of what the court will be all about. The explanatory notes state—

Subsection (6) provides that the Commissioner must give copies of the application and any supporting material to the Criminal Organisation Public Interest Monitor (COPIM). Section 88(2) provides that the COPIM will not have access to information which discloses an informant's name, current location, where the informant resides or the position held in an organisation.

In relation to the other part of the legislation in question here, the explanatory notes state—

Subsection (8) allows the court to impose conditions on a police officer's power to search and seize particular things as set out in section 25.

This appears to me to be somewhat of a hands-tied situation. I hope the Attorney will be able to explain that because I think that is a very serious aspect of the legislation in question.

This brings me to the situation on the Gold Coast. That is a beautiful part of the world, and we certainly want to keep it like that for our international and domestic tourists. We want to keep it as a strip that people want to live in and want to visit. We certainly do not want to have it—or any other part of Queensland for that matter—violated by an element of crime, deceit or activity that is detrimental to the ongoing viability of a beautiful community like that. There is infiltration down there now by the Russian Mafia. We know that for a fact. On the eve of schoolies week, the police on the Gold Coast apprehended criminals from the south who brought amphetamines there. This is a situation we cannot tolerate and cannot afford to have happen.

Whilst our police are there working overtime, I still believe they are underresourced. I speak to police on the Gold Coast all the time, and they are gravely concerned about the resources available to them. On the Gold Coast there is no drugs squad, there is no organised crime squad and there is no fraud squad.

Into the bargain, I can also talk about telephone interception powers. This legislation gives me an opportunity to talk about this area tonight. The shadow Attorney-General, the member for Southern Downs, canvassed that section of the legislation very ably this afternoon. Telephone interception powers are a very integral part of apprehending and tracking down this criminal activity.

Mr Wilson: And we've got them.

Mr JOHNSON: I know we have it. I take that interjection from the honourable minister.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms van Litsenburg): Order! Will the member speak through the chair?

Mr JOHNSON: I am speaking through you, Madam Chair. I like to look at people when I am speaking to them. I want to say to the honourable the minister for education that there are no extra dollars in the police budget for the implementation of the telephone interception powers. It is a very serious situation when we have that vacuum. The police have to use their existing finances to utilise that power in question. I say to the Attorney tonight that I think that is something the cabinet ought to look at very closely.

In Queensland we need to be abreast of this type of criminal activity that can infiltrate our state borders and can undermine the safety of our society and our communities. That is why we need to have the best resourced Police Service in Australia. Every day we hear ministers opposite talking about our population explosion—about 2,000 people a week, or 2,100 people a week I heard the honourable the Treasurer say, are coming to Queensland. That is a big population explosion. That equates to half of Longreach coming to Queensland every week, and we have to find the infrastructure and the resources. Many of these people are concentrating their lifestyles here in the south-east corner. So that is a further tax on our law enforcement agencies, on our court system and on everything else that is applicable to the standard of living that we in this state are accustomed to. It is absolutely paramount that we resource our police to ensure they are abreast of this activity coming in from the south so that they can address it. I say to the Attorney here tonight that we have to be able to address it through the court system and ensure that the courts have the teeth to deal with it. These cunning people are out there to outrun and outmanoeuvre the police.

I do not believe that this legislation is wide ranging enough to give the police the power they need to go after this criminal activity. There are too many restrictions imposed by the court that will hinder police in their very sensitive and secretive investigations. These laws will not give police a full and open shot at organised crime. The explanatory notes to the bill state—

Clause 25 provides a police officer with certain search and seizure powers which can be exercised in the first seven days after a control order or registered corresponding control order is served on a person and can only be exercised once in relation to each premises occupied by the controlled person.

It then lists various subsections. There are concerns about the controls that are placed on police in this legislation. I raise that because when we are talking about organised crime we are talking about an element of the community that is out there in numbers who do not value life. They could not give a continental about police officers, and they are not going to give a continental about somebody they might be suspicious of who has dobbed them into the police or to some other security organisation. They will go out there to conduct that elimination program. At the end of the day we must be on top of the issue in order to address it.

Most western police forces have helicopters available to them. I know the former minister and the current minister say that they are not necessary. I think it is now time to look at resourcing our police with that piece of technology. We need to make certain that, whether it be our SERT squad or whichever other unit needs to use this device, our police officers can go out and conduct their surveillance and apprehension duties and have the right technology available to them—in this case, helicopters—to

manoeuvre and do the job properly. While we have the numbers on the ground, which is good, every other state bar Queensland has a helicopter. I think it is time that we saw that resource put in place here.

The people to whom this bill is directed have the resources to outsmart the police and law enforcement bodies. It is also important to recognise that the South Australian bill has been tested in the courts, and I know that has been raised in the House this afternoon. I am certainly not in the business of saying, 'Ha, ha! Look at that,' but we really need to be looking at the flaws in that South Australian legislation and make certain that the Queensland legislation is going to stand up. In a letter to the honourable member for Bundamba, Jo-Ann Miller, the chair of the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee, the minister said—

> The orders are about protecting the community and not about the punishment of individuals and therefore the test does not require proof to the criminal standard.

I would have thought that everything in this legislation would be top shelf. Again, this brings me back to clause 25. Later in that letter the minister states—

> Clause 25 empowers police to enter premises and search and seize things prohibited under a control order, however, the Supreme Court controls the use of this power with clause 19(8) allowing the court to impose conditions on the use by a police officer of the powers. The Supreme Court similarly controls police powers in relation to enforcement of public safety orders and fortification removal orders.

One of the good aspects of this legislation is these fortification removal orders. Anybody who does not let police enter a premises would be under suspicion straightaway for being guilty of something or hiding something. In that case these fortification powers are absolutely essential to this bill working properly, and I know that it will. That aspect is good. I believe that the Supreme Court in this case has more teeth than the police do in bringing these people to justice and making certain that they are put through the justice system in a way in which there can be a conviction. I feel there is too much of a safety net there that is holding the police back. I have spoken to a lot of police and they have reservations about some of the aspects of this, too. I know the Queensland Police Union does.

In that letter to the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee the Attorney-General also stated—

> The Committee is concerned with the fact that an informant can not be called to give evidence.

I would be concerned, too. If the informant has that material available he or she should be able to give evidence. The letter further states—

> However, the court is able to require the author of the affidavit, that is the police officer who handles the informant, to attend court to give evidence and be cross-examined by the COPIM.

It is all very well for the police officer to be examined, but if there is going to be a question mark over the material available and if there are going to be certain requirements imposed by the court it is going to be very difficult in some cases to get a conviction. Remember that most times this criminal element that we are talking about regarding this legislation has certainly got the money behind them to be able to get the best legal advice and the best defence in the land. We saw what happened in South Australia. I hope that the Attorney in his wisdom will look very closely at what happened in South Australia and at the amendments that the shadow minister will move during the debate on the clauses as we progress through tonight and tomorrow.

I do not believe that anybody in this state should be paying lip-service to this legislation. I say to government members tonight: it is very important that we recognise that, if there are teeth missing from this piece of legislation, the government immediately brings the legislation back and gives it the teeth it deserves. Places like the United States have legislation that is harsher than this, and this afternoon the shadow Attorney made reference to Canada and we are aware of the laws in some countries of Europe. I know for a fact that some of the police forces in Australia have a more definite thought on organised crime search and surveillance in terms of bringing them to justice than we do in Queensland. I say this to the police minister and the Attorney, because they are the two ministers responsible for law and order in this state: it is absolutely paramount that our police be given the tools they need to ensure that they can work in a safe environment and bring this element of society to justice and put them where they should be—behind bars—with the security of a court system that is going to impose those penalties to keep our community safe.

Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (8.00 pm): I rise to speak against the Criminal Organisation Bill 2009 which is before the House this evening. I will premise my contribution to this debate by noting the speaking list for this bill. For such a piece of legislation and the fact that we on this side of the House have received so many interjections and accusations from those opposite of being in bed with bikies and outlaw motorcycle gangs, 70 per cent of LNP members are on the list to speak. How many of the 51 government members are speaking to this legislation? Fifteen per cent! Yet those opposite have the audacity to throw accusations across the chamber at us all day about climbing in bed with bikies and having secret meetings and deals when only 15 per cent of the 51 members of the government have the courage to support this legislation.

An opposition member: They're lazy!

Mr BLEIJIE: That is exactly right.

Mr Johnson: Do you know why they won't get up to speak? They know we're right.

Mr BLEIJIE: That is exactly right. Some 70 per cent of opposition members are speaking to this bill. The bill seeks to disrupt and restrict the activities of organisations involved in serious criminal activity and the members and associates of those organisations. It will amend the Bail Act, the Criminal Code, the Evidence Act, the Judicial Review Act, the Legal Profession Act, the Parliament of Queensland Act and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act. This draconian piece of legislation will enable the Supreme Court of Queensland to make declarations and orders for the purposes of disrupting and restricting the activities of organisations in suspected serious criminal activity and of those people who are members or associates of that organisation. These powers include declaring groups of citizens a criminal organisation, applying control orders against individual members of declared organisations, stopping members of declared organisations from associating, and ordering the removal of fortifications such as metal gates which prevent police access. I note that the shadow Attorney-General has indicated that we have nothing against the fortification laws.

While the objective clause of this bill states that it is not parliament's intention that powers under this act be exercised in a way that diminishes the freedom of persons in the state to participate in advocacy, protest, dissent or industrial action, this bill may just do that. The government cannot assure the people of Queensland that there are sufficient safeguards in place to protect the fundamental personal liberties of individuals that could be breached by this bill. This bill is a knee-jerk reaction of the Bligh Labor government and a campaign to appear to be tough on organised crime. But, in effect, this bill removes the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people of Queensland.

In March this year we saw the bikie brawl at the Sydney Airport. On 30 March this year the Premier announced that Queensland would prepare tough new legislation to respond to the growing threat from outlaw motorcycle gangs. The announcement of the new antibikie laws came about after similar laws were enacted in South Australia and were soon to be introduced into the New South Wales parliament. I note, however, that while this bill was proposed to be tough new antibikie law, the term 'bikie' or 'motorcycle gangs' does not appear once in this legislation. In a joint ministerial statement with the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services, the Premier stated—

> We will not be left behind—Queensland will match any State in regard to the toughness to deal with the threat of outlaw motorcycle gangs.

Queensland absolutely should not be left behind, as it continually is by this Labor government. We should be leading the way, but we do not need to lead the way when it comes to encroaching on the freedoms and liberties of our people. The Bligh Labor government has a history of copying legislation and other material from its southern counterparts. I have said in this place before that it is a sad state in the history of politics in Queensland when this government looks to the southern states, in particular New South Wales, as a great example of legislative reform. The Premier went on to state that Queensland will match any state with regard to the toughness of our laws to deal with the threat of outlaw motorcycle gangs. The parliament should not be about matching other states. This parliament needs to enact a legislative agenda that is appropriate for the people of Queensland and the issues and the concerns that need to be addressed.

The government needs to be proactive in looking at the appropriate legislation and reform for the people of Queensland and not just react to other states reviewing their legislation or incidences that occur elsewhere, because we have had a history of this in Queensland. If members on this side can recall, we had a child safety crisis when the now Premier was the then child safety minister and the government rushed about getting things done. We then had a water crisis under Premier Peter Beattie. The government rushed around and set up the Queensland Water Commission, and it goes on and on and on in this state.

Mr Emerson: They're a crisis-driven government.

Mr BLEIJIE: This is a crisis management government; I take the interjection from the member for Indooroopilly, and this again is another piece of such legislation. They wake up one morning, the Premier gets the newspaper and says, 'Goodness gracious! There's a shooting with motorcycle gangs! What are we going to do? We're a very proactive state so we're going to do something about this.' Absolutely not! It is just reaction after crisis management and crisis management.

This government needs to be proactive, as I have just stated. I commend the officers and members of the Queensland Police Service who are protecting the people of Queensland and who are already fighting organised crime. They do an outstanding job and they put their lives at risk for the safety of others, and they need more resources and they need more funding and they need more support. But based on the argument we had in this place this afternoon where we were supporting the CMC for more resources, that will be knocked back. Not only was our motion knocked back; it was amended to say that the CMC is completely resourced and is not complaining. Yet its annual report says that it needs more funding.

Task Force Hydra, the Queensland outlaw motorcycle gang task force that was set up in September 2006, works with interstate law enforcement agencies and the Australian Crime

Commission's National Intelligence Task Force. From the establishment of the task force to March this year, police have made 332 arrests in relation to 931 charges as a result of the operation of the task force since its inception. These arrests and charges included attempted murder, arson, extortion, robbery and drug trafficking. Also as a result of this task force's operations, police have seized assets such as hydroponic houses, assets and money. I commend the members of the task force for their involvement in fighting organised crime. As criminologist Dr Paul Wilson indicated, the fact that there have been so many arrests indicates that existing laws are sufficient without the need to enact laws aimed directly at bikie gangs. We do not need to enact laws aimed directly at bikie gangs or other groups, but we do need to give more resources, more funding and more support to our police officers.

Mr Wilson: They're soft on bikie gangs!

Mr BLEIJIE: More support, Minister. When I say in this House that police need more support, that is not being soft. That is being appropriate to the circumstances. In a joint ministerial statement the Premier has stated that she is determined to do whatever it takes to give the Queensland Police Service the tools it needs to tackle the threat head-on. This bill is not one of those tools and will not equip the Queensland Police Service to effectively tackle organised crime. We need to resource our Police Service with increased funding and with increased staffing. This bill does none of that. This bill is an attack on the right of freedom of association. While it is currently intended for motorcycle gangs, once again this bill does not mention the term 'bikie' or 'motorcycle gangs', and this piece of legislation could be used against any group that may fall into disfavour regardless of the purpose of their gathering.

While I agree that people need to be protected from organised crime, there must also be the protection of personal liberties such as the freedom of association. The Premier and the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services have stated that people who do the right thing have nothing to fear. I will repeat that: people who do the right thing have nothing to fear. I say to the people of Queensland that, with this government, they do have something to fear. This bill encroaches on their personal freedoms and liberties. A government that tries to remove these freedoms and liberties is a government that is to be feared.

While I am talking about having nothing to fear, today the Queensland government rejected a commission of inquiry proposed by the opposition. It beggars belief. It is a complete turnaround. On the one hand the Premier is telling Queenslanders that if people do the right thing they have nothing to fear. If only the same were applied to the Labor government. If it has nothing to hide then why, only some four hours ago, did it vote against the establishment of a commission of inquiry? Perhaps the Premier should heed her own words when she said to the people of Queensland, 'If you have done nothing wrong, then you have nothing to fear.'

Another essential freedom and one that goes to the heart of our legal system is the right to a fair trial. Every person in Queensland, regardless of whether they are part of organised crime, has the right to a fair trial. In effect, this bill removes that right. It removes the rule of evidence. It lowers the standard of the burden of proof that is ordinarily required in criminal proceedings from being beyond reasonable doubt to the standard that is required in civil proceedings. It allows for the employment of people in certain occupations to be refused merely on the reliance of criminal intelligence without them even having a conviction of a criminal offence. This bill denies the rules of natural justice. It introduces anti-association laws.

This bill allows for the introduction of past offences in proceedings. It allows for the introduction of evidence of the general bad character of the defendant without any action being taken on behalf of the defendant. It even allows a court to have regard to past convictions of former members or current members of an organisation who may have never associated with a person subject to a control order. In effect, this bill replaces the freedom of association with guilt of association.

Another fundamental principle of natural justice is that a defendant must have the power to face one's accusers. This bill provides that an informant cannot be called to give evidence—evidence provided to the Commissioner of Police that is being relied upon against the defendant. This bill limits a defendant's ability to access the records of a hearing and court transcripts. It removes the opportunity and the right of a defendant to challenge evidence that is being relied on to make orders and decisions. Every defendant in Queensland should be afforded the right to know the case that is being brought against them and the right to be heard in response to that information. That is a fundamental right of our legal system—the right to defend. How on earth can one defend when they do not know what they are defending?

In May 2007 my colleague the member for Burnett introduced a private member's bill into this placed called the Criminal Code (Organised Criminal Groups) Amendment Bill. In his response to that private member's bill, the then Attorney-General and minister for justice, the member for Toowoomba North, stated—

The fundamental right of freedom of association is potentially eroded ... because even innocent participation in an organised criminal group as defined may, in some way, contribute to the occurrence of criminal activity by the group.

The then minister, the member for Toowoomba North, stated further—

The bill purports to target outlaw motorcycle gangs and organised criminals. However, if given the interpretation intended, the offence provision may in fact target persons who are not themselves engaging in any criminal activity ... Social groups and culturally relevant organisations could be targeted, resulting in prosecution of people based on race, ethnicity or membership of a social group.

...

A one-size-fits-all response is therefore not the answer to this complex problem. In any event, such an approach is unlikely to be effective in targeting organised criminal groups which may operate under the cover of legitimate business enterprises.

Here we have the Labor government trying to enact a bill that will erode the right of freedom of association that could result in the prosecution of people based on race, ethnicity or membership of a social group and that seeks to be a one-size-fits-all, knee-jerk response. That is not the answer to the complex problem of organised crime. Based on the former Attorney-General's speech, I can understand why he spoke out against this bill in the caucus meeting.

One of the key differences between that private member's bill and the bill that is now before the House is that, under the private member's bill, the tough anti-organised crime law would be tested before a judge and a jury in an open and accountable way—not as proposed by the Bligh Labor government under this bill, that is, behind closed doors. Mark Le Grand, a senior Brisbane barrister and a former member of the former National Crime Authority and Queensland's Criminal Justice Commission, states in his submission—

This type of legislation fundamentally alters the balance between the state and its citizens, between investigator and suspect, and between prosecutor and defendant. In doing so it has swept aside many basic common law protections.

I refer the House to the submission made by the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties in October 2009, which stated—

The proposed legislation is so radical and far reaching that it should have been subject to the stringent Law Reform Commission process of an Issues Paper, a Discussion Paper and then a Final Report.

The Queensland Council for Civil Liberties is not the only organisation to reject this bill. The Law Society, the Bar Association—both key organisations in Queensland—are opposed to the enactment of this bill. Even a former Labor member of this House, Peter Pyke, stated in the media yesterday—

It is well known in legal circles that both former Attorneys-General Dean Wells and Kerry Shine are vehemently opposed to the bill, and there are other members of the ALP caucus who understand that social justice will be seriously damaged by the passing of this draconian Bill that Genghis Khan would have been proud of.

I note with particular interest that the member for Toowoomba North and the member for Murrumba, who are both former Attorneys-General and who spoke out against this legislation in caucus, are both speaking to this bill tonight, which comes as a complete surprise. I look forward to hearing their contributions.

We are talking about tampering with people's rights to associate. That could be broadly interpreted. How can we place control orders on someone who may be innocently associating with others who may be conspiring in a criminal activity and they have no idea, but we are going to punish them? As we are talking about the rights of the individuals and freedoms, I could not let an opportunity pass to quote the following couple of sentences—

Consequently, Labor will give effect to important workplace rights that are essential to a functioning democracy.

This paper then lists a few of them. I say to the members on this side of the chamber: guess what one of them is? Freedom of association. The paper then goes on about respecting choice. This is what it says—and I urge all of those opposite to listen very carefully—

Labor believes freedom of association is a basic democratic right for all Australian workers.

Guess who wrote that? That was written by the honourable Kevin Rudd, the leader of the Labor Party. So in 2007 the leader of the Labor Party, in *Forward with Fairness*, says that Labor believes that freedom of association is a basic democratic right for all Australians. Yet the Premier and the Queensland Labor Party do not believe in that right. But Kevin Rudd, the federal Labor leader, believes in that right of association. I notice that the member for Chatsworth has been standing on his feet during my speech. He is ready to jump next. I will table this report and he can read it out, too, because in it the federal Labor leader is saying that Labor believes in freedom of association. Yet Anna Bligh and this government does not and this Attorney-General does not. That document is titled *Forward with Fairness* and it is dated 2007.

Tabled paper: 'Forward with Fairness: Labor's plan for fairer and more productive Australian workplaces', April 2007, Kevin Rudd MP, Labor leader, and Julia Gillard MP, shadow minister for employment and industrial relations [1488].

When reading through this legislation, ticking all the boxes that the Supreme Court has to satisfy when determining whether one has been involved or has been associated with a serious criminal association and then they set certain control orders, a few people came to mind. I will list them: Gordon Nuttall comes to mind, Merri Rose comes to mind, Keith Wright comes to mind, Bill D'Arcy comes to

mind, Mike Kaiser—a self-confessed vote rorter—comes to mind. The Premier in this place gave Nuttall a glowing endorsement.

The issue here should not be about the associations of individuals, it should be about the crimes committed. If I look at all those people I have just mentioned and look across the table here, one could potentially argue that the Queensland Labor Party is a serious criminal organisation because five of its members are in jail, have served jail or are currently before the CMC and there are certainly those on that side of the House who have associated with them.

The penalties here are contained in the Criminal Code. The Criminal Code deals with the issues. This bill does not need to be debated in this House tonight. Give the police more resources so that they can effectively prosecute these people. This week when drugs were on the way to schoolies the police caught them without having this bill enacted. The law was not passed this week; we are debating it today and the police still managed to catch the guy. I challenge the members opposite to not simply toe the party line but to come on this side and support the right to freedom of association in this state.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! The member's time has expired.

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. I was just interjected by a member saying, 'Sit down, stupid'. I take personal offence at what the member for Keppel said and I ask him to withdraw that interjection.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member finds the statement offensive.

Mr HOOLIHAN: I withdraw.

Mr KILBURN (Chatsworth—ALP) (8.20 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Criminal Organisation Bill that has been presented in the House. I am a member of the Attorney-General's caucus committee and as such I was involved in discussions around the development of this bill. This bill has been developed in response to a perceived increase in criminal activity and violence amongst organised crime gangs in Australia. A number of recent high-profile cases have raised that public awareness of the issue and have demonstrated that criminal networks are becoming more diverse and difficult to investigate.

From the outset I acknowledge that this bill has caused a fair deal of discussion amongst government and caucus members, and so it should. I would be extremely disappointed if a bill of this importance did not create a great deal of discussion. It would be very disappointing. We did discuss this bill. There were a number of changes made to it to ensure that we could be happy with it when it was brought to the House. The description by the member for Southern Downs of a knock-down brawl in caucus is laughable. It is just a bit wide of the mark. I think a knock-down brawl is more a description of what goes on in a coalition party room when they are discussing climate change or the leadership. It was not a knock-down brawl; it was a mature debate and the bill is the better for that.

I do not take lightly any bill that could impact on the rights of any Queenslanders. I have particular concerns about any bill that would affect the rights of people to associate, as we have just so amazingly heard from the member for Kawana. For this reason I will admit that I had some serious concerns about the legislation that was passed in South Australia and New South Wales. But let us be clear: this is not the same legislation that was passed in South Australia and New South Wales. It is different. Going on about what happened in New South Wales and South Australia is pointless because there are a lot of differences in this bill from those bills. I will go through what those differences are shortly.

I am pleased that the concerns that we raised, quite legitimately, with the Attorney-General and the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services have been addressed. I congratulate the way the Attorney-General made himself available to listen to the concerns of government and caucus committee members, and make amendments and changes to this bill that have made it much more acceptable than those bills in other states. The commitment of the Attorney-General to work with the committee is to be commended. I personally thank him for his understanding and commitment to an effective consultation process that went on during the drafting of this bill.

Any criminal bill that imposes any type of criminal sanction must, by definition, affect the rights of somebody. If a person goes to jail, their rights, have been affected. The task for government, as always, is to walk the fine line between personal freedom and public safety. That task is not easy and it is not always straightforward but that is what this bill is trying to do. The discussions we had were about making sure that we had the balance right between public safety, looking after the interests of the citizens of this state and the personal freedoms of those same people.

I am a motorcycle rider. I rode my motorbike in here last night. One day I hope to join the Ulysses Club and, as their motto suggests, grow old disgracefully. I am aware that there are concerns that this bill is purely about bikies and will adversely affect honest, law-abiding motorcycle riders. However, after reading the bill and after discussions that I have had with the Attorney-General I am confident this is simply not the case. The claims by the member for Mudgeeraba that we will start targeting religious schools, organisations and sporting groups are just so ridiculous that it defies belief. What she is

actually saying is that the police in this state would go out and target a Catholic school, a football club or a sporting organisation. The first thing that she is suggesting is that the police in this state are so corrupt or evil that they would go out and target these organisations. This process starts from the police, not from the Attorney-General or members in this House. The suggestion is that police members will go and attack these groups. That is ridiculous claim No. 1. The suggestion is the matter will go to the court and the Public Interest Monitor will also support an attack on a religious school or a sporting club. That is ridiculous claim No. 2. Then, to top it all off, we have a slur against the Supreme Court, because not only are the police evil, not only is COPIM not going to stop it, but, according to the member for Kawana, the Supreme Court will allow the police to target legitimate sporting clubs and schools. Wake up! It is not going to happen. It is ridiculous.

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. I never said that the Supreme Court is targeting sporting groups. I never mentioned sporting groups in my speech. I ask the member to withdraw his comments.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Mr KILBURN: That was the member for Mudgeeraba I was speaking about. It is not all about you.

Mr Horan: You said the member for Kawana. I heard you.

Mr KILBURN: I said the member for Kawana said one thing, I said the member for Mudgeeraba said we were going to attack schools.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Chatsworth has the call. Please direct your comments through the chair.

Mr KILBURN: Let us put that to bed for a start. That is just pure scaremongering and making ridiculous statements hoping to get a grab in the newspaper tomorrow. I think even the *Courier-Mail* is above that. The behaviour that this bill is aimed at stopping, and let us not beat around the bush, is that of criminal organisations of all types in this state, not just bikie gangs, that are involved in murder, extortion, drug manufacture and supply as well as numerous violent attacks and acts of brutality. I want to make it clear that violence perpetrated by anyone is unacceptable. I believe that the people in my electorate expect me to support actions that give law enforcement agencies the powers needed to stop law-abiding citizens being harassed, intimidated and subjected to violence by people with no regard for the rules of a civil and respectful society.

This harassment has historically been used to threaten, harass and intimidate witnesses to prevent them from giving evidence in criminal prosecutions, and it is time that this type of behaviour was stopped and witnesses provided with the opportunity to give their evidence free from the threat of retribution. Let us be quite clear about what this bill is and what it is not. The powers allowed in this bill are not to be exercised in a way that diminishes the freedoms of persons in this state to participate in advocacy, protest, dissent or industrial action. But let us be very clear that there has been another law that was aimed at stopping people conducting legitimate industrial action, and that was called WorkChoices. I cannot remember the civil libertarians on that side of this House standing up and bleating on too much when Howard rammed through his WorkChoices legislation, which gave Minister Andrews the right to declare someone a person of bad character. He and he alone could declare someone a person of bad character and those people were unable to carry out the role of a union official. That is the type of legislation that those opposite supported. Those members opposite have no credibility when it comes to this supposed revelation of civil liberties.

This is not an attack on legitimate organisations. I commend the Attorney-General for listening to and acting on the concerns of members in this regard. The statement that says that those types of things are not to be included makes sure that the powers in this bill are not misused, particularly in the case of industrial organisations. As I said, we have seen very recently the appalling attack on unions by the Liberal National Party and its continued vilification of the union movement. I simply could not trust it to use these powers fairly if it ever formed government, God forbid. I am pleased this statement has been included in the bill.

Contrary to what some observers may contend, this bill will not allow for the harassment of groups or organisations over minor infringements. The court must be satisfied—that is, the court and not the Attorney-General—that the members of an organisation are associating for the purpose of engaging in or conspiring to engage in serious criminal activity and the organisation is an unacceptable risk to the safety, welfare and order of the community. If people carrying out that sort of behaviour feel that they are being harassed, good! A serious criminal activity is defined as an indictable offence punished by at least seven years jail.

It was interesting to hear the previous speaker, the member for Gregory, say that he was concerned that there were too many safeguards, which would slow down the processes of the police to get their information through the court. One member on the LNP side argued that there are not enough safeguards, schoolchildren will be rounded up and put into jails and all sorts of other ridiculous claims, and another member from the same party, supposedly, argued that there are too many safeguards. You cannot have it both ways.

Let us at look the safeguards proposed in the Criminal Code (Organised Criminal Groups) Amendment Bill, which was mentioned by the member for Kawana in his speech, presented in this House by the member for Burnett on 24 May 2007.

Mr Bleijie: What did Kerry say about that?

Mr KILBURN: The member has already read that out. It is on the record. People can go and check it. I will tell the member what was in that bill. I wonder about the concerns of the so-called burning civil libertarians on the other side of the House when that bill was introduced. I also wonder where their burning care about civil liberties will be when the member for Southern Downs presents his bill about surrogacy, which proposes to take away the rights of same-sex couples. That will be very interesting. It will be interesting to see what the Council for Civil Liberties will have to say about that, seeing as it is the opposition's new mentor.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! Member for Chatsworth, you are talking about a bill before the House. Please move on to something else.

Mr KILBURN: Most of those opposite have no credibility when it comes to this sort of debate. Today it was again proven that the shadow Attorney does not understand the separation of powers. Therefore, I understand that he will not understand the safeguards that are built into the bill to ensure clear separation between the executive and the judiciary when it comes to declaring a criminal organisation or a control order.

Let us look at what the LNP offered on this front. I quote from the member for Burnett's second reading speech on the Criminal Code (Organised Criminal Groups) Amendment Bill. He said—

The legislation makes it clear that to be a member of an organised criminal group includes associate members and prospective members, however they are described in the group. Subsection (2) makes it clear that the wearing of clothing, patches, insignia or symbols relevant to the group would be considered proof of membership to an organised criminal group. Speaking simply, this amendment ensures that if police produce credible evidence before a court that a group of people have participated in organised criminal activities and police also produce credible evidence that a person is a member of that group—

Just by wearing a T-shirt with their insignia on it—

then that person would be facing a five-year jail term.

They would be sentenced to five years jail just for wearing a T-shirt or a patch. Where are the safeguards? It is an absolute joke. We have put in place a COPIM to ensure that there are safeguards. We have put in place Supreme Court judges—

Mr Messenger interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Burnett, I ask you to cease interjecting like that. You are disrupting the House. The member for Chatsworth has the call.

Mr KILBURN: The opposition put up a ridiculous bill that contained no safeguards and then wondered why then Attorney Kerry Shine had something to say about it.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr KILBURN: The member for Kawana should read the ridiculous bill that was introduced by the member for Burnett. He should look at the sorts of civil liberties that that bill impinged upon. That would be an eye opener, even for him. I will continue to quote from the second reading speech of the member for Burnett. This goes back to what the member for Kawana had to say. It might sound familiar. The member for Burnett said—

People who are members of organisations that do not participate in organised criminal activities have nothing to fear from this legislation.

I can assure honourable members that they had a lot more to fear from that legislation than they have from this. The member for Burnett continued—

I call on the Premier, the Queensland Labor Party and Independent members ... to join with the Queensland coalition and take a stand against organised crime—

Well, tonight they failed on that score—

by fast-tracking the debate and supporting this bill.

Here we go; this is the usual stuff we hear—

For the sake of the innocent, our children, the aged and justice for families, it is time to tell thugs, murderers, rapists and drug dealers that they are not welcome in Queensland.

Apparently, today they are welcome. They are welcomed back because today the opposition does not have the courage or the guts to support a bill that will deal with organised crime in this state. So welcome back and well done! We can see the level of natural justice that the LNP really thinks is required. Under the member for Burnett's bill, simply wearing a T-shirt with a motorcycle group insignia on it would have landed you in jail for five years. The LNP has no credibility—

Mr MESSENGER: I rise to a point of order. I have listened long enough.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is this a point of order?

Mr MESSENGER: Yes, it is.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Chatsworth, take your seat.

Mr MESSENGER: The member for Chatsworth is misleading the House. I find his words offensive and I ask that they been withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are two issues there. One is that you find it offensive and I can ask the member to withdraw. If it is an issue of misleading the House, there is another process to adopt.

Mr MESSENGER: I find them highly offensive and ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Chatsworth, you have been asked to withdraw.

Mr KILBURN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I withdraw the words that I quoted directly from Mr Messenger's speech.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Chatsworth, order!

Mr KILBURN: I directly quoted from the speech by the member for Burnett—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Chatsworth!

Mr KILBURN: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Unreservedly, member for Chatsworth.

Mr KILBURN: Unreservedly.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

Mr KILBURN: As we have just seen, the LNP has no credibility. Obviously, it lacks courage. It has really squimped out tonight. It lacks the courage to support a bill that provides the police and other law enforcement agencies with the tools needed to attack organised crime whilst ensuring sufficient safeguards to protect innocent citizens from victimisation. We have spoken about them. The COPIM to act on behalf of the public interest, the seven-year sunset clause built into the bill to ensure that it will be reviewed, a review of the legislation after five years, and a yearly report to the Law, Justice and Safety Committee are just a few of the safeguards.

We could go on about the hypocrisy that we have seen in this place. It is clear that this bill has been discussed and debated amongst people on this side of the House to ensure it provides the strength to deal with what is undoubtedly a problem of organised crime, whilst protecting the citizens of Queensland. Once again I thank the Attorney-General and the Minister for Police for the mature way they have handled this debate, compared to the ravings that we have heard from the other side on this issue. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr EMERSON (Indooroopilly—LNP) (8.37 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Criminal Organisation Bill 2009. While the term 'bikie' does not appear in the legislation, according to the Attorney-General the legislation is targeted at groups such as outlaw motorcycle gangs. The government claims that this bill will disrupt and dismantle the serious criminal activity of criminal organisations. Tackling organised crime is a major commitment from the LNP. We need effective laws coupled with appropriately resourced law agencies. However, we must also always be cautious that the laws that we introduce do not unreasonably restrict the freedom and liberties of individuals, including the freedom of association.

The sentiment behind this bill to disrupt organised crime is commendable. However, despite one or two good initiatives, it seeks to achieve this through potentially dangerous means. The real risk here is how far these laws can reach and the opportunities for them to be abused. As the Attorney-General has said, the bill allows the police to request the Supreme Court to declare an organisation as criminal and place control orders on individuals, preventing them from associating with others, patronising certain places and holding particular jobs. The police will have heightened powers, lower standards of evidence and no real accountability.

In his review of the bill, the Queensland Law Society president, Ian Berry, warned that the big problem with the legislation is that the court can be forced to make decisions on applicants based only on criminal intelligence from police informants. The government's proposed safeguards do not allow for intelligence to be scrutinised or for the police informant to be identified in any way. Hearings involving intelligence are to be conducted in secret, and accused persons, not even their legal representatives, are not permitted to hear evidence against them. There is every chance the information provided to the court could be false or misleading. There is also the potential that such information has been manipulated by the police.

The president of the Bar Association of Queensland, Michael Stewart SC, also raised concerns about the legislation. He warned that the legislation would allow information that would not stand up in a criminal trial and would not have to be true to obtain a court order. He said—

This is a watershed moment for the Queensland justice system and looks like a return to the days before the Fitzgerald inquiry.

Mr Lawlor: The old National Party days, hey?

Mr EMERSON: I take the interjection from the minister. Let me repeat that: the Bar Association president says that it is a return to pre-Fitzgerald days. Both the Law Society and the Bar Association raised legitimate and disturbing concerns—

Mr Dick: Did you consult with them about the commissions of inquiry bill? What did they say about the commissions of inquiry bill?

Mr EMERSON: Obviously the Attorney-General cannot hear me. I will say it again so that he can hear. Both the Law Society and the Bar Association raise legitimate and disturbing concerns that these laws have the potential to lead to the abuse of rights and open the door to police corruption.

The Queensland Council for Civil Liberties has also raised serious concerns. The vice president of the Council for Civil Liberties, Terry O'Gorman, has described it as the worst legislation he has ever seen. He said—

For the first time in Queensland's entire history ... a person can be convicted of a criminal offence and be sent to jail on the basis of secret evidence which neither he nor his lawyer is able to see, be told about, let alone be cross-examined on.

The government has attempted to make these utterly draconian and unprecedented laws look more respectable by putting a Supreme Court judge as a supposed supervisor of the secret evidence scheme, but where evidence is secret and the target is prohibited from knowing what that evidence is, it doesn't matter whether a justice or God himself presides over the scheme.

Criminologist Paul Wilson has also warned of these laws. While rigorous investigation of individual offenders and effective crime prevention schemes should be encouraged, Professor Wilson said that there is no evidence that supports the effectiveness of tougher laws targeting groups rather than individuals. It is important to note that the Queensland Police Commissioner, Bob Atkinson, says that his officers will not abuse these laws. He said—

We will not in any way attempt to abuse the opportunity we have with this legislation, we will exercise common sense and discretion.

This assurance seems rather naive given recent evidence such as the CMC's *Dangerous liaisons* report or the Fitzgerald report from two decades ago. Under legislation where police know that all evidence they put up is secret and cannot be challenged, the way is open for police to lie and fabricate evidence, with the police knowing that in a secret evidence regime where police cannot even be cross-examined police lies would never be revealed.

The public should be in no doubt that the LNP believes strongly in fighting organised crime. But this legislation raises legitimate concerns about the arbitrary removal of the right to freedom of association; the stripping away of natural justice, depriving the accused of the right to the 'criminal intelligence' which is presented against them; and the absence of sufficient safeguards to balance the breaches of fundamental legislative principles.

University of Queensland law lecturer Andreas Schloenhardt has warned that laws such as this are open to abuse—that they can be used to target community groups or even political parties. Others clearly share these fears. I see media reports of concerns within Labor's own ranks about these laws, with two former Attorneys-General opposing them and comparing them to the outlawing of the African National Congress in South Africa and the subsequent jailing of Nelson Mandela.

We do need a carefully developed and meaningful response to organised crime in Australia, but it needs to have boundaries and it needs to have safeguards. The Labor government thinks that it can put these laws up and its quota of 'tough on crime stance' will be satisfied for its term. These laws will not resolve the problem. The Queensland Police Service and the Crime and Misconduct Commission are both underfunded and underresourced. With enough funding and other resources, these bodies will be better enabled to protect the community without dangerously infringing civil liberties.

In 1984 George Orwell wrote of a world where you are told where to work and where you can go, where you are not entitled to know all the evidence against you, where the court is entitled to know your past criminal record and associations and where it only has to be merely satisfied of your guilt. We need to combat organised crime, but this is not the way.

Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (8.43 pm): I rise today to contribute to the debate on the Criminal Organisation Bill. In short, the bill aims to tackle organised crime by giving the court power to declare an organisation as criminal. Much has been written about this bill—some for and much against. Similar versions of the bill were introduced in South Australia and New South Wales, yet months later the legislation continues to be debated in those states. In South Australia, declaration of a particular bikie gang as a criminal organisation was challenged and ultimately overturned in the South Australian Supreme Court. Suffice to say that when it comes to criminal organisations the Queensland government would be making a terrible mistake to assume there is a clear-cut, black-and-white legislative solution.

Though the term 'bikie' is never used in the bill, the bill clearly targets bikies. Thus, a fair understanding of bikie gangs is required. There is no doubt that elements of some bikie gangs can be dangerous. I remember very vividly, as a young student living in Sydney at the time, the media's coverage of the Milperra massacre. To date, our state has avoided the worst of these activities, but we should not for one minute assume that we are immune. We want our state to be safe.

There is no doubt that some bikie gang elements are a threat to that safety. According to the Australian Crime Commission, the ACC, bikie gangs have a 'strong presence in many illicit markets throughout Australia and maintain strong and complex criminal networks'. Certain activities include extortion, drug manufacturing and distribution.

Former federal Attorney-General Robert McClelland estimated that outlaw motorcycle gangs cost the Australian community some $15 billion each year. But we must show some restraint, some caution, because there is equal, if not more, evidence to suggest that motorcycle clubs are beneficial. According to Dr Arthur Veno, a professor at Monash University, most members are not criminals. Rather, members can be victims of dysfunctional families and are drawn to motorcycle clubs because of their 'clear sets of rules and rapid punishment for breaking them'. Fink's spokesman Ferret says, 'Bikies have got jobs, families, mortgages, just like everyone else. Maybe we're not like everyone else but,' he asks, 'if we're not criminals, why are we being treated like them?' The following is a testimony of Robbie Fowler, President of the Outcasts Motorcycle Club—

I never respected or liked myself I hated Authority and I resent woman, I was released in 1990 went to the Bike club, got married and had five children.

...

One must understand the club saved my life and my liberty, as my actions positive or negatives, reflects as you know on my Brothers in the club.

As I said before, there is no clear-cut solution for addressing the criminal element of such gangs. This issue does need addressing, and I agree that tackling organised crime is a good thing. However, the proposed legislation seems to manipulate the situation and goes too far. It is like treating a bruise on the skin with a plaster cast. For example, if a child steals money from a parent, the parent may not leave their wallet lying around and is also more likely to watch the wallet since that is the object of abuse. The parent may discipline the child and will most certainly explain the ethics of stealing, but the parent does not banish the child from the house. More importantly, the parent does not banish all other children from the house because one child disobeyed the rules.

The legislation's intent is clearly to disband bikie gangs. Perhaps the hope is that members will accept this outcome, sell their bikes and go home to their families. I do not make it a habit to be a sceptic, but I do suggest that if these gangs are outlawed altogether they will find new ways to meet in secret and continue their criminal activities. This will only make it harder to catch the real criminals. I am not the only one who thinks so. Mark Findlay, a professor of criminal justice at the University of Sydney, says, 'Criminal members of declared organisations will be driven further underground.'

The ACC chief executive officer, John Lawler, says that gangs are 'becoming increasingly sophisticated'. So it raises the question: is this the best way to address this criminal activity? It sounds unlikely. They will just reappear in another form. This leads me to believe that the real issue is not being addressed. As it stands, rights are being abused. The government states that the bill is 'not about targeting people who ride motorcycles' but rather is about 'cracking down on dangerous criminals and ensuring community safety.' We would all agree that safety is a worthwhile pursuit, but it must not come at the expense of rights and freedom being jeopardised.

Rights infringed on in this bill are numerous. The Scrutiny of Legislation Committee's *Legislation Alert* lists them all. They include clauses which would require satisfaction of a lower standard of proof than the criminal standard; clauses requiring the court to have regard to 'any conviction for current or former members of the organisation'; clauses allowing the court to consider evidence of past associations; clauses which may affect freedom of movement; clauses which would reverse the presumption in favour of bail; clauses providing for a criminal organisation declaration to last for five years unless revoked or renewed; clauses which may affect rights to access the courts; clauses which have the potential to affect employment rights and liberties of individuals; clauses relating to criminal organisation orders regarding children and young people; clauses which have the potential to affect property rights; clauses excluding decisions made under the Criminal Organisation Act from the operation of the Judicial Review Act 1991; clauses which may be inconsistent with principles of natural justice; clauses which would override common law protections of the right to silence; and clauses which would confer officials with immunity from civil liability.

There are so many question marks, so many challenges to an individual's rights and liberties, but let me look at one in more detail—that of lowering the burden of proof. In Woolmington v Director of Public Prosecutions in 1935, Viscount Sankey, for the House of Lords, said—

Throughout the web of the English Criminal Law one golden thread is always to be seen, that it is the duty of the prosecution to prove the prisoner's guilt ... If, at the end of and on the whole of the case, there is a reasonable doubt, created by the evidence given by either the prosecution or the prisoner ... the prosecution has not made out the case and the prisoner is entitled to an acquittal. No matter what the charge or where the trial, the principle that the prosecution must prove the guilt of the prisoner is part of the common law of England and no attempt to whittle it down can be entertained.

In Thompson v The Queen in 1989, Mason CJ and Dawson J of the High Court of Australia said—

The fundamental principle of our criminal law is that the accused's guilt must be established beyond reasonable doubt. The law requires that standard of proof of the commission of a criminal offence in order to eliminate or minimise the chance that an innocent person might be found guilty with all the grave consequences that such an erroneous condemnation would have for the accused, for our system of justice and for the community generally.

Is the LNP tough on crime? You bet. But I also belong to a party that, as stated by the federal shadow Attorney-General, George Brandis, privileges the rights of the individual over the power of the state. John Dowd QC, President of the International Commission of Jurists, said—

Once the public is desensitised to issues on civil liberties and rule of law and basic civil liberties safeguards, people become insensitive to other legislation.

Under these laws, certain gang members will be restricted from owning weapons, working in certain industries such as the security industry or holding a liquor licence. I must ask: how is this freedom? Furthermore, how does it relate to bikie crime? This bill will affect innocent bikies. The bill assumes the hundreds of Queenslanders who are members of motorcycle clubs simply because they love riding their motorcycles have nothing to fear. However, Tim Meehan, a Brisbane criminal defence lawyer, said—

Unless the legislation is thoroughly examined, there is a risk of loopholes which could penalise innocent members of the community.

The bill states anyone under anti-association orders could face criminal sanctions for associating with other gang members more than three times in a 12-month period. This is despite assurances that law-abiding members of the public have nothing to fear. These laws take us closer to a state in which you could be regarded as a criminal merely for having contact with so-called outlaw bikers, rather than actually committing any criminal act. Meehan raised this point: what about bike owners who have bikes serviced at legitimate businesses run by gang members? Will they be accused of associating?

There are Christian bikies too. God's Squad members minister to the outlaw biker fraternity. They devote their efforts to those on the fringes of society. How will they minister if they are not allowed to contact such members more than three times in a 12-month period? Who is next? According to the legislation, groups of three or more can be declared a criminal organisation. If this is true, what about churches, sporting clubs or the ALP itself?

We cannot go down a path where we punish a whole group for an individual's crime, implementing what is known as guilt by association. Isn't such a move criminal itself? It is certainly against every right and liberty we hold dear in this country? To quote Ferret again—

Behaviour of the few doesn't give our state government the right to punish the majority.

So many stakeholders are against the bill, like the Queensland Law Society, the Bar Association, the Queensland Police Union and the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties. As other members have stated, former Attorneys-General and lawyers, Kerry Shine and Dean Wells, are both on the record as saying that the bill is equal to the 'outlawing of the African National Congress in South Africa and the subsequent jailing of Nelson Mandela'. Others, such as Nicholas Cowdery, the Director of Public Prosecutions, are concerned that there has been insufficient community consultation. Paul Wilson, a Bond University professor of criminology, stated—

There is no proof it will work, no evidence to support that this legislation will work.

There are many alternatives to this legislation for tackling the organised crime issue. For starters, we can better resource the current police services and organisations such as the CMC. The federal shadow minister for justice and public security has called for a quarantining of the ACC and Federal Police from budget cuts so they have the resources needed to fight bikie gangs and organised crime. To quote Dowd QC again—

If you want to crack down on law and order, use existing laws, which are by and large perfectly ample for that task. And give police better resources to enforce them.

To further add faith in the police force, Senator Steve Hutchins asked—

Do you really see the Sydney Airport beating as a covert criminal operation? I think police around the country have got enough authority to deal with this.

In concluding, I would like to share some further comments from eminent stakeholders regarding this legislation. Mr Terry O'Gorman, from the Council for Civil Liberties, said—

I do not accept that the organised crime problem is serious, let alone that it is out of control. Nor do I accept that any evidence has been put before you that the existing suite of police powers is inadequate to deal with it.

Dr Schloenhardt, a senior lecturer at the TC Beirne School of Law, said—

A better response would be one that aims at the key directors and financiers of criminal organisations and targets the wealth accumulated from drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, trafficking in persons, loan sharking, and other types of organised crime.

Dr Schloenhardt again said—

Confiscate clubhouse, bike, or badge. It's a better deterrent to crime than this legislation.

Paul Wilson, a criminologist at Bond University, said—

The fact that there have been many arrests (332 in 3 years) indicates that the existing laws are sufficient without the need to enact laws aimed directly at bikie gangs.

Clearly there is a very strong case to use what is already in place, what is already working. The ACC, since its creation in 2002, has broken 200 syndicates, made 1,357 arrests and seized property worth $120 million and drugs with a street value of $1 billion plus. If there is any doubt that it is not achieving enough, the first port of call should be additional resourcing, not additional legislation.

Dr DOUGLAS (Gaven—LNP) (8.57 pm): The Criminal Organisation Bill, it has been said, is being submitted to restrict and disrupt the activities of criminal organisations and their members and their associates.

Mr Watt interjected.

Mr Lawlor interjected.

Dr DOUGLAS: This bill will not achieve this objective.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! I would ask the minister and the member for Everton to take your seats. The member has only got to his feet. The member for Gaven has the call.

Dr DOUGLAS: This bill will not achieve this objective and will unwittingly draw in all sorts of people who were never intended to be included.

Labor Party members have internally had all sorts of disputes themselves over this bill, and the 186th version we see tonight is the end result. It is not quite a dog's breakfast, but it is the sort of policy you are likely to see dressed up as a legislative step that is to be sold as doing something when nothing was done for years. I need only remind members of how many years Labor refused to implement phone-tapping powers until they were out of step even with all their other state colleagues. We in the LNP will be opposing the bill. We are for law and order, but this is not the way to do it. It is ham-fisted and takes us back to the days of the Star Chamber when kings, dukes, lords and their equerries decided the fates of the unrepresented public. We have progressed.

The LNP also proposes to make a number of amendments to the bill. The amendments the Bligh Labor government has already made are grossly inadequate and lacking in substance. Our amendments should give the bill the kinds of checks and balances it should have had from its inception.

The great misconception about this bill is that it has been said that it is all about excluding bikie organisations. All of the ministerial statements and minister's press releases invoke criticism of anyone, including LNP members, opposing this bill. That same government machine has said that we in the opposition support bikie and outlaw motorcycle gangs; this is patently untrue. Whilst the fine print of this draconian legislation does not include bikie organisations, it also links all sorts of people from businesspeople through to church members and sporting groups. It has the effect of potentially severely limiting their freedoms.

In brief, the impact of this bill is that all the government has to do is present its evidence in a closed court in a prepared form where the individual or individuals affected have no capacity to defend themselves and may or may not know that it is even occurring. All of a sudden everyday people are going to find that they are being named, shamed and denied the ability to fraternise with friends and associates and they are deemed to be criminals.

This bill has plenty of definitions about what constitutes a criminal organisation and it is big on the implication that it is a genuine attempt to target criminal organisations. It is not. Everyone from the Law Society to the Council for Civil Liberties says so, too. This is anti-freedom of association legislation. It can and will almost certainly be used to intimidate and threaten opponents of this and any subsequent government. It is probably the kind of law that George Orwell referred to in *1984*.

Again, this bill is not just about bikie and outlaw motorcycle gangs, but this is how it is being marketed. If anyone wonders how it might be played out, I will give you an insight. Those government ministers, their bureaucrats and party machine officers just falsely link normal everyday people to bikies and outlaw motorcycle gangs by false linkages. I find it offensive in the extreme and I have personally experienced the type of nonsense that this sort of linkage by association can lead to. In the election campaign of 2006, the former minister for police publicly on the Gold Coast made grossly offensive and false statements linking my son to bikies because he had been at a function in a building owned by an outlaw motorcycle gang trust. My son was a 17-year-old schoolboy in his final year of school and was at the official post-formal function. Parents were in attendance as chaperones. Paid security was on site. I was not at the function nor had any role whatsoever in the organisation of that function. The then police minister and now Leader of the House made damning statements about my wife and me. She made outrageous claims about us as parents. Personally, I am quite happy to have the record of me and my wife as parents compared to that of the former minister.

Not one government member spoke in our defence and hell was unleashed via talk shows, talkback radio and voyeur night-time so-called current affairs television. This Labor machine fed the media onslaught. It was and is disgraceful. At the time I was involved in the election campaign as the returning member for Gaven, having been previously elected as the member in a by-election when the retiring member had gone to live in Thailand. His name is Mr Robert Poole and he is a very decent fellow and a loyal servant for the Labor Party and the public in general.

During that subsequent election campaign in September 2006, the false linking of my son, my family and me was conducted daily by all manner of Labor senior identities. Mail, both direct and indirect, from Peel Street, Labor headquarters, was sent out falsely claiming my son as being linked to bikies. He was harassed constantly. He developed pneumonia and missed a bulk of his examinations

that seriously affected his subsequent university studies. The member for Southport needs to listen to this. My son had no link to bikies then, before, or after in any way. I similarly have never had any link to bikies or outlaw motorcycle groups in any way.

The government and its lackeys continued to pursue this line and kept the claims rolling right up to the election. Subsequently, the public elected the former Labor member whom the Premier has now said personally needs to look at himself and is unsuited for politics. He was obviously not re-elected. He has now responded in equal measure by claiming the Premier is a foul-mouthed person. Personally, I do not share his view.

However, what was going on in Labor head office and just what were the people in marginal seats thinking? Does anyone ever say, 'Enough is enough; we have gone too far!'? By using this totally outrageous long-string link, a complete travesty of justice to all sorts of players occurred. As I have said before, if you have to win an election in this manner then I was happy to lose. However, this bikie linkage claim as part of this outrageous behaviour of this utterly irresponsible, gutter-dwelling, dictatorial government seriously weakens any subsequent argument that Labor wants to run on the issue of bikies.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! I remind the member to return to the purpose of the bill.

Dr DOUGLAS: I am. I do not believe any of this utter tripe that government members are feeding about the government—in this case relating to this bill—being serious about organised crime and outlawed motorcycle gangs.

This morning, in this House, the Deputy Premier condemned just about everyone for all sorts of outrageous personal claims and then made an utter fool of himself and repeated the claims about me permitting my son to attend a function in a building owned by an outlawed motorcycle gang. The Deputy Premier castigated me for allowing my son to go to an approved school function. What sort of world does he live in? To incorrectly try to link decent, law-abiding members of the public to outlaw motorcycle gangs is completely wrong. Yet that is what the government has already done and continues to do. Maybe my experience was a 'dry run' as the government may have been just trying it out to see what mileage it might gain.

My rights and liberties and those of my family were violated and this bill is going to legislate to allow this to happen routinely. It continues. Additionally, both the parliamentary and electoral processes were severely compromised in 2006. If government members have been convinced by their minister and his Bolshevik mates that this bill can be managed and it will make a difference, then they are plain wrong. I repeat, they are seriously mistaken. People like me will not cop it. Just because the federal anti-terrorism laws have not been challenged, do not think we will not see major challenges to this nonsense. For those whose thinking is a little slow, the dearth of challenges to the federal laws are because the anti-terrorism laws make sense. The converse is the case for this bill.

If the lawyers amongst the government rabble did not get up and shout this down in caucus they ought to be ashamed of themselves. I suggest that government members who have a spine should get up, refuse to speak in support of this bill, cross the floor and join their colleagues who do have a spine and vote this down. No Australian is going to be told who they are to associate with or, in this case, associate with by inference—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Stop the clock. Would members stop the crosschat across the chamber.

Dr DOUGLAS: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, for your protection. No Australian is going to be told who they are to associate with or, in this case, associate with by inference. However, this bill goes even further. Even if there was association by accident, then people are caught up by it.

All the substantial legal groups oppose this bill—the Queensland Law Society, the Bar Association, the police union and the Council for Civil Liberties. Yet what does the Bligh government do? It presses on, does not consult, and tries to ram this legislation through the House.

Various speakers have raised all sorts of future valid scenarios that will result from this bill. The member for Southern Downs has raised realistic examples that mirror my own experience. This is the real life impact of an ill-considered bill. It is no wonder that similar legislation was successfully challenged in South Australia, as it will be here.

The most effective method to restrict or even stop organised crime is to turn the money tap off. This is strongly supported by expert research. Once organised crime has severely restricted access to funds—both the illegal proceeds of crime and the ability to fund new activities—then it will usually move its activities or shrink its operations. These people do not commit crime when the internal rate of return is insufficient for the risk outlayed and where the capacity to launder the illegal cash is severely restricted. A cash economy plays into their hands and policies that do not restrict the effective tagging of funds—even as low as $100—is akin to putting one's head in the sand.

As I clearly stated in this House just over one month ago in the debate on the gambling bill, organised crime is laundering $2.2 billion in cash annually through Queensland poker machines alone. This area is where the greatest gains can be made on reducing crime, restricting the activities of organised crime and improving the restriction of illicit drug availability in Queensland. The price is a reduction in state tax revenue, but it is more than offset by the savings in crime occurrence and public health.

This so-called bikie bill will not achieve anything like this. So why is Labor now proposing such nonsense? What sorts of alarm bells on the issue of chasing the money trail do members of the opposition have to raise with this Bligh Labor government to get it to move on this point? Good regulations are proportionate, accountable, consistent, transparent and targeted. These proposals are none of these.

Mr Lawlor: Have you ever thought of reporting it?

Dr DOUGLAS: Member for Southport, let us just see what happens in a few years if it went to your grandchildren. Let us just see what you would say then. When evidence suggests a failure to actively promote the use of listening devices and the only recent use of those telephone interception powers is years after everyone else, then the regulations would not be seen to be proportionate. Without the public being allowed due process in open court, consistency and transparency are not addressed. If churches can be drawn into this legislation then, by definition, it is not targeted.

This bill fails the test of good regulatory practice and it will fail to do any of that which it is intended to address. Who is fooling whom here? How can anyone have any confidence in this Bligh Labor government to handle serious law and order issues when the response is this poorly considered approach? The unacceptable low standard of 'suggesting a link' is just not good enough. Is this the 'Clayton's criminal organisation's bill'—a bill about law and order that one makes when one does not really want to do anything? I can promise honourable members that the aftertaste will be shocking. It may not kill them, but the memory of it will last forever.

Mrs STUCKEY (Currumbin—LNP) (9.09 pm): I rise to speak to the Criminal Organisation Bill 2009 introduced into the House on 29 October by the Hon. Cameron Dick, the Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations. As members have heard, this side of the House is not supporting this legislation because of a number of concerns raised by the shadow Attorney-General, the honourable member for Southern Downs. These are concerns shared by members of the Queensland police force as well as the legal fraternity. The Attorney-General in his second reading speech said that this bill seeks to disrupt and restrict the activities of criminal organisations, their members and their associates. Every member of the LNP deems this form of crime with its far-reaching networks and recruitment drives as particularly insidious. We on this side of the House acknowledge that a range of tough measures need to be taken to arrest this underworld style of criminal activity. However, notwithstanding our strong commitment to fighting crime, we are not of the opinion that this legislation will sufficiently achieve its goals and neither are a variety of experts in this field.

Much publicity and public comment with regard to the content of this bill has preceded the introduction of the legislation we have before us today and indicates the intense interest in this subject. The objectives of this bill will allow the Supreme Court upon application by the Police Commissioner to make orders aimed at disrupting and restricting the activities of criminal organisations, with a particular focus on bikie gangs. The Supreme Court would then declare the organisation a criminal organisation, and this then gives rise to a control order. A control order prohibits a person from associating or communicating with specified persons or entering specified premises. The bill also allows for a public safety order to be made by the Supreme Court, which prohibits an individual or group from entering a specified premises, area or event. As mentioned in the explanatory notes, such an order impacts on rights and liberties.

In order to obtain a declaration for a criminal organisation, control order or public safety order, the bill allows for the use of secret criminal intelligence evidence. This would mean that admitted evidence would be withheld from the defendant and their lawyers and only seen by the Supreme Court judge. While it is important to protect covert police officers and not to prejudice an ongoing criminal investigation, it does affect natural justice by not giving the respondent the ability to argue the evidence against him or her. Critically, it does not give the judge or the Criminal Organisation Public Interest Monitor, who is present at hearings, the ability to question an informant as they are not called to the hearing. Instead, they must rely on an affidavit by the police officer who handles the informant—and bear in mind that the respondent or their lawyer does not get to scrutinise the affidavit or to question the police officer. Perhaps the Attorney would be kind enough to address why this is so in his summation. These are the main areas of objection raised by key stakeholders which are worthy of some deliberations by this government.

But what of the fundamental legislative principles that the Attorney so eagerly trumpets at every possible occasion to lambast the opposition with, one may well ask? According to the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee's *Legislation Alert No. 12 of 2009*, a raft of issues was identified in relation to this bill, including several clauses that may have insufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals,

possible inconsistency with natural justice, retrospective operation and concerns regarding interference with the independence and impartiality of the Supreme Court exercising powers under this legislation. An aspect of the bill that the LNP is happy to support is the fortification removal orders that allow for the removal of excessive fortifications at premises used in connection with serious criminal activity. There is no reasonable excuse for law-abiding organisations to be heavily reinforced, and they present an impediment—a deliberate one of course—when it comes to the issuing of search warrants.

In April 2009 a meeting of the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General agreed on a national approach to legislative and operational measures aimed at addressing organised criminal activities and violence among bikie gangs. Predictably, as is so often the case, the response from the Bligh government was to take the easy option and jump on the bandwagon of blindly outlawing bikie gangs. I make mention, as have other honourable members, of the fact that the word 'bikie' does not appear in this bill, yet it is clearly this group of people who are in the spotlight.

Since this bill was introduced into the House, the Bligh government has been forced to amend certain aspects, including banning bikies associating together. Despite these last-minute adjustments to the original bill, Labor chose to follow a reactive but supposedly populist path rather than taking the time to consult experts in the field to ensure that the most effective strategy was introduced. South Australia and New South Wales are the only two other states that have similar legislation, which was introduced in September 2008 and April 2009 respectively. Victoria has flatly refused to implement such measures, and the Northern Territory and Western Australia are currently debating whether they should.

The legislation is heavily based on the New South Wales legislation, which is an improvement on the South Australian legislation, but so far both have proved to be fairly ineffective. In South Australia only one bikie gang has become a declared organisation, that being the Finks Motorcycle Club, but no control orders have been issued against any members of the Finks. As for New South Wales, I am not aware of any bikie gangs to date becoming a declared organisation. The legislation in South Australia has already been challenged with a Supreme Court ruling that determined banning bikies from associating with each other was invalid.

The rising level of violence between bikie gangs and the increased level of criminal activity that some clubs have become actively involved in must be stopped. While bikie clubs were initially formed for camaraderie by World War II returned servicemen, they have over time evolved into a breed of underworld figures. The technical sophistication of these bikie gangs is on the increase, and they have infiltrated nightclub businesses, the security industry, prostitution and even the finance, transport, natural resources and construction industries. Most have the sinister aim to manufacture and sell illicit drugs, to launder money and to take part in a host of other unlawful activities. Initial structures that were put in place many years ago and which saw members serving long probation periods before being given their colours have broken down, allowing younger, newer members high on amphetamines and steroids to push older members aside. These ice-addicted, steroid-using younger males have taken over.

Experts such as Dr Arthur Veno, a professor with expertise in bikie gang culture, believes the most effective means of punishing gangs is for the police to confiscate the clubhouses, bikes and badges of club members, as these aspects go to the heart of their culture. The Hon. James McGinty, who has already been mentioned in this House and who was the Attorney-General in Western Australia when antifortification laws were introduced, considers that the best way to punish outlaw motorcycle gangs is to hit them in their hip pockets by confiscating criminal proceeds. The Queensland government, to its credit, in September 2006 implemented a task force known as Task Force Hydra to tackle the problem of bikie gangs. On 30 March 2009 the Premier announced that, since the task force's inception, police have made 322 arrests in relation to 931 charges, including attempted murder, arson, extortion, robbery and drug trafficking. New South Wales has implemented two task forces—the first being Operation Ranmore in 2007 and the second being Strike Force Raptor during Easter 2009. Both task forces have done an exceptional job in seizing assets, firearms and cash and making numerous arrests.

Respected criminologist Dr Paul Wilson, who has also been mentioned here tonight, believes that our laws are already sufficient without enacting legislation directly at bikie gangs, and these successful task forces that I have mentioned are proof. Dr Wilson strongly advocates that targeting individual criminals is far more effective than tougher laws targeting groups. More resources for such task forces may be a more feasible option than legislation that impacts on rights and liberties of a person who has not even been convicted of a crime. We on this side of the House recognise the strained resources our police are expected to work under and have been advocating for better staffing ratios for years.

Control orders mean very little if they cannot be properly controlled by police. If our hardworking police officers have difficulty keeping track of paedophiles, then how will they accommodate the extra duties that will be imposed on them through this bill? The Australian Crime Commission and the Crime and Misconduct Commission consider that strengthening existing laws and reforming the proceeds of crime legislation and telecommunication interception laws are more effective ways to close down bikie gangs than enacting legislation to ban organised crime groups. In other words, go harder chasing after the money that is earned from these illegal activities and, as I have said already, hurt these criminals in the hip pocket.

But as is the usual tactic, the Bligh government has ignored the advice of the experts and has instead just followed the other states with this reactive response to public outcry. Even members of the Premier's own Labor government believe that this legislation is going too far, with the summoning of nine parliamentary secretaries to a recent caucus meeting to ensure a majority vote. I wonder what the honourable members for Toowoomba North and Murrumba think about this legislation and if they will speak their minds—or if they will speak at all.

I notice that a mere dozen of Labor's 50-plus members even bothered to speak to the government's own Integrity Bill that we debated in this House compared to 26 of the LNP's 34 members, which is pretty telling of their commitment to improving the tawdry image that they have created over these past 11 years. With this bill, I count only some nine speakers on the speaking list from the government's pool of 51 members, compared to 20 speakers out of 34 from the LNP. It would appear that government members are too lazy to address their own bill. That is something that the people of Queensland should take heed of—that these government members are too lazy to even address their own bills.

In May 2007, a private member's bill was introduced into parliament by the then shadow minister, the honourable member for Burnett. This bill sought to make it an offence to participate in a group knowing that it is an organised criminal group. The Labor government voted down the Criminal Code (Organised Criminal Groups) Amendment Bill as they considered—

> The fundamental right of freedom of association is potentially eroded ... A one-size-fits-all response is therefore not the answer to this complex problem.

Let us take a look at what we have here. Now, this Labor government is attempting to introduce legislation that is more invasive than what it condemned two years ago—a bill that government members described as a narrow-minded, one-size-fits-all response. The bill before us today goes much further than the opposition's proposition in 2007, which was to be tested before a judge and jury—not behind closed doors, which has the potential to drastically impact on people's rights and liberties and the principles of natural justice, and that is supported by the comments of the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee.

Undeniably, criminal activity by bikie gangs is becoming more frequent and savage. On a regular basis our tabloids inform us about rival gang shootings, drug deals gone wrong and indiscriminate attacks on innocent people. Back in 1996, local Tugun residents attending a bike show at the footy club organised by Odin's Warriors were horrified when their family outing was shattered as two men were shot and seriously injured. I am sorry to say that since then bikie gang violence has entered mainstream society and is now affecting the average person.

On the Gold Coast it is reported that outlaw motorcycle gangs are responsible for an upsurge in violence, standover tactics and drug activity. A report last year by the International Narcotics Control Board found that Queensland was the main supplier of amphetamines to the rest of Australia. Five bikie gangs have clubhouses on the Gold Coast: the Finks, the Rebels, the Nomads, the Black Uhlans and the Lone Wolf, who just happen to be based in Currumbin. However, it is the Finks who have been getting the most media attention in recent years over numerous acts of violence, and in particular for their now infamous 'ballroom blitz' at the dignified Royal Pines Resort in March 2006 during a kickboxing match. Two rival gangs—the Finks and the Hell's Angels—came to blows because one member had supposedly deserted to the other gang. During the brawl two men were shot, two were stabbed and more than $40,000 of damage was caused.

But the Finks and the Hell's Angels are not alone in their deadly pursuits. Two years ago a man was kidnapped from his Currumbin Waters home over a botched $40,000 drug deal, had his jaw fractured and his ears sliced off with a Stanley knife. Recently, a tattoo parlour owner on the Gold Coast was confronted by two bikie members making extortion threats against him. It is alleged that the gang members intimidated and threatened the tattooist to try to get him to close down his shop. Only last week in the *Courier-Mail* there was a report saying that Effective Transport Pty Ltd, which is controlled by a bikie gang, was a subcontractor on the Airport Link. Although there were no direct issues with the company and the work that it undertook, that is a valid example of the type of industries that bikie gangs have infiltrated.

Thankfully, not all the stories we hear relating to bikie gangs are bad and not all bikie gangs are involved in criminal activity. Recently, the Queensland police issued an order that gang members who chose to take part in the Morcombe charity ride on the Sunshine Coast were not allowed to wear their colours. The United Motorcycle Council of Queensland, which is made up of several bikie clubs, was offended by this decision, but out of respect for Daniel Morcombe's family they obeyed the directive and decided not to ride. Wearing their club patches is a badge of honour for these members and they will not ride without them. The UMCQ arrived after the ride and donated $10,000 to the charity.

On 24 August 2008, 200 Harley-Davidsons made their way through Toowoomba as they raised $20,000 for cancer research. The money was raised by people who paid to ride on the back of these bikes. In Cairns, the 95-strong Motorcycle Muster raised $70,000 for the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation, which would certainly assist the government in that area. The Ulysses Club for over 50s

motorcyclists, formed on 6 December 1983 when five people approved a basic constitution, is now the largest organisation of its kind in Australia. From modest beginnings, the club has grown and now has an extensive 120 branches throughout the country. The Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club was established to provide social and welfare support for bikers who are Vietnam veterans. It is not only a motorcycle club but also recognised as an ex-serviceman organisation and welfare group in its own right by the Department of Veterans' Affairs. So not all bikie groups are bad.

In summary, violent behaviours conducted by criminal organisations are abhorrent and must be addressed in a manner that will get results. We on this side of the House are prepared to address the issue, unlike the majority of the members opposite. This legislation, although it purports to contain provisions that will stem the illegal activities of criminal organisations, and in particular bikie gangs, will also affect the rights of legitimate, law-abiding bikie organisations such as those I have spoken about in this House already. In addition, the bill has the potential to affect any organisations that are believed to be a risk to public safety.

Through the use of secret intelligence information, many people could potentially be affected without having the ability to adequately defend themselves through having no access to the evidence that the judge has convicted them on. As I have already stated, rather than putting in place legislation that will be ineffective and which goes against the advice of the experts, we should be strengthening the laws we have in place already. Clubs known to be involved in criminal activity should be hit with the full force of the law where it hurts the most: in the hip pocket. The seizure of property such as clubhouses and bikes as well as cash obtained through unlawful means plus the effective use of task forces and phone tapping will be more effective methods to curb the escalating reign of terror that bikie gangs thrive on.

Mr DICKSON (Buderim—LNP) (9.30 pm): Like the vast majority of the community, I deplore the criminal activities associated with some motorcycle gangs. I deplore all such criminal activity no matter who the perpetrators are. I am the first to say that our laws and our courts must deal appropriately with criminals who engage in organised crime. That is what any civilised society should do. What civilised societies should not do is create laws that actively discriminate against one section of our society. This bill gives the Supreme Court the power to declare organisations to be criminal on the basis of criminal activities its members are engaged in or may be conspiring to engage in. The court may make such declarations if it believes that the safety and welfare of the community is at risk from that organisation.

The bill also gives the court the right to impose controls on the activities of individuals, curtailing those individuals' rights and civil liberties. A person subject to such orders must be a member of an organisation deemed to be criminal and must be engaged in or have previously engaged in criminal activity. Further, they are deemed to be associating with others to engage in, or conspire to engage in, criminal activity. This tells us that simply being a member of an organisation may be sufficient for an individual to be subject to a control order. That person may have engaged in criminal activities in the past which may have been of a minor nature when he or she was much younger. If they are members of an organisation and associating with other members, is that sufficient justification to assume that they are also engaging in criminal activity?

I am very concerned about the sweeping powers that this legislation will give the court. Throughout, this bill provides for orders to be made against organisations and individuals where the Supreme Court is satisfied that criminal activity is involved. Apart from the removal of normal rights, there are serious penalties for the contravention of those orders. What evidence is required to satisfy the Supreme Court if no legal case has been brought before the court? In our legal system we test criminal charges in a court of law using the burden of proof. We have proper checks and balances to ensure that we do not wrongly convict people. Protecting the community must not be done at the expense of removing civil rights from people who happen to be associated with an organisation that has or may have some criminal involvement.

This bill extends considerable powers to the police. It allows them to enter premises, search and seize items under a control order without a warrant. It also allows them to demand personal information of a person who is reasonably suspected of committing an offence under the bill. Again, what constitutes 'reasonable'? I do not believe being a member of an organisation, no matter how much we might dislike what that organisation represents, is a good enough reason to target individuals in our community.

It is no secret that this legislation is being introduced to target so-called outlaw motorcycle gangs. The full force of the law should certainly be brought to bear on any of these gangs who indulge in the sort of serious criminal behaviour that has been well published in the past. It is behaviour that should not be tolerated in our society. But to pursue criminal behaviour engaged in by bikie gang members is quite different from creating special laws to deal with them. This bill leads us to believe that every member of these gangs is a criminal or potential criminal and that all activities they engage in are criminal. It creates a subculture for these gangs and an image that also reflects on ordinary, legitimate motorcycle clubs. This is an emotive issue that will always generate powerful media coverage. So-called outlaw bikie gangs represent an image that is easy to attack, whether they are proved to be engaged in criminal or antisocial activities or not.

This government has done nothing to be tough on crime for the whole time it has been in office. It will not even bring in mandatory jail sentences for criminals who assault police officers, but here it is jumping on the bandwagon and bringing in a whole new bill just to deal with bikie gangs. I suppose there is more front-page coverage with bikies in their colours than there is for bashed coppers. If the government were really serious about dealing with this problem, it would properly resource our law enforcement agencies so that they can in turn combat all crime in our community, including organised crime.

This bill is about being seen to do something rather than making good laws for fighting crime. It sets a very serious precedent in terms of how we treat sections of our community. It allows the court and the police to target people not necessarily because of what they have done but whom they have associated with and what they might do.

Finally, there is no evidence to support that these laws will work. I believe there are more effective ways for our law enforcement officers to tackle organised crime. Our police and the CMC need resources, funding and adequate staffing levels. Tackling organised crime is a major commitment from the LNP, but such commitment will not be at the expense of the freedom and liberties of individuals. After all, this is one of the things that makes living in Australia so appealing. We enjoy democracy. Can anyone ever believe the words coming from members of this Labor Party? Its members ask the public to trust them. Labor misled Queenslanders before the last state election. It told everyone that it would create 100,000 jobs. It sold out the unions by putting up our assets for sale. It imposed a fuel tax. The Traveston Crossing Dam cost us $680 million.

One has to sit down and think about where this law is going and who it is imposed upon. I used to own a caravan park. We had 245 sites at the last park and 45 of those vans were ours. On the same day I had two people move into our caravan park—one was a lawyer and one was a bikie. It is going back about 15 years but I remember the bikie's name quite well. His name was Skeeta. He had red hair halfway down his back. When he moved in he had a Harley-Davidson that was intact—it was a nice looking bike—and another one that was in pieces. He moved into one of our most expensive vans—$110 a week at the time. The lawyer moved into a very similar van. Two weeks later the lawyer moved out. The van was an absolute wreck. Two years later the bikie moved out and one could eat breakfast off the floor.

The message that I want to send to this House tonight is do not judge a book by its cover. That is what is happening with this bill. We are judging people without understanding what they are all like. We have to look at ourselves as human beings as well. In this House over time—we will talk about the last 10 years—we have had politicians who have been criminals, we have had people who work for churches who have been criminals, we have had police who have been criminals, we have had doctors who have been criminals, yet we target those people who have long hair and wear different clothes from the rest of us. Do we want to be seen in society as a group of people in parliament who are targeting one organisation? In Burma it would be accepted, in China it would be accepted, but in a democratic country like Australia should a law like this be accepted?

This is a draconian law being imposed by a government that has lost its way. It does not want to talk about the real things that are going on in this state: the money it has squandered, the people who cannot get into our hospitals or the ambulances that are banked up in those hospitals waiting to be looked after. These laws are an indictment on our government. They are showing society that we just do not care. We are targeting individual people. Look at what we are doing. We are judging that book without actually reading the contents. I will leave all members with that thought tonight. This is a draconian law that is targeting a particular component of our society. If the members on the other side say they are not, I urge them to read the paper and look at the news clippings. The Premier has spoken very plainly about this. This bill is to target bikies—nobody else. That is what it is all about. If you are a bikie who lives in Queensland, you should remember that the Labor government created this law, it made this law just for you, and when you go home tell all your friends, spread the word, because you are all going to be affected. If you go to church, if you are a doctor, if you are a politician—anybody who associates with these people—if you have known anybody who has broken the law, you will be implicated.

Mr Dick: Read the bill.

Mr DICKSON: Mr Attorney-General, I wish you would read the bill. I wish you would understand your laws. You know you do not. You are new to the job. I am sure that you will gain a lot of experience when you have had a real job and have lived in the real world, as a lot of these bikies have. We have returned servicemen who went to Vietnam and fought for this country who are bikies today. Are they criminals? Are they going to be crucified under this draconian law that this government has put forward? Attorney-General, remember when you walk out on the street and pass a bikie, smile at him—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! Direct your comments through the chair.

Mr DICKSON: When the Attorney-General walks down the street and passes a bikie, he should remember the law that he made and that his government is looking to pass, because this is about victimising Queenslanders who have long hair and who wear patches on their back. Remember it, people: you did it.

Hon. NS ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services) (9.39 pm): From the contributions of opposition members here tonight it is clear that the chest beaters on the other side are as weak as water when it comes to supporting legislation to combat serious organised crime in this state. Opposing a bill that will give police additional powers over and above those they already have to disrupt organised criminal activity is something that I did not expect to see from the opposition. Tonight a number of speakers have made hysterical claims about the impact of this legislation on innocent individuals, community organisations, churches and the like. That is absolute nonsense. As the Attorney-General spelt out in his second reading speech and as a number of speakers from this side have said, this legislation is targeted fairly and squarely at individuals and organisations, proven in a court or accepted by a court, to be involved in serious—

Mr Springborg: Not proven.

Mr ROBERTS: They will be accepted by the Supreme Court to be involved in serious criminal activity and to be a serious threat to public safety. A number of opposition speakers have made comments about the Police budget. This year the Police budget is $1.7 billion, which is a record budget. We have an extensive capital works budget and additional funding to provide at least another 203 police officers, and 600 police officers over the term of this government. In fact, this government has increased police numbers by more than 50 per cent since the Nationals were in power. In 1998 when the Nationals were in power there were 6,800 police officers and now there are over 10,300. That is an increase of more than 50 per cent. The important point about those increases is that under the Nationals the police-to-population ratio was one police officer to every 507 people; under Labor, we have reduced that to one police officer for every 427 people. That is a substantial improvement not only in actual police numbers but also in the ratio of police to population. That is a significant enhancement of the police's capacity to deal with criminal elements in the community. The resources that we have provided to the police could not have been dreamt about under the National Party government.

As I have indicated, opposition members have claimed, quite hysterically, that this legislation will apply to church groups, stamp clubs, basic community organisations and people who legitimately enjoy riding motorcycles. That is absolute nonsense. As I have indicated and as this legislation clearly spells out, the court must be satisfied that the individuals and the organisations are involved in serious criminal activity and—there are two tests—pose a serious threat to public safety. That is what this bill is about. People involved in stamp clubs, community organisations and those who genuinely involve themselves in recreational activity, whether they are riding motor cycles or horses, will have nothing to fear from the legislation.

Organised crime is a serious threat, not just in Queensland but throughout Australia. It is insidious and police need more than the traditional powers that they have to deal with the activities of criminal organisations. This bill gives the police the additional powers that they need. Significant numbers of organised criminal groups, which include a number of outlaw motorcycle gangs, have been convicted in Queensland of a range of serious crimes including attempted murder, extortion, drug manufacturing and trafficking. Those convictions have been secured using existing laws. However, the government, in concert with other states, and most notably New South Wales and South Australia, believes that we need some additional—what one might define as—non-traditional laws to enable police to restrict and disrupt the serious criminal activity that these organisations are involved in.

Much has been said about the so-called impact these laws would have on law-abiding citizens and I have addressed that issue. Again, to state very clearly, this legislation is targeting serious criminal activity. It is not targeting legitimate groups in the community that will go freely about their legitimate businesses.

Recently we have seen instances such as the violent bashing that resulted in the death of a bikie in Sydney and other incidents in southern states, but Queensland has not been immune. A number of members have outlined particular instances on the Gold Coast and in other areas. The police advise me that organised crime and, indeed, the activities of a number of outlaw motorcycle gangs do pose a very serious threat to public safety and security in Queensland. As a number of members have outlined, in 2006 a specialist outlaw motorcycle gang task force, Task Force Hydra, was established with the responsibility for monitoring and investigating the activities of OMCGs. It chalked up an impressive record. From February 2007 to 18 November 2009, 549 people were arrested on 1,413 charges, including attempted murder, arson, extortion, robbery with violence and drug trafficking. Large caches of firearms, property and money have also been seized. Many of those criminals are now serving lengthy jail sentences.

Mr Wilson: These are the people the opposition defends.

Mr ROBERTS: That is right. This bill provides the police with additional tools, over and above the traditional laws that they currently have, to disrupt and restrict the activities of many of these organisations. As has been indicated, South Australia and New South Wales have enacted laws along these lines. As the Attorney-General has outlined, Queensland laws have been based on sound advice in terms of constitutionality and the way in which the laws will stand up to court challenges. The powers in this bill are intended to send a very clear message to criminal organisations that there will not be a safe haven here in Queensland for their activities.

This bill has a number of features that seek to balance the rights of individuals to freely associate with the need for police to have sufficient powers to deal with the serious activities that they are involved in. For example, there is a very active and proactive role for the Criminal Organisation Public Interest Monitor—COPIM—and the court will have full discretion to make determinations about whether orders should be issued and whether organisations should be declared. This issue was challenged in South Australia. Under the Queensland legislation, the court is unfettered. It has full discretion as to whether it will grant orders in these particular matters. There will be annual reviews of the use of the powers, a five-year review of the act and a seven-year sunset clause. Built within this legislation are a number of safeguards that will look after the interests of legitimate organisations and individuals, and tough sanctions for those who are captured by its provisions.

I will not go through the individual provisions of the bill. They have been adequately covered by the Attorney-General and others. However, I reiterate that there are two significant tests before the sanctions in this bill can apply: demonstrated serious criminal activity and the court accepting that the organisation poses a significant safety threat. That definition does not fit my local church organisations. It does not fit my local gym clubs, orchid clubs or legitimate recreational motorcycle riders. It does fit people who engage in serious criminal activity and who are actively undermining public safety and security.

The bill, as has been outlined, provides a number of measures to address this issue: the power to declare an organisation as a criminal organisation with significant tests, overseen by the Criminal Organisation Public Interest Monitor; the power to grant control orders against individuals; and antifortification measures et cetera which have been well documented by speakers. The bill, as I have outlined, does strike a fair balance between respecting the freedom of association, which we do hold dear, and also putting in place laws to assist the police over and above those existing laws they have to tackle serious organised crime in the community. This bill, in my view, and indeed in the view of this side of the House, is an important and significant step forward in assisting police to tackle what is a serious and growing crime in this community.

Debate, on motion of Mr Roberts, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (9.50 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

White Ribbon Day

Mr EMERSON (Indooroopilly—LNP) (9.50 pm): Today is White Ribbon Day. Earlier today on the lawns of Parliament House I, along with some of my colleagues here in the House including Mr Speaker, took a vow to oppose violence against women. Someone I know has unfortunately experienced domestic violence and she has given me the opportunity tonight to share her story.

As she told me, it started out just like any other relationship might—they went for a drink to get to know each other. But it did not take long for the nightmare to begin. He started hanging around her house and accusing her of cheating when she was not with him. She knew that she could not be around someone like him. She asked him to leave, but he said he was sorry and it would not happen again and she believed him.

He said he wanted to spend all of his time with her. He even bought her a car. He then made her chauffeur him around for over six hours at a time to get his drugs. Before he would get out of the car he would ask to borrow another few hundred dollars. The nightmare went on. He checked her phone, went through her bag, demanded that she stay at his place every night. Her friends told her to leave him or they could not help her anymore. She asked him to leave, but he said he was sorry and it would not happen again and she believed him.

He got fired from his job. Every day he yelled at her for not being loyal to him, for not leaving her job too. He wanted to move in with her, but she was scared. He screamed so loud that she broke down in tears and said, 'Fine.' She told him she was scared that one day soon he would hit her. She asked him to leave, but he said he was sorry and it would not happen again and she believed him.

One night she had dinner with friends after work. She was waiting to pay the bill when her phone rang. He said that she should have been home 10 minutes ago and that he should not have to wait for her by himself. He screamed and threatened to steal her belongings to make up for the money she owed him. She drove him to an ATM and gave him some money. She had just enough to make him go away.

She could barely see through her tears as he pushed her and flung her into a bench. She drove him home in fear of what else was coming. She got out and went to walk away. He tried to block her and she said it was over. Then it came—the punch to the jaw and she dropped her phone and her credit card. He threw her phone into a busy intersection, destroying it. But, finally, she could walk away. She was one of the 23,386 applications for domestic violence protection orders in 2008 in Queensland.

Pioneers of Chermside

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (9.53 pm): As part of Queensland's sesquicentenary celebrations, I recently had the privilege—

Mr Reeves: What was that again?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Sesquicentenary—I take that interjection. I recently had the privileged of attending the Burnie Brae Centre to unveil a public artwork created to honour early pioneering families of Chermside. The Chermside and District Senior Citizens Centre, better known as the Burnie Brae Centre, was successful in obtaining $10,000 in Q150 community funding towards this commemorative public artwork.

Historic photos of the early pioneering families of Chermside have now been embedded in a timber and iron public mosaic on the archway entrance to the Burnie Brae community garden. The public artwork is made up of two panels—one each on the side of the entrance to the archway. As well as historic photographs, it depicts the keys to the Burnie Brae homestead and early equipment like the crosscut saw. The photographs were sourced from the State Library of Queensland, the Chermside and District Historical Society as well as individuals in the local community.

Both I and the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services, the member for Nudgee, Neil Roberts, were delighted to be a part of the occasion. While the Burnie Brae Centre now falls in the electorate of Minister Roberts, it had for a long time been part of the Stafford electorate prior to the recent redistribution. I am still in regular contact with many members of the Chermside and District Senior Citizens Centre.

Known in the 1950s as Downfall Creek, Chermside was an important district of farmers and traders. This year, as we celebrate the separation of Queensland from New South Wales, it seems only right that we pay our respects to families like the Hamiltons, the Argos, the Fishers, the Staibs and the Chesneys. Pioneers like them were celebrated today through this unique public artwork created by local artist Jamie McLean on behalf of the Chermside and District Senior Citizens Centre.

I congratulate the Chermside and District Senior Citizens Centre for its efforts in applying for the funding to bring this project about. It involved a whole range of people in the community. I congratulate all of them. I particularly want to commend the main contributors to the project including Beverley Isedale of the Chermside and District Historical Society; Jean Vernez, from the Chermside and District Senior Citizens Centre; and Kevin Rouse, the manager of the Burnie Brae Centre. This is just another way that the Bligh government is helping to encourage the community to appreciate its connections right across each and every corner of our great state and to celebrate 150 years since our separation from New South Wales.

Australia Zoo

Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (9.56 pm): The 15th of November saw many in Glass House, in Queensland, in Australia—indeed, throughout the world—celebrate the extraordinary life of Steve Irwin. But the celebrations started several days early for the Irwin family and the team at Australia Zoo. On the Friday evening before, Australia Zoo once again, for the third year in a row, took out the award for the state's best major tourist attraction. With this award, the zoo automatically entered the illustrious ranks of the Queensland Tourism Awards Hall of Fame and gave its competitors some respite, becoming ineligible as a result for similar awards next year.

Terri, Bindi, Robert, Wes and the team followed that evening with the Steve Irwin Day Gala Dinner at Portside, Hamilton, on the Saturday evening. It was with significant pleasure that I was able to attend. Whilst the evening was designed to be enjoyed, with performances by Jessica Mauboy, an appearance by WWE wrestling superstar Edge, and MCs Steve Jacobs and Sofie Formica, it also served a very serious purpose: as a fundraiser for one of Steve's greatest passions—conservation.

All of the funds raised on the evening will go towards the Wildlife Warriors conservation programs at the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve on the Wenlock River in Cape York. As many members will be aware, the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve is a wetland conservation property and a tribute to the Crocodile Hunter himself, Steve Irwin. The 135,000-hectare property is home to a set of important spring-fed wetlands which provide a critical water source to threatened habitat, provide a permanent flow of water to the Wenlock River and is home to rare and vulnerable plants and wildlife.

Steve Irwin Day on 15 November was also the one-year anniversary of the new Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors Australian Wildlife Hospital facilities. On the anniversary staff were busy treating the average of 30 animals that come through the hospital's doors every single day and caring for over 80 patients that are recovering from their injuries and illness within the hospital. The 26 full-time staff, which include veterinarians, vet nurses and admin staff, and over 90 volunteers, have already treated over 6,300 animals this year. During its one year of operation, the new hospital has seen over 700 koalas, over 2,500 birds and almost 300 freshwater and marine turtles. Steve Irwin Day itself, Sunday, 15 November, went off with a bang at Australia Zoo—with plenty of crocodiles, plenty of 'crikeys' and more than a little bit of khaki.

Cook Electorate, Solar Eclipse Marathon

Mr O'BRIEN (Cook—ALP) (9.59 pm): The first ever full marathon and half-marathon running festival is being organised in Port Douglas to coincide with the total solar eclipse in November 2012. This full adventure 42.195 kilometre marathon will start on the morning of 14 November as the first rays of the sun re-emerge from behind the moon, thus creating the first ever intergalactic starting gun.

The event will be organised by Travelling Fit, Australia's only specialist travel agency dedicated to the needs of the running community. With such international and domestic support, the organisers are confident at capping running competitors at 2,000. This will bring approximately 2,700 visitors, including support crews and families, to the Port Douglas region, making it significantly the largest single international event the region has ever seen.

To launch this unique event, Travelling Fit, together with its international travel partners, Albatross Travel from Denmark, and in association with its on-site agents, Port Douglas Event Management, hosted an informal presentation evening at Rex Smeal Park in Port Douglas. The invited guests included the Mayor of the Cairns Regional Council, Val Schier; division 10 councillor, Julia Leu; Tourism Port Douglas and Daintree executive officer, Doug Ryan; Port Douglas Chamber of Commerce representatives; and official event ambassador and Australian marathon legend, Steve Moneghetti.

Mr Reeves: What about yourself?

Mr O'BRIEN: I take that interjection from the Minister for Child Safety. I was there at that launch at Rex Smeal Park with Steve Moneghetti. Mr Moneghetti was enthusiastic about the prospect of this marathon, saying—

The concept of a marathon and half marathon in the pristine environment of Port Douglas sounds wonderful. I love to run and I love the beauty of the Australian rainforests so this event is a winning combination for me. An endurance run provides a great personal challenge but to share the adventure with like minded people on a significant day in a special place will be astronomical—where else would you want to be on the morning of November 14th 2012.

A feature of this unique running festival will be the inclusion of local, national and international runners all travelling to the area as part of a series of fully hosted tour and accommodation packages.

While I would hate to make a promise I cannot deliver, it is my intention to run the full marathon on that day. I am starting my preparation. I have never run a marathon before, but I pride myself on being one of the fitter members of this parliament. I put it before this parliament that it is my intention to run the full marathon on that day. I invite all other members to be in Port Douglas on that important day and join with me in running the first marathon at Port Douglas, which will be an ongoing event.

National Parks, Access

Mr DOWLING (Redlands—LNP) (10.02 pm): Tonight I rise to bring to the attention of the House an email that came across my desk. I table the entire email but I will just read extracts from it.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 23 November 2009, from Wim Schneider to Mr Dowling MP regarding changes within Queensland national parks [1489].

The email stated—

The purpose of this email is to express my concern over the changes within the Q1d National Parks. I am not sure what I expect as a result of this email. Maybe just the opportunity to express my anger.

And I am doing that on his behalf. He continued—

The apparent attitudes of the Q1d NP's comes up in conversation on a regular basis.

I had the opportunity this last weekend (whilst camp in a Qld NP) to talk to a park ranger.

I will cut to the chase. He said—

I then approached the subject of changers to the park camping areas themselves. Over time their has been an increase in areas closed of by bollards. The ranger then explained that that was due to a conscious decision on the part of NP's to a preference for minimalist (his words) camping. In other words (and he confirmed it) they are moving to tent camping only.

We heard what I expect was the forerunner to that from the Premier this morning. He continued—

Q1d NP's do not want caravans, motor homes or camper trailers in NP's. In his words those type of campers are responsible for the damage and waste within the parks.

The next paragraph stated—

Since when have NP's been given the right to carry out their own social agenda when it comes to any part of NP's operation?

I am a Qld tax payer and as such I have the right to camp in NP's even though I choose not to camp in a tent.

I have camped all my life and my days of camping in a two man tent are over.

This trend is not confined to Qld, it can be seen in NSW as well.

As far as Q1d NP's are concerned, I am being classified as undesirable based on my style of camping.

This morning we heard from the Premier, who said—

The effects of this kind of a downturn on tourism can be catastrophic, especially here in Queensland where tourism dominates the local economies of a number of major towns and cities in our regions and is a key economic driver.

Here we are turning away what have been dubbed the grey nomads in favour of the backpacking fraternity. These are good citizens. These are the ones who fought for the country. These are the ones who gave us the national parks and these are the ones we are trying to freeze out. It is a Nazi attitude to the community by Labor. It is controlling. The government is picking on one group at a time. Tonight, the government is singling out the grey nomads and it is trying to excise them out of national parks. Tomorrow, I suspect the government will be excising bike clubs out of Queensland. It is appalling and should not be allowed to continue.

Bulimba Electorate, Social Housing

Ms FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (10.05 pm): The Bligh Labor government is committed to providing affordable housing to Queenslanders who need it most. The government is rolling out 4,000 new social housing dwellings across the state and is 'sprucing up', as the minister says, many others to make sure they remain homes that their occupants can be proud to live in. One of the innovative ways the department provides affordable housing is through the ownership and management of caravan parks, and I am proud to say that one of these caravan parks is in my own electorate of Bulimba.

In 1991 the government funded the purchase of the Monte Carlo Caravan Park in Cannon Hill to preserve low-cost accommodation for permanent residents, as the caravan park was at risk of closure and redevelopment. There are now 152 sites at Monte Carlo, and I have to say that these sites are part of a wonderful community. I recently had the great pleasure of attending a barbecue at the caravan park to discuss with the residents the sprucing up that the government is about to undertake there—though really this is more than just 'sprucing up'. The new work will mean major upgrades providing much-needed benefits to residents, including improved access by widening roads, better power supply, improved security, improved sewerage and more visitor parking.

The residents of Monte Carlo are fantastic people. They all look after each other. No-one will be sick without their neighbours knowing about it and making sure they are looked after. They take a huge pride in their community, and this is obvious even at first glance, from the many beautiful gardens people have built up around their vans and surrounding areas, let alone the wonderful work being done, for example, by many residents who are part of the Cannon Hill Bushcare Group, led by Teresa and Matt, who are rejuvenating the creek and bush area behind the caravan park.

Another thing about these residents is that they will not stand for any nonsense. This includes nonsense from people who treat them as if they have some sort of stigma because they live in social housing. I am ashamed to be in the same parliament as some of the members opposite who, although they may not ever espouse this view publicly, will work furiously to make sure social housing never comes the way of their electorates. I will be working closely with the residents of Monte Carlo Caravan Park to make sure their new rejuvenated community is something they can continue to be proud of.

I cannot talk about social housing without mentioning the recent garden awards run by the Bayside Tenancy Group. This was a great occasion which I attended with the members for Capalaba and Cleveland to celebrate the pride taken by social housing tenants in the Bayside area. The award winning gardens were anything from pocket sized to full backyard garden varieties, and they were an obvious source of pleasure to all participants. I congratulate the Tenancy Group and in particular those enthusiastic locals of the Bulimba electorate, Dot and Gordon, who worked so hard to provide encouragement to social housing residents.

White Ribbon Day

Dr ROBINSON (Cleveland—LNP) (10.08 pm): Well done, Di, and I enjoyed being there with you. I would like to recognise in the gallery members of the United Motorcycle Council and commend them for their involvement and their interest in the debate today.

On this White Ribbon Day, I rise to speak about the blight on our society called domestic violence. I add my comments to those of the Premier's in her ministerial statement this morning. Domestic violence is rife in our society and is a most heinous crime against women. In Queensland in the past five years there have been up to 60 domestic violence related deaths. Indigenous women are 35 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence.

Vulnerable women and children need support to survive the hell of domestic violence and to recreate a caring and fear-free home environment. Today I joined many others—men and women—on the Speakers Green to support White Ribbon Day. I also joined with many men to sign an oath on www.myoath.com.au in which I swore 'never to commit violence against women, never to excuse violence against women and never to remain silent about violence against women.' This is my oath and I ask that every Queensland man go online and make their own commitment.

The oath includes a statement to never be silent about violence against women. To this aim, previously in this House I have mentioned the work and plight of the Bayside Domestic Violence Initiative—BDVI. BDVI provides court assistance for victims of domestic violence at the Cleveland and Wynnum Magistrates Courts, among other services. Its activities, under the direction of president, Pauline Egglington, cover at least four electorates in south-east Brisbane: Lytton, Capalaba, Cleveland and Redlands.

It came to my attention earlier this year that it was about to shut down due to a lack of funding. Its voice about violence against women was almost silenced. Despite requesting funds from the government, it had received nothing. I met with its members, spoke in the parliament about their plight, discussed their case with the member for Capalaba and some emergency funding was provided. I do not want to overstate my involvement in the outcome but I do want to thank the government for coming to their aid.

However, now the emergency funding is running out. Last Friday I was invited to a fundraising dinner in Cleveland, run by Females and Friends in the Finance Industry, known as FFIFI. What a fantastic group of women committed to this important cause. The fundraising efforts of this dedicated group of local women has helped to keep BDVI afloat. But now BDVI needs recurrent government funding to add to its own fundraising efforts or it will have to close, its voice will be silenced and our women will stand alone in our courts—victims of violence and of abandonment.

I noted that today Minister Struthers announced funding for a program in Rockhampton as a genuine coming-together of government, the courts and the non-government sector. I simply ask that the women of south-east Brisbane be given a chance. Recurrent funding is needed now so that BDVI can continue its service and not close its doors.

Gumdale, Proposed Tavern

Mr KILBURN (Chatsworth—ALP) (10.11 pm): I rise tonight to speak on an issue of importance to the people of my electorate of Chatsworth who live in the Gumdale-Wakerley area. Before I do so, I point out that what I will be talking about has nothing to do with my role with the Law Justice and Safety Committee; it is an issue involving a proposed licensed premises in my electorate.

The people of Gumdale have a school at the corner of New Cleveland and Tilley roads. It is a lovely school which has about 850 children. Recently two businessmen, Mr Danny Burke and Mr Jason Titman, the owners of the Chalk Hotel, held a community meeting informing residents that they intend to build a tavern/country club right against the boundary of the school. Two edges of the tavern would be directly against the school, within 20 metres of the school administration and classrooms. The overwhelming sentiment of the community at the public hearing that was held on 10 November was that this government should be looking to protect schools from the incursion of licensed premises.

Since that meeting about 70 local residents have contacted me. Two residents in particular, Linda and Ingrid, have set up a community group to oppose the development application and the licence application for the tavern at Gumdale. In my capacity as the member for Chatsworth I would suggest that this may be something that the minister for education could look at. I am aware there are other locations where hotels are located close to schools. As I said, the overwhelming feeling of the residents in the Gumdale area is that, whilst they appreciate the idea of the tavern/country club and the recreational facilities it will provide, they generally feel it is inappropriate to locate it right next to a school, and I would have to agree with them on that point.

I would ask that any residents in the Chatsworth electorate or the Gumdale and Wakerley areas who want their feelings on this issue known contact me in my electorate office before the development application is lodged. I have a feeling that they are waiting until the school year finishes to lodge the development application so that no-one is around and the period in which people may oppose this will occur while most parents are away on school holidays. I ask that members of the community contact me and let me know their feelings. I ask if the minister for education could have his department look at the appropriateness of having licensed premises located right next to primary schools in this day and age.

Southport, TAFE Development

Dr DOUGLAS (Gaven—LNP) (10.14 pm): The Bligh Labor government has given its permission to clear native endangered coastal remnant vegetation from the TAFE Southport site between Rigeway Avenue, Benowa Road and Drury Avenue. Four four-storey buildings providing 600 dual occupancy hostel accommodation—motel-type rooms—are to be built on a 70 per cent footprint of the site. The government through TAFE has granted the Korean development company a 39-year lease over the land. The rooms are simple, two-person rooms with a dividing wall, one bathroom, no cooking facilities, 25 metres squared, one laundry with three washing machines for 1,200 students, 130 car parks, one small pool, no park, very few trees, no sporting facilities and one television room in each of the buildings. There is no transport and there are eight licensed food outlets and one convenience store.

The TAFE will remain on seven per cent of the site and 365 further students are envisaged to use these facilities. The Bligh Labor government has allowed a development offset of trees planted 15 kilometres away. No quantity or type has been specified. It remains unclear whether these students will be TAFE students or even have to be doing any type of English language course. During holiday times it can be used as rental accommodation for anybody.

The Gold Coast City Council planners are critically assessing the plan. This may be a reality in four weeks. Slums are being built in our city. I saw these types of developments in Seoul last year. It is unacceptable development in a major tourist mecca such as the Gold Coast. I call on the Premier, Anna Bligh, as a Gold Coast girl herself, to stop this development. This deal is a legacy from Peter Beattie that he championed to our local press after returning from a trip overseas. The government would be very wise to stop this development before it goes any further. The Gold Coast residents are up in arms over this totally unnecessary, totally questionable deal. There is a rally this weekend and I recommend that anyone interested attend it.

Far North Queensland, Schools

Mr PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (10.16 pm): Over the past month I have been to a number of school presentation evenings across Far North Queensland. Most were emceed by students, many reflected the unique nature of the school concerned, but all were certainly entertaining.

Almost on a daily basis we see stereotyping of our young people that, if given enough exposure, can begin to be seen as reality rather than the views of a select few. At these presentation evenings I was left utterly impressed by the calibre of students who shone not only in an academic sense but who had also achieved in the sporting, cultural and community spheres. On the whole, the students demonstrated wisdom and dedication beyond their years. I was particularly impressed by the valedictory speech delivered by Miss Nicole Schumacher from Gordonvale State High School, which I now table. It is worthy of inclusion in the permanent record of our state's parliament.

Tabled paper: Speech by Nicole Schumacher [1490].

Another highlight was representing the Minister for Education and Training and presenting certificates on his behalf to the first graduating class of SchoolTech, a vocation based senior school in Cairns. In 2008, the Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE and Woree State High School launched SchoolTech, which sees students study years 11 and 12 at the Cairns TAFE campus and specialise in a trade or vocation area. Upon completion of their senior studies, students graduate with a Queensland Certificate of Education and a TAFE qualification. The students come from all across Far North Queensland.

The program is a first for the Queensland government and is driven by the Queensland Skills Plan, which aims to move secondary school students into further education, training and employment while providing the skills necessary to enter the workforce. It represents a major step towards creating a skilled workforce to serve local industry.

The SchoolTech program has quite rightly received widespread support from within the Cairns business community. It is the valuable partnerships between schools, businesses and community groups that have been the key to its success. This is also why the program is viewed as a best practice model for bringing schools and the Queensland TAFE sector closer together. The Bligh government is committed to encouraging three out of four Queenslanders holding trade, training or tertiary qualifications by 2020. By increasing people's skills, programs like SchoolTech are changing lives and helping to build the skills base in our region.

I will finish with some words for the more than 45,000 Queensland Year 12 students who have this year completed high school: you have reached an important milestone in your lives and will soon embark on new pathways into employment, training, or, in some cases, tertiary study. I wish you the best of luck as you enter the next phase of your lives and I hope you continue on the journey of lifelong learning. To quote Miss Schumacher—

> Inevitably you will fail in some form or another and you will survive and you will reach your goals ... Ultimately, (you) have to decide for (yourselves) what constitutes failure, but the world is quite eager to give you a set of criteria if you let it. Do not be afraid of what comes next, of the possibility of failure, because failure is important and in many cases failure delivers more benefits than success.

With those words, I say I have confidence in the next generation of young Queenslanders. They represent our future and we need to harness their talents to make Queensland a better place for tomorrow. From what I have seen, our future is in good hands.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.19 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Attwood, Bates, Bleijie, Bligh, Boyle, Choi, Crandon, Cripps, Croft, Cunningham, Darling, Davis, Dempsey, Dick, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Farmer, Finn, Flegg, Foley, Fraser, Gibson, Grace, Hinchliffe, Hobbs, Hoolihan, Hopper, Horan, Jarratt, Johnson, Johnstone, Jones, Keech, Kiernan, Kilburn, Knuth, Langbroek, Lawlor, Lucas, McArdle, McLindon, Male, Malone, Menkens, Messenger, Mickel, Miller, Moorhead, Mulherin, Nelson-Carr, Nicholls, O'Brien, O'Neill, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pratt, Reeves, Rickuss, Roberts, Robertson, Robinson, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Seeney, Shine, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Spence, Springborg, Stevens, Stone, Struthers, Stuckey, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Watt, Wellington, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson