Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 16 MARCH 1988

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

WEDNESDAY, 16 MARCH 1988

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. L. W. Powell, Isis) read prayers and took the chair at 2.30 p.m.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Lindeman Island National Park; Protection of National Parks

From **Mr Ahern** (90 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will reject any moves for major development in any area of Lindeman Island national park and ensure national parks throughout Queensland are offered the highest level of protection.

Transport Passes for Children Attending State High Schools other than Runcorn High School

From **Mr Ardill** (7 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take action to ensure that transport passes are not withheld from students attending State high schools other than Runcorn High School.

Free Bus and Rail Passes for Private School Students

From **Mr Burns** (440 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure that free bus and rail passes will still be available to students of private schools by the non-enforcement of transport guide-lines.

Bundaberg Child Health Centre

From **Mr Campbell** (83 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take action to increase staff at the Bundaberg Child Health Centre.

Rent and Mortgage Repayments, Exclusion of Family Allowance Supplement from Assessable Income

From **Mr McElligott** (147 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take action to exclude the family allowance supplement, in full or in part, from assessable income when calculating rent and mortgage repayments.

Out-patients' Services, Wynnum District Clinic

From **Mr Burns** (1 112 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will maintain existing out-patients' services at the Wynnum district clinic.

Erosion Control, Bribie Island Beaches

From **Mr Newton** (2 981 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will provide the necessary funds to assist with erosion control on Bribie Island beaches.

Medical Superintendent, Aramac Hospital

From **Mr Glasson** (314 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will appoint a resident fellowship doctor as medical superintendent at Aramac Hospital.

Budget Allocation to State Schools

From **Mr Beanland** (20 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will increase the Budget allocation to State schools.

Amendments to Education Act

From **Mr Beanland** (40 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will desist from making amendments to the Education Act which will eliminate independent education boards.

Central Place Development

From **Mr Beanland** (140 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure that the Brisbane City Council's town-planning processes will prevail especially in relation to the proposed 107-storey Central Place development.

Introduction of Poker Machines

From **Mr McPhie** (530 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure that poker machines are not introduced.

Extended Drinking Hours

From **Mr McPhie** (505 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure that there is no increase to existing drinking hours.

Death Penalty for Brutal Premeditated Murder

From **Mr Simpson** (507 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will reintroduce the death penalty for brutal premeditated murder.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed—

Report of the Queensland Museum Board of Trustees for the year ended 30 June 1987.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Regulation under the Education Act 1964-1987

Notice of Exemption of Parents and Citizens' Associations established under the Education Act 1964-1984 from Audit by the Auditor-General.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

World Heritage Listing of North Queensland Rainforest Areas; Conservation Legislation Amendment Bill

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (2.35 p.m.), by leave: Honourable members will have noticed in the press this morning that the Australian Democrats have predictably decided to support the passage of the Commonwealth's Conservation Legislation Amendment Bill 1988. The effect of that will be that the legislation will pass into law unless the Commonwealth Government belatedly develops a conscience on the subject. It is therefore important that honourable members realise the draconian effects that the legislation will have. The legislation will give the Commonwealth the power to lock up large areas of the States without reference to the States and without regard to the rights of land-holders in the areas affected by prohibiting and regulating activities in those areas. The Bill allows the Commonwealth to act in four circumstances.

The first is where the property is subject to an inquiry for the purpose of determining whether the property forms part of the cultural heritage or the natural heritage. Under that category the property does not have to have World Heritage qualities before it can be locked up. The only requirement is that there be a Commonwealth inquiry on the subject.

The second category is where the property is subject to World Heritage List nomination. In that case also, the property in question may not actually have World Heritage values. The fact that the Commonwealth has nominated substantial areas of the north Queensland rainforests which the Queensland Government genuinely believes do not have World Heritage qualities is evidence of that.

The third category is where a property is included in the World Heritage List. The fourth is where the Commonwealth declares a property by regulation to form part of the cultural or natural heritage. Once again there is no guarantee that the property will actually have World Heritage values and be worthy of preservation. It is the Commonwealth's opinion that it forms part of the cultural or natural heritage that enables it to lock up the land in question.

This state of affairs must be of concern to all Queenslanders. It is well known that the conservation lobby has a hit list of areas which it wishes to have nominated for World Heritage listing. It is inevitable, if this Bill becomes law, that there will be further land grabs by the Federal Government, locking up large and diverse areas within Queensland. This is an intolerable situation. The fact that people living and working the areas themselves will have their lives ruined is of no concern to the conservation lobby or the Hawke Government.

The legislation shows how far the Federal Government will go in a cynical quest for votes from the greenies in Sydney and Melbourne.

The fact of the matter is that closing down an industry for a year or more while an inquiry is held to decide whether an area has World Heritage values, or while the World Heritage Committee decides whether to accept or reject a nomination, achieves the effect of killing or at least crippling that industry economically. So, even if the area is eventually shown not to have World Heritage value, the greenies have achieved their purpose. What could be more cynical than that?

Another effect of the Bill is that the Commonwealth no longer has to comply with its own Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act 1974. Not only does the Bill specify that that Act will no longer apply but, solely for the purpose of trying to defeat Queensland's action in the High Court, it also has declared that it has never applied to World Heritage nominations. That is a clear case of the Commonwealth's shifting the goal posts after the ball has been kicked. It is retrospective legislation of the worst kind.

In addition, the Commonwealth is seeking to vest the World Heritage Committee, based in Paris, with the right to make final decisions on matters relating to the validity of a proposed listing under the World Heritage Convention.

Mr Tenni: Mr Eaton and Mr De Lacy support that.

Mr CLAUSON: Of course they do.

By doing that, they are attempting to by-pass the High Court of Australia, which has traditionally been and should be the court responsible for the determination of disputes arising under the Commonwealth Constitution.

Honourable members should also note that the Commonwealth is setting up its own enforcers for this legislation.

Mr Burns: Will you be moving that the House take note of this statement?

Mr CLAUSON: Mr Burns, the civil libertarian, should wait for it.

The Bill provides for the appointment of inspectors who have the right to enter and search, take photographs and record occurrences in relation to an "eligible place".

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr Ardill interjected.

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

Mr ARDILL: I do so.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Lytton!

Mr CLAUSON: For the benefit of the honourable member for Lytton, I will repeat myself.

Mr De LACY: I rise to a point of order. My point of order is that this is obviously a subject of great importance and debate.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! What is the honourable member's point of order?

Mr De LACY: I challenge the Minister to make a debate out of this.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The point of order raised by the honourable member for Cairns is frivolous.

Mr Burns: No, but it is true.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Lytton is warned under Standing Order 123A.

Mr CLAUSON: I shall repeat that paragraph.

Honourable members should also note that the Commonwealth is setting up its own enforcers for this legislation. The Bill provides for the appointment of inspectors who have the right to enter and search, take photographs and record occurrences in relation to an "eligible place". An eligible place does not even have to be on a property which is under the protection of the Act. The only exclusion is a person's dwellinghouse. It seems that "Biggles" is now joined by 007.

Normally a warrant will be required, but an inspector is given the power to enter if he believes on reasonable grounds that it is necessary to enter in order to prevent the concealment, loss or destruction of anything and the entry is made in circumstances of such seriousness and urgency as to require and justify immediate entry without a warrant.

Mr Mackenroth: What are you suggesting?

Mr CLAUSON: Listen to the civil libertarians.

In many other pieces of Commonwealth legislation, there are provisions for obtaining warrants in circumstances of urgency by telephone. That safeguard is conspicuous by its absence in this obnoxious piece of legislation. I ask: why has the Commonwealth not made such a provision? Why has the Council for Civil Liberties not complained about it? The silence from that body on the question has been deafening. So has that of the Opposition.

The legislation is bad legislation. Its potential to allow the Commonwealth to totally control development in Queensland and indeed in every other State should be of the most serious concern to honourable members. Honourable members are assured that Queensland will not back off from its immediate fight to preserve the livelihood of north Queensland simply because the Commonwealth has changed the rules after the game has begun. It will also continue the longer-term battle to prevent Canberra from assuming, under this obnoxious piece of legislation, effective control over large areas of the State.

The Opposition, by failing to condemn the Commonwealth Government over this, has forfeited any claim that it may have had to the respect of the voters of this State.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Prospect Marine Pty Ltd Lease, Whyte Island

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Premier and Treasurer and Minister for the Arts) (2.45 p.m.), by leave: In the House yesterday, I indicated to the Leader of the Opposition that I would respond to his allegation that I had misled the people regarding my opposition in Cabinet to the construction of a marina near the mouth of the Brisbane River. I have expressed my reservation in regard to this matter on a number of occasions. The whole issue has been on Cabinet's agenda a few times.

I take this early opportunity to inform the House that Cabinet records show that on 17 March 1986 I made an oral submission concerning marina development at the mouth of the Brisbane River. The siting of a marina in this area raised a number of important issues. I advised the Cabinet of my concern in allowing marinas to be established in areas that were more suited for projects relating to industry development.

The decision of the Government to establish, at great expense, the new Port of Brisbane facilities at Fisherman Islands had resulted in substantial development works taking place in that area. As Minister for Industry, I considered it inappropriate for port land near the mouth of the Brisbane River to be used other than for the needs particularly of heavy manufacturing industries.

Mr Hamill: What about the doctrine of ministerial responsibility? If you disagreed with Cabinet's decision, you could have resigned. Why didn't you resign?

Mr AHERN: The honourable member's leader asked me yesterday to make this statement, and I am responding to his wishes. I think the honourable member is required to listen.

Manufacturing industry is of vital importance to any capital city's economic growth, and the Government has a duty to protect scarce heavy industrial land in Brisbane from alienation, one way or another.

Mr Burns: You made the decision in 1982 and you objected in 1986—four years later.

Mr AHERN: The honourable member has not listened to the statement. He should read the statement.

The views I expressed in 1986 still apply. I do not consider that land—adjacent to an oil refinery, sewerage works and fertiliser plants—is suitable for the construction of marinas and resorts. I inform the House that it is my intention to ensure that that land near the mouth of the Brisbane River is retained to meet the future requirements of industry.

I might add that my views on the use of port land and the desirability of preserving it for heavy industry and appropriate port-orientated purposes was the subject of several media releases as well as many speeches I delivered as Minister for Industry. My attitude to this subject has been consistent throughout.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Training Schemes in Queensland

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Affairs) (2.47 p.m.), by leave: Figures quoted by Community Youth Support Scheme Chairman, Wayne Swan, do not show the true position of training in Queensland. Mr Swan is selectively quoting old figures.

It is true that Queensland's apprenticeship numbers peaked in the early eighties—the result of the resources boom, and generous Federal Government incentives for

apprenticeship creation—but in the mid-eighties the resources boom slowed, and the Federal Government hand-outs simply dried up. That period, which ended last year, was a low point for apprenticeships.

However, it is necessary to look at the current situation. Apprenticeship starts in 1988 are up by 20 per cent on the same time last year. Queensland now has 5 888 apprentices who began their training in the past year compared with 4 977 for the year ended February 1987.

I also inform the House that Queensland is also very much involved with pre-vocational courses. This State leads the rest of Australia in full-time pre-vocational training, which allows graduates to undertake a three-year apprenticeship instead of the normal four-year term.

In addition, traineeships are proving to be a major success in Queensland. In the last two years since their introduction, 2 050 traineeships covering 20 different industries have been created. For the period ending January 1988, in the private sector Queensland had 1 248 traineeships; Victoria, with a much greater population, had only 433; South Australia had 482; and Tasmania had 172. On top of that, the very fact that all four gold medals won in the Work Skill Olympics were won by Queenslanders is indicative of the efforts made by the Queensland Government and the progress that it is making currently.

It is a pity that Mr Swan, who is a leading member of the ALP, is using the CYSS organisation to push his barrow for a job with Wayne Goss—or so I am led to believe.

INCORPORATION OF MATERIAL IN *HANSARD*

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (2.50 p.m.): Quite often during the normal cut and thrust of debate in this House, honourable members table material and seek leave to have it incorporated in *Hansard.* All honourable members in this House accept that where such information is informative, explanatory and responsible, that course is acceptable. Unfortunately, honourable members do not have time to peruse the material before a vote is taken.

Yesterday in this Chamber the honourable member for Currumbin tabled some material concerning an Italian female parliamentarian. I accept that perhaps he tabled the material in good faith because it was explanatory of his points and informative for honourable members. But it certainly was not responsible. I do not believe that the material is fit for inclusion in *Hansard.*

Therefore I ask, Mr Speaker, that you seriously peruse this matter and bring it back before the House. If it is possible, I am prepared to seek leave to move that it not be included in *Hansard.*

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I thank the honourable member for Mackay for drawing the matter to the attention of the House. I will look at it and report at a later time, hopefully tomorrow morning.

Mr COMBEN proceeding to give notice of a motion—

Mr VEIVERS: I rise to a point of order. This matter is tedious and repetitious.

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr HENDERSON (Mount Gravatt) (2.55 p.m.), by leave: An article in last Saturday's *Sydney Morning Herald* titled "Labor may put a quiet man in top post" was an attempt to outline the various characteristics of two candidates for election as general secretary of the Australian Labor Party in Canberra: Mr Bob Hogg, former principal private secretary to the Prime Minister, and Mr Ian Henderson, a teacher, formerly of Mount Gravatt.

I can understand how the mistake occurred, as the article says that this particular individual is described as a workaholic, intelligent, honest and forthright and as "Mr Rectitude". Furthermore, it says—

> "Those who know him say he is good company, a witty man but private, and his life revolves around work and the party."

The article contains a photograph of a rather distinguished looking gentleman—namely, me. I wish to assure the House that it is not my intention to a seek a second job as secretary, but if I do I shall donate the salary to the children's hospital.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr HINTON (Broadsound) (2.57 p.m.), by leave: Last night in the Adjournment debate I made an inappropriate and quite inaccurate statement about the honourable member for Woodridge, implying that he was inebriated. I have apologised to the member and wish to record that apology in this House.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr GATELY (Currumbin) (2.58 p.m.), by leave: I rise to indicate that I am affronted by the comments made by the member for Mackay and wish to indicate very clearly to the House that I did not wish to mislead any member or have put into *Hansard* something that ought not to have been incorporated. I believe that the matter is of grave concern. My reason for raising the issue was to achieve exactly what has happened, that is, to bring to the minds of everybody in this House the stupidity of the Federal Government's allowing such a person to enter Australia under a work visa.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has already made his personal explanation. I have already said that I will be looking at the matter and reporting to the House later today or tomorrow.

QUESTION UPON NOTICE

Fitzgerald Commission of Inquiry; Indemnity from Prosecution for Mr and Mrs J. R. Herbert

Mr GOSS asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

> "With reference to media reports to the effect that the Queensland Government has agreed to drop charges against former Queensland Police Officer, Jack Herbert, and his wife in exchange for their return to Queensland to answer questions before the Fitzgerald Commission of Inquiry, and to his Ministerial Statement on 15 March, and without canvassing any of the facts or allegations before the inquiry—
>
> (1) Have the Herberts sought, or been granted, an indemnity from prosecution?
>
> (2) Without specific reference to the Herberts, will he confirm that, as a matter of general principle, an important consideration in deciding whether to grant an indemnity from prosecution to an alleged major participant in corruption, is the willingness of that witness to provide direct evidence of the involvement of other major participants in corruption?"

Mr CLAUSON: (1) The Herberts have not sought or been granted an indemnity from prosecution by me.

(2) Yes.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Prospect Marine Pty Ltd Lease, Whyte Island

Mr GOSS: In directing a question to the Premier and Treasurer, I refer him again to the questions posed to him by me yesterday, which have not been answered, and to the conflicting claims by him and the former Premier as to the truth about whether or

not the current Premier objected to the 1982 deal in favour of Prospect Marine Pty Ltd. I ask and invite him to answer again those questions, namely—(1) Did he object to the 1982 deal on the grounds of planning or cronyism, or both? (2) What did he do about those objections? (3) Did he ask to have his objection noted on the 1982 Cabinet minute recording the decision and, if so, will he agree to table it?

Mr AHERN: I have made a statement to the House on the issue today and my answer rests. The matter is settled.

Mr Goss: What have you done about it?

Mr AHERN: Cabinet has settled the question, has it not? The Government will ensure that that land remains for heavy industrial development.

Mr Goss: It was a preferential deal. You bailed out someone who is going broke.

Mr AHERN: The Leader of the Opposition is really only trying to make party-political capital in this House. His efforts might well be directed to trying to save Jeannie Davis from her demise next Saturday and to trying to save——

Mr Goss: That's how confident you are on the question—you want to get on to the council.

Mr AHERN: I mention that matter because the former Labor Lord Mayor of Brisbane was also responsible for intrusion into the area of designated industrial development of the south bank of the Brisbane River. That is one of the principal reasons why he was thrown out of office and replaced by the current Lord Mayor. There is no doubt about that at all.

Mr Goss: You haven't refuted the former Premier's claim. The former Premier nailed you last week. He said that you made no objection.

Mr AHERN: The matter is concluded. My colleagues know what the situation is, and the decision rests.

Mr Goss: You won't confront it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Does the Leader of the Opposition wish to ask yet another question?

Mr GOSS: Yes, I have a second question.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr GOSS: You never know; three times lucky.

Redevelopment of Expo Site

Mr GOSS: In directing a second question to the Premier and Treasurer and Minister for the Arts, I refer him to reports that three historic buildings on the present Expo site—all more than 100 years old and all listed by the Australian Heritage Commission—are to be effectively demolished and somehow rebuilt to fit into the development plans of the River City 2000 consortium. I ask—

(1) Does the Premier seriously believe that the fabric of these buildings could withstand dismantling and rebuilding?

(2) Is it true that of the final tenders to receive serious consideration, the successful River City 2000 consortium was the only one which failed to give a commitment to maintain these historic buildings in their present position?

(3) Is it also true that the River City 2000 consortium proposal gave no undertaking to preserve the buildings in their present position and that in fact these historic buildings were not even marked on that consortium's plan?

(4) What action will the Premier take to preserve these buildings in their present state and their present position?

Mr AHERN: Our Government will be guided by our architects on the matter. In my view, it is not a serious issue.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr AHERN: No, it is not. So far, the Government has acted quite responsibly on the preservation of historic buildings on that site. It will continue to exercise responsibility.

Unemployment

Mr FITZGERALD: In directing a question to the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to an article in last Saturday's *Gold Coast Bulletin* attributed to the Leader of the Opposition. In it he referred to a review of State tax systems as a means of solving unemployment in Queensland. I ask: will the Premier please advise the House on the present tax situation with regard to employment?

Mr AHERN: In recent times I have been rather amused to see the antics of the Leader of the Opposition in respect of charges levelled against this State Government in relation to new taxes.

The Queensland Government has a very proud record in the area of State taxation, one which is unparalleled in Australia. If the Queensland Government raised taxation to the level of taxation in South Australia, Queensland citizens would be paying an extra $254m in State taxation. That represents, on average, 16 per cent across the board less than the other State taxes in Australia. That is the proud record of this Government.

What has been the proud record of Labor Governments? They are high-taxation Governments. In other States of Australia there is a raft of new taxes that are unknown in this State.

When it comes to tax, the word of a Labor man in Australia is absolutely useless. In the past, complete undertakings have been given by Labor Governments in respect of no new taxation. Honourable members will recall the Prime Minister saying a few weeks before an election, "There will be no capital gains tax in Australia." What happened? A few weeks later there was a capital gains tax.

Labor Governments are high taxers. That is simply how it is. The honourable Leader of the Opposition disclosed this recently in a press release in which he suggested a program for creating jobs. Having challenged the Queensland Government in relation to its employment program and its priorities, the Leader of the Opposition said, "This is ours." In that press release the Leader of the Opposition states quite clearly—

> "A review of the state tax system which had not been altered in years."

Look out, Queenslanders! This is what the Labor Party is threatening Queenslanders with in the future—new State taxes. Labor Governments around Australia have given undertakings in respect of taxation which have not been carried out. They have increased taxation in every State of Australia and nationally.

Today the superannuation tax is the issue. Why is it that at the moment around Australia public servants, employees in the private sector, and politicians, for that matter, are worried about a new superannuation tax in Australia? It is a Labor Prime Minister's initiative, it is on the agenda, and the Labor Party will not deny it. What has the Leader of the Opposition done about it? What has he done to bring to the attention of his Federal colleagues the concern that is being felt throughout the community? Nothing! Absolutely nothing!

In the Australian political context, Labor is equivalent to high tax. There are no words that will get the Leader of the Opposition off the hook.

Defence Department Contracts

Mr FITZGERALD: In directing a question to the Minister for Industry, I refer to the same article in last Saturday's *Gold Coast Bulletin* in which Mr Goss suggested an immediate chase for some of the huge submarine contracts in order to create employment.

I ask: could the Minister inform the House as to what steps have been taken in relation to defence contracts?

Mr BORBIDGE: I take this opportunity of rejecting any suggestion that the Queensland Government or industry in this State has not had its act together in regard to defence contracts. The situation is particularly serious, and the Queensland Government has been working very, very hard. Contrary to the suggestions of the Leader of the Opposition, the Queensland Government has been doing a lot more than just issuing press releases.

As I mentioned last week in this Chamber, the last Queensland company to win a major defence contract was NQEA in Cairns, and that was pre-Hawke. That company won an award for its workmanship, it came in ahead of time and it came in under budget.

No major defence contracts have been let to Queensland since that time. An examination of recent developments in respect of this matter reveals that the $4.5 billion ANZAC frigate contract was awarded in rather indecent haste to New South Wales and Victoria, no doubt to bolster Mr Unsworth's chances. In addition, last year, prior to the South Australian election the awarding of the submarine contract for the navy went to an Adelaide ship yard. That was worth about $3.5 billion.

The only other recent naval contract, for patrol boats, was awarded some 18 months previous to that to a Western Australian ship yard, which I understand is based in the electorate of the Federal Minister for Defence.

Mr Katter: After being promised to north Queensland.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the Minister says, after being promised to north Queensland. I will deal with that in a moment.

Mr Tenni: De Lacy let all this happen.

Mr BORBIDGE: The Honourable the Minister no doubt knows what is going on up in the north.

I make the point that for some time the Department of Industry Development has maintained consultants to assist Queensland industries to win defence contracts. More recently, a Procurements and Offsets Branch has been established within the Department of Industry Development. In recent weeks I have travelled to Cairns on two occasions for discussions with NQEA. I have met with Evans Deakin and I have been to Canberra to talk to Mr Beazley.

The Queensland Government has served notice on the Federal Government that the Queensland Government will not permit Queensland industry to continue to be discriminated against. I just happen to have in my possession——

Mr De Lacy: What are you going to do about it?

Mr BORBIDGE: I will tell the honourable member something. The document *North Queensland: Future Directions*, which is an ALP policy paper that was distributed just prior to the 1983 Federal election, states—

> "Contracts will be let for five patrol boats, for attachment to the Coastal Surveillance Force.
>
> Consideration to be given to building a further five patrol boats when the first five are built."

That statement was made in 1983, and we are still waiting.

Let me turn now to the credibility of the Labor Party and the Prime Minister in respect of this matter. On 25 February 1983, Prime Minister Hawke's north Queensland policy speech stated—

> "Labor would build 5 more patrol boats and would look at building a further 5."

It is a matter of public record that those commitments were not honoured and that, ever since, the Federal Government has been discriminating against Queensland industry and Queensland jobs.

There can be no suggestion whatsoever that the Queensland Government has not had its act together in trying to secure defence contracts for industry in this State. The record of industry in this State shows that Queensland companies are perfectly capable of doing the job as well as any other company in the rest of Australia or in any other part of the world. I suggest to honourable members opposite that their performance in this matter has been totally abysmal. Queensland has been subjected to blatant political discrimination, the cost of which has been massive job losses in this State. Members of the Opposition have been nothing more than willing accomplices of their Federal colleagues.

Facilities at Brisbane International Airport; Future of Tourism Industry in Queensland

Mr STEPHAN: In directing a question to the Minister for Environment, Conservation and Tourism, I refer to the greatest attraction in Australia's history that will open in Brisbane in a few weeks' time, namely, Expo 88. I point out that visitors to Expo will have to pass through totally inadequate airport facilities. I ask: what steps can be taken to remedy that problem? I also ask: what is the future for Queensland's tourist industry?

Mr MUNTZ: The honourable member for Gympie is correct when he says that at the end of April for a period of six months the eyes of the world will be on Queensland. It is only right that Queensland should create and maintain the tourism image that it has built up, particularly over the last 10 years, to ensure that advantage is taken of the growth in tourism. In terms of bed nights, Queensland receives about 25.8 per cent of Australian business.

There can be no doubt in anyone's mind that the Brisbane international airport could only be described as a chickenhouse. Brisbane's international airport was built by the Federal Government on a temporary basis. Queensland's tourist industry will not be promoted by the first impressions of Australia that people will gain when they arrive here for Expo.

The Federal Government has been remiss in that it has refused to speak to people in the private-enterprise sector who have already offered to build an international airport and accompanying services. A suitable international airport could be built in Brisbane together with an international hotel and related services. If such an airport can be built by private enterprise, there is no reason why tax-payers' resources should be used for such a purpose. It is a pity that the Federal Government did not heed the advice of those people in private enterprise who were prepared to build an international airport in Brisbane.

The Federal Government has expended approximately $500m of tax-payers' resources on the construction of a domestic airport, which is all very well. However, a new domestic airport in Brisbane was not essential, because the existing facilities would have lasted approximately five more years. The real need in this State was for a new international airport, but the Federal Government went ahead and spent those dollars quite unnecessarily.

I believe that, next Saturday, as a public relations exercise, Mr Hawke will be in Brisbane to open the new domestic airport. It will be up to him to inspect the facilities that are available at the international airport and to decide how inadequate they are.

When people arrive in Brisbane on flights from overseas, they are treated like cattle and sprayed by antiquated methods. I believe that that is a quite unnecessary procedure. Once they disembark from the aeroplanes, they are required to walk across a wind-blown tarmac and move into totally inadequate facilities that do not meet modern standards.

Major-General Gray has described the security facilities at the Brisbane international airport as totally inadequate. Pilots believe that the security network is a joke; that it is 15 years behind the times.

It is about time that the Federal Government considered its responsibilities and provided the necessary services for Australians and international visitors. It is significant that approximately 80 international flights arrive in Queensland each week. It must be realised that our tourism industry depends on the growth of the international sector. We have relied on New Zealand, and will continue to rely on the Asian market and the North American market.

Queensland receives 25.8 per cent of that market. By the year 2000 the North American market will increase sevenfold and the Japanese market will increase twelvefold. By the year 2000, 1.1 million visitors are expected from North America and Japan. The total number of international visitors is expected to be something like 2.4 million.

Growth in tourism from overseas has been phenomenal. In 1985, approximately 7 million international visitors came to Queensland. By 1986 that figure had reached 9 million, and by 1987 it had reached 12 million. It has been predicted that, by 1990, we will receive 20 million visitors; by 1995, 32 million visitors and, by the year 2000, 48 million visitors. It is only right that those people should expect to be provided with services of a similar quality to those at other international airports. Sydney international airport cannot cope; it is overcrowded and accommodation facilities are inadequate. There is no reason why the Federal Government should not be asked and, if necessary, forced to provide the necessary facilities here in Queensland.

An imbalance exists in relation to airport facilities. Queensland receives approximately 5 per cent of direct seating from the North American market; Sydney receives approximately 80 per cent. Each capital city has something like 30 per cent of direct bed nights. It is about time that the Federal Government considered the preferred destinations of tourists. Statistics show that, whether they come from America, Japan, Europe or New Zealand, tourists prefer to come to Queensland. However, because of the Federal Government's archaic policies, those people are forced to fly into Queensland via Sydney. That is quite wrong.

It is up to the Federal Government to provide at our international airport facilities that are in keeping with an industry that wants to meet the needs of people from overseas and interstate.

Redevelopment of Expo Site

Mr INNES: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to answers that he gave to questions that were asked in this House last week about the Expo redevelopment project. In answer to one question, the Premier stated that, at a certain point in time, the Government decided to offer a casino licence to the successful developer and that he would avoid the difficulties of re-tendering by keeping the matter confidential until he decided who the successful short-list developer would be. At a later point in time the Premier said that the decision to do that was made on the same day as the Cabinet decision awarding the successful developer. I ask: did that decision on the casino occur spontaneously at that Cabinet meeting or was it the subject of some recommendation and advice? If so, who initiated the proposal to have a casino on the site? What were the benefits that were seen to follow from that decision?

Mr AHERN: Honourable members will recall that there was a general discussion in the community about ways and means of raising extra money for shortfalls in the Consolidated Revenue Account next year as a result of the cut-backs in Commonwealth financial assistance grants in the triennium—this year, next year and the following year. Various issues were floated as ways and means of providing this community with the revenue shortfall. Quite a number of suggestions were made. It was in that context that suggestions were made at our Cabinet meeting that this was one option which might assist us in meeting that particular problem.

I would point out to honourable members that it must be understood that what the Cabinet has decided is that the successful developer, or the most preferred developer, on the Expo site will have to provide a venue for a casino on the site in the future. However, it is not suggested that that developer will be the successful tenderer for the casino. It is quite certain in my mind that Cabinet will want that matter to go back to tender. So, if it is suggested that the developer in question will be the successful casino-operator, I point out that no suggestion like that has been made, and the matter will proceed further to tender.

It has to be understood that there is a separation between the investment side and the operational side of the Jupiters group of companies. In respect of the post-Expo development, they are partners in providing the capital investment. The operator of the casino has not yet been determined. It will be determined at a future time.

In the circumstances, I believe it has all been properly and reasonably done. A number of people are making suggestions to us. The great advantage, as I see it, from the capital city point of view, which is a specific point in the honourable member's question, is that a casino will provide an important catalyst to promote further capital city tourist structures. That has been the outcome of the Gold Coast casino development. When that development took place, it was the initiator, or the catalyst, for a whole range of other things to happen. They have obviously happened as a result of that particular development. The capital city tourist infrastructure lacks this important amenity. One can talk to a number of people around town who have a focal interest in tourism and they will indicate that at the moment the lack of a casino is a gap. If Cabinet were to agree to the development of a casino—and I will be recommending that to Cabinet at some future time—the casino will be an important part of the capital city tourist infrastructure and it will reap quite substantial rewards for economic development in our capital city.

Redevelopment of Expo Site

Mr INNES: Leaving aside the tourist facility enhancement of the city, and looking to the commendable commitment made towards the return to tendering integrity in this State, I ask a further question of the Premier about the Expo redevelopment project.

Mr Gately: This is getting monotonous.

Mr INNES: Yes, it might be getting monotonous, but I will continue.

I ask: is it not a fact that the successful person chosen from the short list was the only one of the proponents who had an involvement with an existing casino? Conrad International is part of the group which was successful. That is the company which operates Jupiters casino. The financiers proposed are the Commonwealth Superannuation Fund and the owners of Jupiters Casino, the people involved with Conrad International. I am asking: is it not an extraordinary coincidence that the other people who put forward a proposal had no involvement in casinos and that the decision by the Cabinet to have a casino was arrived at simultaneously with the awarding of the tender to a group involved in a casino?

Mr AHERN: A "coincidence" it is; "extraordinary", I reject. The proposal is as I clearly stated it. The other day I took honourable members through it in sequence without notes, relying on my memory as to the sequence of events. The preferred developer was selected on the basis of merit.

The fact that the capital investment was being provided by one of a group of companies that has casino interests on the Gold Coast and other capital developments around the State and the nation is a coincidence. As to the fact that the Government will be proceeding back—it is an honest position; that is how it happened; that is how it is. There is no preference to be given in respect of that particular operator on that site. It will go back to tender and it will be won on the basis of merit at that time. That is how it is. No amount of questioning from the honourable member will change the facts.

Steel-mill, North Queensland

Mr McELLIGOTT: In directing a question to the Premier and Treasurer, I point out that during his recent discussions overseas with American financiers, he announced that a $500m steel-mill would soon be built in Queensland, probably at Townsville. Representatives of Pioneer Concrete—one of the companies that are looking at the project to mine ore from Mount Podge, north of Townsville—have said that there is not enough iron ore worth mining and that the project is unlikely to proceed. I ask: was the Premier not aware, prior to travelling to America, that the announcement of 1 000 jobs at a proposed steel-mill was nothing more than a media beat-up by his Minister for Northern Development? Why did he seek to mislead the Americans at a time when he was supposedly trying to re-establish Queensland's credibility? Will the Premier now agree that the $500m Townsville steel-mill is the first Ahern phantom project?

Mr AHERN: It is interesting to hear the honourable member being so negative about his city and its industrial projects. As far as members of this Government are concerned, we are prepared to be positive about the promotion of economic development projects in Townsville and other areas of Queensland.

Mr McElligott interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Thuringowa has asked the question. The Premier listened in silence, and the honourable member will listen in silence as the answer is given.

Mr AHERN: The presentation that I made to the US authorities in connection with the Yankee bond issue was prepared on advice from the Department of Industry Development, which is very positive about economic development projects throughout Queensland. We are endeavouring to give to the US financial institutions a very positive view of the future of this State.

Mr McElligott: It has fallen through, and he knows it has fallen through.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr McElligott: Did your Minister know that it wasn't proceeding?

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

Mr AHERN: I have no advice to the extent that Pioneer has become negative in respect of that proposal. As far as I am aware, certain assistance has been asked for through the Department of Industry Development and every assistance will be given. Everybody who comes forward to the Government with a positive project and seeks assistance will be given that assistance. It is in no-one's interests at all for anyone to try to talk down the community or the various provincial cities.

The North American road show was very well received and the Yankee bond issue at the present time is floating on the market very nicely. It is the judgment of the market and not of the honourable member for Thuringowa that Queensland's investment potential is very significant. Its significance is worth some dollars per centum less than New Zealand in terms of interest rate charged on the money that they are lending to this Government on today's market.

I say to honourable members opposite, "Answer that!" That is the judgment of the international market in terms of the proposition put to it by this Government, which was extremely well received. Regularly since my return I have received a number of communications from people whom I addressed there expressing interest in investment in Queensland.

Proposed Gas Pipeline to Denison Trough

Mr R. J. GIBBS: I direct a question without notice to the Premier. I fear this Government's proposed intention to build a gas pipeline linked into Denison Trough from Gladstone and ask—

(1) What financial viability studies have been carried out by the Government in this regard?

(2) What reports are available, and will he table them in this House?

(3) Is it true that on a number of occasions the Premier has met representatives of Queensland Alumina Limited in an attempt to convince that company to change from oil usage to gas, in spite of its resistance to do so in the light of low world prices for oil?

Mr AHERN: I have not met anyone from Queensland Alumina since I became Premier. I do not know where the honourable member gets his information from, but he is not right.

I make the point that this important infrastructure project in Queensland is critical to this State's industrial future. A large gas pipeline which will feed Gladstone and link up Denison Trough and the Jackson Field is obviously an important issue in the future economic development of Queensland. If this Government can make it happen, it will. I have not met representatives from Queensland Alumina, but I have telephoned the chairman.

Opposition members: Ah!

Mr AHERN: All right! I was asked the question and I answered it literally. I was asked, "Did I meet?" The answer is, "No, I did not. I have not." If I had answered it in any other way, I would have been misleading the House.

I have telephoned the chairman of Queensland Alumina in respect of this important project, and I make no apology. That development depends on QAL because it is a very large user. This is an important issue in the future industrial development of the city of Gladstone, and a number of very substantial projects in Gladstone depend upon this development. Is the honourable member for Port Curtis complaining because this Government is trying its level best to bring this development to fruition? Has he checked with his colleague in this House who today is trying to knock the Government's efforts to bring about this project?

Mr R. J. Gibbs: I am not knocking it.

Mr AHERN: Yes, he was. He was knocking the project, and there is no doubt about it.

This Government makes no apology for the substantial amount of discussion that has occurred. Over at least a couple of years this Government has been doing its level best to bring this project to fruition. The honourable member asked if it had been the subject of various studies. The answer is that it has been the subject of endless studies, to the point where I have had to say to the chairman of Queensland Alumina that there has to be an end to the number of studies that have been carried out on this project. A decision has to be made one way or the other as to whether or not it is going ahead. At the moment the negotiations are proceeding very satisfactorily and very productively. It is my hope that very shortly we will be able to announce an historic development that we will have created in the economic future of Queensland, and very proudly so.

Electricity Tariffs

Mr R. J. GIBBS: In directing a question to the Minister for Mines and Energy, I refer to the experimental energy management system that is currently being tested in 100 homes in the Brisbane region. I now ask: is it not true that, if this system goes ahead, although SEQEB will save annually the $5m that is now spent on sending meter-readers to some 700 000 customers' homes, house-holders and firms forced to use

electricity during the peak-load period from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. will be heavily penalised? Is it true that, although the comparative standard electricity rate now charged for the entire 24 hours is 10.5c a power unit, it is the Minister's intention to increase that to 18c per unit during peak periods? Is it also true that business and factories, which are already subsidised by average consumers, will experience between a 38 and 76 per cent decrease in their power bills under this proposal?

Mr TENNI: I could answer that question simply by saying: no, no, no. All I can say is that one night the honourable member has certainly had a nightmare and dreamt up these imaginary figures. As a matter of fact, we are looking at proposals to reduce power costs to the people of Queensland in general, not to one particular area.

As the honourable member knows, the proposal for power charges is to make them the same all over Queensland. The Government will continue with that proposal; but its aim will continue to be, as it has been for three years, to keep the cost of power to consumers, whether house-holders or industry, down to the lowest possible price. That will continue to be the case.

The honourable member should speak to his socialist colleagues in the other States who have been to Queensland. In particular, representatives from Western Australia were here as late as last week wanting to have a look at the way Queensland is handling its affairs. They are absolutely astounded that, over a three-year period, Queensland has been able to restrict increases in power charges to half the CPI.

In the future, if the honourable member has any concerns, instead of having nightmares he should come to me and have a sensible discussion so that he is able to ask a question in this House that the people of Queensland will believe is honest, truthful and worth answering. Until then, I suggest that he keep quiet.

Kangaroo Meat for Human Consumption

Mr BOOTH: In directing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries, I refer to the proposal to sell kangaroo meat for human consumption in Queensland, and ask: will the Department of Primary Industries enforce the same standards of hygiene adopted by meatworks in the handling of meat from other animals and, if not, why not? What standards will the Department of Primary Industries enforce, and will they be adequately policed by the DPI?

Mr HARPER: In asking the question, the honourable member referred to a proposal to sell kangaroo meat in Queensland. Certainly such a proposal has been put forward, particularly by some representatives of conservation groups. It has received some support from people connected with the meat industry. However, the Government has taken a decision not to pursue that proposal—certainly not in the foreseeable future.

If at some time in the future the Queensland Government decided to follow the track of South Australia, which has had kangaroo meat available to consumers in restaurants and other eating places for some eight years, I am quite confident that it would have very extensive discussions with people who have an interest in it. If a decision was taken to proceed, undoubtedly standards of hygiene would be required.

I repeat: at the present time the Government has no intention of pursuing any proposal that has been put forward by interested groups, including conservationists, to alter the law so that kangaroo meat is available for human consumption in Queensland.

Langdon Report on Dairy Industry

Mr BOOTH: In directing a second question to the Minister for Primary Industries, I refer him to the Langdon report and ask: has the report been abandoned or shelved and, if not, what stage has been reached in regard to its finalisation? Has Mr Langdon been paid for compiling the report and, if so, is the Minister prepared to release the amount paid to him?

Mr HARPER: Again I thank the honourable member for the question, because it affords me an opportunity to endeavour to correct some misunderstanding that he apparently has in regard to the Langdon report. In doing so, I repeat what I have said on a number of occasions, I believe, in this House—certainly outside at public meetings.

The dairy industry approached me with a proposition to see what my response would be. My response was that, in the interests of preserving the Queensland dairy industry and in the interests of maintaining its competitiveness in view of possible threats—probable threats, indeed—from interstate, particularly from Victoria, and overseas—as a result of the initiatives taken by Prime Minister Hawke, within a couple of years New Zealand will enjoy virtually the same status as another State of Australia——

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr HARPER: It will enjoy the same status, but it will not accept any of the obligations. The Labor Prime Minister Hawke would give protection similar to that provided by section 92. It would accept all the gains but none of the responsibility for the defence of this nation.

As a result of that threat—that competitiveness—which I believe will occur, the dairy industry approached me suggesting a degree of rationalisation along similar lines to that which has been supported by both State and Federal Governments in the sugarcane industry. I am sure that the member for Mackay and other members opposite agree with the decision taken jointly by the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments to encourage rationalisation in that industry.

At that time, I indicated to the leaders of the dairy industry that the prospect of rationalisation to ensure the continued prosperity of Queensland's dairy industry was attractive to me and that I would like to pursue the matter by having an investigation into their proposal carried out. I asked them if they had any ideas as to a person who may be suitable to carry out such an investigation. They came forward with two people, one of whom was Mr Ian Langdon. He had spent many years at Geelong in various educational institutions—the university and technical college—and was highly accredited. More recently, he had spent a period in Toowoomba at the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education. In that year he had moved to the Gold Coast in a somewhat similar position, where he had responsibility for business studies.

It appealed to me that I should use a person who had had vast experience in the co-operative movement throughout Australia—particularly in Queensland—and who had some understanding of the dairy industry. Mr Langdon had been associated in a small way with the Downs Co-operative in Toowoomba, so I asked him if he was prepared to make his time and energy available to prepare for me, the Minister for Primary Industries in the Queensland Government, a report into the proposal that had been put forward by the dairy industry in Queensland. I commend Mr Langdon for the energy and expertise that he brought to that task. He made himself available. The people to whom he is responsible in the college on the Gold Coast also deserve our thanks for making his services available.

The end result was a very extensive confidential report which was made to me. The dairy industry throughout Queensland, the 13 co-operatives as well as the proprietary companies, joined in a meaningful way and gave him access to information and material, which he passed on to me on a confidential basis. Resulting from that confidential report to me, I developed an abridged version—one might say a censored version—deleting confidential information relating to the financial positions of co-operative dairy associations based on information made available to Mr Langdon on a confidential basis. That, of course, included the Co-operative Dairy Association in Warwick. I knew full well that none of those people would expect that confidential information to be made available to the public.

As I have said, I personally prepared an abridged report, which was made available as a discussion paper. The front page of that report very clearly set out that it was a

discussion paper, intended to provide a constructive basis for discussion—for comment—on the proposal put forward by the Queensland dairy industry. That has occurred. I assisted the industry in convening a number of meetings. The Queensland Dairymen's Organisation convened meetings throughout Queensland. The end result was that the 13 co-operative dairy associations in Queensland—reduced to 12, actually, with the advent of Queensco—decided that they were not prepared to continue with further consideration of the proposal as a group, but individual dairy associations—I think, including the one from Warwick—have continued to pursue this objective of rationalisation.

I take this opportunity to say that I support fully moves being made to pursue rationalisation of the Queensland dairy industry because it is an important industry, one which this Government supports whole-heartedly and one which can only continue to be competitive if it is able to meet the competition that it will face. To achieve that, I believe that rationalisation is necessary.

Pioneer River Mouth Tourist Development

Mr CASEY: In directing a question to the Minister for Environment, Conservation and Tourism, I refer to the lack of progress on the Pioneer River mouth tourist development, which is supposedly a $130m joint project of the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation and a company called Pioneer River Developments Pty Ltd, and I ask: was the Minister correctly reported in the Mackay *Daily Mercury* of 12 December 1987, the day after this meeting in Mackay with the Mackay Chamber of Commerce and the chairman of the development company about the delays, as saying—

> "It must be remembered that this was the only company—locally, nationally or internationally—that expressed an interest in Mackay when the idea was floated."?

If so, and if the Minister is also correctly quoted as stating that the company is being offered in addition an area on the northern bank of the Pioneer River for an expanded development, why are not fresh tenders being called for the expanded project to allow for a wider range of options for the best possible tourist resort for Mackay?

Mr MUNTZ: The question covers a number of portfolios, including my own. The member for Mackay has been totally asleep in regard to promoting tourism in that area and, for that matter, in north Queensland. He has done absolutely nothing. When this Government moves in and endeavours to promote a tourist development in Mackay, the member for Mackay continues to knock the project every week. The member for Mackay is determined to see it fold, and I am determined to see it come to fruition. If a piece of land is available in a city and it has some potential, there is nothing wrong with this Government's endeavouring to get the most out of that land.

The honourable member asked was I reported correctly as saying that when the idea was floated and expressions of interest were called by the QTTC, the company involved was the only company which expressed interest. The answer is: yes, that was the only company that submitted an application and a proposal to develop that land.

That company has already invested in excess of $1m in feasibility studies on a site that is very difficult from an engineering point of view. Everybody accepts that. However, not everybody accepts that it is impossible to develop a tourist resort on that land.

If Mr Casey would get behind the people of Mackay, the business people, the families who are out of work and the people who are looking for work, and try to get that project off the ground, as I and my colleagues have endeavoured to do, we might get somewhere. For the benefit for the member of Mackay, I point out that both the QTTC and the developers have been talking to major tourist operators and major hotel operators within Australia and internationally. Those negotiations are proceeding quite satisfactorily. However, they will not proceed if Mr Casey continues to slander, to knock, and to adopt the negative attitude that he has adopted over the last 12 months. At present, the development has reached a very delicate stage.

The member for Mackay referred to land on the northern side of the river. There is nothing wrong with the Queensland Government's considering that land for future

tourist development. I did not quite hear the exact content of that part of the honourable member's question. If the existing developer of the project on the south bank of the Pioneer River wishes to make application for an area of land on the north bank, he may do so. There is nothing wrong with that. He is allowed to make such an application. At this stage he has not yet made an application in respect of that land. However, if he makes an application, the Government will give it consideration, which will be either favourable or unfavourable.

The suggestion that people cannot apply to develop a piece of land is quite wrong. The Queensland Government has a right to consider such an application. The Queensland Government is trying to achieve for Mackay something that will benefit all of the people in Mackay.

I ask the honourable member not to be so negative, to get behind the project and endeavour to get it started. The project will benefit the whole of Mackay, the honourable member's family and everybody who lives in Mackay.

Pioneer River Mouth Tourist Development

Mr CASEY: I ask the Premier: in view of the confirmation by the Minister for Tourism, Mr Muntz, of my previous comment that only one tender—or expression of interest, as he called it—was received for the Pioneer River mouth development, and in view of the Premier's publicly expressed desire to maintain honesty, responsibility and truthfulness as a necessary part of the code of conduct by his Ministry, is he aware that in a series of public press releases relating to this project the previous Minister for Tourism, Mr McKechnie, stated on 8 May 1985, "At the closure date seven major developing teams . . . from overseas, interstate and within Queensland had registered interest.", and that on 24 June 1985 the same Minister said, "Three major investors had been invited to submit formal proposals. The short list had been selected from expressions by nine major developers."?

As it is very obvious that one of those Ministers, by his actions, has deliberately deceived the people of Queensland—especially those in the Mackay region—will the Premier take urgent and immediate action to inform Parliament of the truth of this matter and to sack whichever Minister has been lying?

Mr AHERN: Over the years I have been to Mackay on a number of occasions in a number of capacities. Every time I have visited Mackay I have met groups of people who have pleaded with the Queensland Government to promote economic development projects of one type or another. It is No. 1 on the agenda on every occasion. I have met Tony Zelenka and the Mayor of the city, as well as the chairman of the Pioneer Shire Council and a whole range of other well-intentioned people. I have been to Mackay for the annual meeting of the development board. I have attended the shire council chambers in the city from time to time. On every occasion people have pleaded, "What can be done to promote further economic development projects of one type or another in Mackay?" Down through the years Ministers have done their level best for the city of Mackay. As I understand it, at the request of certain people a number of projects around the river mouth have been examined with a view to trying to find some way or another of developing it.

Mr De Lacy: You are not answering the question.

Mr AHERN: I am about to answer it, and very validly, by providing the proper background to it.

It is in this context that the Queensland Government has been trying to help. Down through the years the honourable member for Mackay has been against everything. If we went to build a toilet block in Mackay, he would be against it. It is as simple as that.

Tenders were invited for the development of a tourist project in the Mackay area. That project had the strong support of community representatives in the area. Initially, the QTTC made that request. A number of parties expressed interest.

Mr Casey: How many?

Mr AHERN: A large number. Initially, they expressed interest.

In the final negotiations, when it got down to the stage at which all of the issues were known, such as engineering problems and a whole range of matters, only one player who was actually prepared to do it was left. At that time I was one of the Cabinet members who said, "We are left with only one fellow who has said that he is prepared to have a go." I am sure that many other Cabinet members at that time would have said, "We are not prepared to go back to Mackay and tell the people up there that we are not even prepared to allow that fellow, who said that he was prepared to go ahead within the parameters that we have set, to have a go."

The answer is that all Ministers have been correct. At the outset, when Mr McKechnie made that statement, there were a number of interested parties. In the final analysis, in terms of all criteria, only one person said that he was prepared to have a go. Therefore, Mr Muntz was correct, too. All Ministers have been correct in trying to promote some form of development in Mackay. Over the years, the honourable member for Mackay has been negative, negative, negative.

Mr HYND having given notice of a question—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Does the honourable member for Nerang have a second question?

Mr Gately: Mr Speaker, could you note that the Leader of the Opposition is not in the House?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Currumbin will remain silent. Does the honourable member for Nerang have a second question?

Mr HYND: No.

Submissions to Health Department from Professor Hirst

Mr SHERLOCK: I ask the Minister for Health: is she aware that, at about the time that she took office late last year, correspondence and submissions from Professor Hirst and the Princess Alexandra Hospital were lost in her department, and is she aware that, subsequently, new submissions were made early in January setting out the proposal again?

Is the Minister aware that all approaches to her by correspondence and by telephone seeking discussions with Professor Hirst had been ignored until I raised the request in a letter to her dated 19 February?

Will the Minister say in what circumstances the file could have been lost at the time of her taking up the Health portfolio?

Mrs HARVEY: Because I am not aware of some of the administrative procedures, to which the honourable member refers, which were adopted by my department prior to my receiving my current portfolio, I cannot comment on such matters.

Discussions with Professor Hirst are being arranged. I anticipate that they will be fruitful and that I will be able to report to this House in the future on their outcome.

Cooyar Floods

Mr ELLIOTT: I ask the Premier: will he outline to this House the position in respect of those people who had their houses washed away and also those houses——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I direct that that question be placed on the Notices of Questions. The time allotted for questions has now expired.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS COMMISSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Minister for Finance and Minister Assisting the Premier and Treasurer) (4 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Local Government Grants Commission Act 1976-1979 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Austin, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Minister for Finance and Minister Assisting the Premier and Treasurer) (4.01 p.m.): I move—

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

The purpose of the Bill before the House is to make administrative and procedural amendments to the Local Government Grants Commission Act 1976-1979 arising from the introduction of the Commonwealth Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1986. The Commonwealth Act outlines new arrangements for providing general revenue assistance to local government in the States and the Northern Territory.

The amendments to the Local Government Grants Commission Act are necessary to ensure consistency with the Commonwealth legislation. In particular, the Commonwealth legislation defines "local governing bodies" to include Aboriginal and Islander councils, and these councils are therefore eligible to receive a distribution of funds in accordance with the arrangements outlined in that Act. However, the Local Government Grants Commission Act at present restricts the commission to making recommendations in respect of the allocation of financial assistance among "Local Authorities", defined to include only local authorities constituted under the Queensland Local Government Act 1936-87 and the Brisbane City Council Act 1924-84.

The Bill provides for the commission to adopt the Commonwealth definition of "local governing bodies". The Bill also provides for the commission to comply with relevant provisions of the Commonwealth legislation, particularly in regard to:

- the requirement for the commission to hold public hearings;
- the assessment of a minimum entitlement for each local governing body; and
- the requirement to consult with bodies representative of local government in determining appropriate principles for distribution.

In addition, the Bill provides for the membership of the commission to be expanded to include the Director of Local Government as an ex officio member of the commission. This is designed to further strengthen the expertise of the commission. Provision has also been made for a deputy to act in place of the Director of Local Government in the same manner as that for which provision currently exists for a deputy to act in place of the Under Treasurer.

It should be noted that the amendments proposed in the Bill are mechanical only, and do not impinge on the significant policy differences which remain with the Commonwealth Government over the role of the commission in the grant distribution process.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr De Lacy, adjourned.

DRAINAGE OF MINES ACT REPEAL BILL

Hon. M. J. TENNI (Barron River—Minister for Mines and Energy) (4.03 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to repeal The Drainage of Mines Act of 1912."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Tenni, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. M. J. TENNI (Barron River—Minister for Mines and Energy) (4.04 p.m.): I move—

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

The Drainage of Mines Act 1912 was originally introduced to make better provision for the drainage of all mines. However, following the introduction of the Coal Mining Act 1925, which included appropriate drainage provisions, the Act was confined to metalliferous mines. The legislation was enacted to provide a means by which pumping and drainage costs could be shared in circumstances in which neighbouring mines, owned and operated by different proprietors, had to drain water for mutual safety and efficiency. To enable pumping and drainage costs to be shared, the Act provided for the definition of mine drainage areas and the establishment of drainage boards.

There are no records, nor is there any personal knowledge within the Department of Mines, as to when the provisions of this Act were last applied or whether they have indeed ever been applied. It is therefore very clear that there is no demonstrated need for legislation of this nature today. Accordingly, it is appropriate that The Drainage of Mines Act 1912 be repealed.

I commend this Bill to honourable members.

Debate, on motion of Mr R. J. Gibbs, adjourned.

EMPLOYMENT, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BILL

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Affairs) (4.06 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to promote employment, vocational education and training in Queensland."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Lester, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Affairs) (4.07 p.m.): I move—

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

On 14 December 1987, the Government of Queensland established a new Department of State entitled the Department of Employment, Vocational Education and Training. This department represents the bringing together of the responsibilities for administration of technical and further education, training and employment-planning.

This is a major Queensland Government initiative and demonstrates in the clearest possible way the Government's philosophy on the close relationship between employment, vocational education and training. The Government has the strongest commitment to

ensuring that vocational education and training are relevant to both employment and industry and therefore beneficial to the economic development of this State. The Bill now before the Parliament is the first stage of the Government's program of expressing that philosophy in new legislation.

The Bill introduces the legislative provisions that are required to ensure the efficient and effective establishment and administration of the department. These include the establishment of the Minister as a corporation, which is an essential facility, the clear definition of the Minister's functions under the Act and the establishment of heads of power necessary for the management of the department's operations.

The second stage of the legislative process will culminate in the introduction of further legislation that will consolidate under the one Act the authority necessary for the administration of all aspects of employment, vocational education and training. That further legislation will have as its principal objective the development and management of a highly effective, efficient and innovative vocational education and training system for Queensland that will focus on the creation of a highly skilled and qualified work-force for Queensland.

Central to the effective development of this second-stage legislation is the involvement of the stake-holders in the employment, vocational education and training process. I have already appointed a ministerial advisory committee which is representative of industry, trade unions and Government and which will provide me with advice on both the parameters and detail of that proposed legislation. I can also assure honourable members that there will be consultation—I might add that there has already been quite a lot—with industry, the community and other vocational education and training providers prior to its being finalised and introduced to the Parliament.

As I mentioned earlier in this speech, the Bill now before the Parliament introduces a small number of key management provisions. These provisions have the effect of—

(a) establishing the Minister responsible for the Act as a corporation;

(b) prescribing the functions for the Minister under the Act;

(c) enabling the Minister or an authorised officer to undertake membership of or to enter into agreements with other bodies related to or complementary to employment, vocational education and training or research;

(d) enabling the Minister to produce and sell vocational education materials and services;

(e) enabling the disbursement for the purposes of the Act of all fees and other moneys raised under the authority of the Act;

(f) enabling the Minister to appoint advisory committees;

(g) prescribing the requirement for an annual report to be prepared and tabled in the Parliament; and

(h) providing for the making of regulations by the Governor in Council.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Vaughan, adjourned.

HOLIDAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Affairs) (4.11 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Holidays Act 1983-1985 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Lester, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Affairs) (4.12 p.m.): I move—

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

In recent years there has been an increase in the practice of banks operating full banking facilities at shows throughout the State, particularly on the week-end and on public holidays.

Section 10 of the Holidays Act presently provides that all holidays granted in terms of the Act and all Saturdays shall be bank holidays. However, agencies of savings banks may remain open on Saturdays. It will be appreciated that banks do operate branches providing all services at the Royal National Association Exhibition in Brisbane on both Saturdays, the Wednesday public holiday and the Sunday during the period of the show. In addition, in certain provincial areas banks are providing facilities at showgrounds on holidays declared as show holidays or public holidays. I would stress there is no difficulty with the payment to staff who are required to work on these days at branches at shows. I am assured that the officers are paid the normal penalty rates that would apply.

The practice of banks opening on holidays declared in pursuance of the Holidays Act is, however, contrary to the provisions of the Act. It has developed in recent years due to the demands placed on banks by industry, the rural sector and the community generally. Naturally, from a security point of view, it is desirable that operators on showgrounds are able to deposit their takings. Furthermore, facilities are required to process cheques, etc., in conjunction with cautions for the sale of livestock.

In the circumstances, it is considered that the provisions of the Holidays Act should be updated in accordance with present practices of banks to permit them to operate legally within the confines of showgrounds for the duration of a show. The matter has been discussed in detail with the Queensland Bankers Association, which fully supports the proposed amendment to the Act.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Vaughan, adjourned.

RETAIL SHOP LEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Minister for Industry, Small Business, Communications and Technology) (4.14 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Retail Shop Leases Act 1984-1985 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Borbidge, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Minister for Industry, Small Business, Communications and Technology) (4.15 p.m.): I move—

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

The Retail Shop Leases Act was assented to on 12 March 1984 and was amended on 15 April 1985. While the Act provides for prohibited conditions and implied conditions in retail shop leases, very important parts of the Act provided for mediation in lease disputes by a mediator and in certain cases, where mediation fails, the referral of those complaints to a Retail Shop Lease Tribunal.

At the time of introducing the Bill to the House in 1984, the Minister pointed out that this was pioneering legislation and that Queensland was the first State in Australia

to grasp the nettle and make a major effort to come to grips with the prime causes of concern with retail shop leases. Recognising that the Act was the first of its kind in Australia and was breaking new ground, the Minister introducing the initial Bill stated that the Government was prepared to amend the Act from time to time if additional problems became apparent in the market-place.

My officers administering the retail shop lease legislation in Queensland continually monitor and report on the many and varied complex issues relating to retail leases. The amendment brought to this House in 1985 and the present proposed amendments are the result of such reports. As a result of the ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of the legislation in the market-place, these proposed amendments are intended to clarify certain aspects of the Act about which some anomalies have been brought to my attention by both landlords and tenants.

The Government, with the introduction of this legislation in 1984, embarked on an awareness program, and officers of my department have met with and addressed chambers of commerce, trade groups, service clubs, merchants and traders associations, centre managers and others in practically every part of Queensland, resulting in a clear communication between Government and the market-place which has contributed significantly to the success of the legislation.

During the second-reading debate on the introduction of this legislation in 1984, I pointed out that the Bill then before the House would set a precedent for every Parliament in Australia. The background to the legislation is important and is of relevance. Few proposed laws have been subject to such careful scrutiny and such sustained public input and review. I further pointed out to the House that the four Labor States and the Federal Government at that time had done nothing positive in regard to what is a nationwide problem.

Those on the opposite side of the House should be correctly informed on what progress has been made by their Labor colleagues in other States. At that time, Victoria and South Australia were only in the process of establishing working parties to identify the problems which the Queensland legislation sought to rectify. In New South Wales, a keen interest has been taken on the workings of the Queensland legislation, and late last year a select committee of the New South Wales Parliament visited Queensland for the purpose of being briefed by my officers on the effects of the Queensland legislation in the market-place.

Members who are familiar with the South Australian legislation introduced in that State in October 1984, seven months after the introduction of Queensland legislation, will see that it duplicates many of the provisions of the Queensland Act in similar terms. In Western Australia, a Bill was passed on 13 May 1985, 14 months after the introduction of the Queensland legislation, which is for all practical purposes a replica of the Queensland legislation.

In 1986, Victoria introduced the Retail Tenant's Act, which took effect from late 1987, some 3½ years after the Queensland legislation was introduced. This legislation has approached a number of issues already addressed in the Queensland legislation. However, the tried and proven two-tier structure for the low-cost, speedy resolution of disputes that has worked so well in Queensland has been replaced by a more expensive and more time-consuming system in that State. At this time, although working parties in the Australian Capital Territory have identified similar problems to those experienced in Queensland, no comparable ordinance has been enacted.

Queensland is acknowledged throughout Australia as being the first and only State which has positively identified and successfully addressed this problem. Approaches have been received from all other States by officers of my department to learn of our experiences in this complex field before proceeding with the drafting of their own legislation.

The awareness program by my officers meeting and conferring with and addressing both landlord and tenant groups throughout the State is a major contributing factor to the establishment of a better understanding between landlords and tenants. As a yardstick

of the success of the Queensland legislation, between 70 per cent and 80 per cent of all disputes brought before the mediator have reached a level of conciliation acceptable to both the landlord and the tenant.

These amendments are drafted as the result of input sought from the market-place to ensure the legislation's continuing effectiveness and relevance to the market. Conferences with landlord and tenant groups, both prior to and subsequent to the distribution of the Green Paper, have taken place on these proposed amendments.

In detail then, the amendments to the principal Act are as follows—

Clause 1 of the Bill is the short title and citation.

Clause 2 amends section 4—Interpretation. The amendment inserts additional definitions of adequate particulars, determination of market rent, specialist retail value and the Valuers Registration Board.

Clause 3 amends a heading to Part II of the principal Act to prohibited conditions and provisions.

Clause 4 inserts a new section 6A—Tenant's right to join or form commercial associations. It is proposed that a tenant should be given a clear, unfettered right to join any merchants, traders or tenants' association or similar body of the tenant's choice.

Clause 5 amends section 8—Certain payments to landlord prohibited. The amendment ensures that a landlord shall not be held responsible for the actions of an agent who has no authority from him to accept the prohibited payments as set out in the section. The amendment further ensures that tenants in shopping centres are not called upon to contribute to sinking-funds for the amortisation of the cost of the centre, extensions to the centre and/or the construction of major improvements to existing centres.

Clause 6 amends section 10—Rent review. The amendment ensures that where leases provide for a periodic review of rental on the basis of market rent during the currency of the lease, the assessment of market rent will be determined by a specialist retail valuer appointed under the provisions of the Valuers Registration Act and accredited by the Valuers Registration Board.

Clause 7 provides for new sections 10A, 10B and 10C. Section 10A—Provisions concerning determination by specialist retail valuer. If a landlord and a tenant cannot agree on the nomination of a specialist retail valuer, provision is made where there is apparent conflict of interest by the valuer and further sets out provisions in the event of non-compliance or misconduct on the part of the valuer, the payment of fees to the valuer and penalties in the event of non-compliance by the valuer.

Section 10B—Designation of specialist retail valuers. This amendment provides for individual registration of specialist retail valuers by the Valuers Registration Board and the method of appointment and the responsibilities of the Valuers Registration Board.

Section 10C—Appeal by an aggrieved valuer. This amendment sets out procedures by a valuer who is aggrieved by the decision of the Valuers Registration Board not to register him as a specialist retail valuer.

Clause 8 amends section 11—Requests for assignment of lease. The amendment reduces the period of 42 days to 30 days in which a landlord is required to respond to a tenant who requests his consent to the assignment of a lease. Provision is also made for the landlord to be supplied with adequate particulars in relation to the assignment.

Clause 9 amends section 12—Sharing of operating expenses. The amendment clarifies the responsibility of landlords, while advising tenants in relation to certain defined operating expenses in a prescribed form.

Clause 10 amends section 13—Option to renew lease. The amendment defines procedures to be followed by landlords and tenants where a tenant seeks an extension or a renewal of the lease beyond the expiry date.

Clause 11 provides for a new section 14A—Provisions concerning trading hours. This new section applies to existing leases as a result of changes to shop trading hours following the enactment of the Trading Hours Act 1987.

Clause 12 amends section 15—Implied provisions concerning compensation. The amendment clarifies the liability of a landlord for the payment of compensation where an agent has acted lawfully under his authority. Tenants are also given the right to compensation in the case of a defect in the centre which may cause a loss of profits to the tenant or where a tenant has to vacate the retail shop as a result of extensions, refurbishing or demolition of the centre or where a tenant has entered into a lease or renewed a lease as a result of false or misleading statements made to him.

Clause 13 provides for a new section 15A—Documents and information to be given to tenants. This new section recognises the need for disclosure statements and copies of leases to be made available to prospective tenants prior to their entering into leases.

Clause 14 amends section 36—Extent of jurisdiction. This amendment is designed to render ineffective, provisions inserted in leases seeking to circumvent the low cost of dispute-resolution procedures available through the Retail Shop Leases Act.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: This is important legislation. It is important to many small-business people throughout this State. It is of interest to them, even if the member for Brisbane Central is not interested. He would be the first to complain if I did not tell him what was contained in the Bill. I will continue with the amendments to the principal Act—

Clause 15—Amendment of section 60—Protection of things done under the Act. This amendment clarifies the protection of mediators appointed under the Act and grants them protection against legal liability in the same way in which the Crown accepts legal liability for the actions of Crown employees.

Clause 16 provides for a new section 63—Review of Act. This new section implements the Government's policy which requires a Minister to review legislation after a prescribed period.

Clause 17—Amendment of First Schedule. This is a machinery amendment inserting the specified businesses, restaurants, cafeterias, coffee lounges and other eating places.

Clause 18—Amendment of Second Schedule—Specified Services. This sequential machinery amendment omits restaurants, cafeterias, coffee lounges and other eating places from the second schedule.

The proposed amendments will greatly enhance the administration of the Act.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr McElligott, adjourned.

MEAT INDUSTRY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 15 March (see p. 5208).

Mr LINGARD (Fassifern) (4.27 p.m.): It is my pleasure to take part in the debate and to support the Meat Industry Act Amendment Bill.

At the outset I will speak about the new section of the Act which will provide the legislative authority for testing of residues of pesticides, chemicals and other unwanted substances in meat.

Quite obviously, the Opposition supports the Bill. However, it is disappointing that members of the Opposition are speaking about specifics. The member for Mackay spoke about the throughput of the Cannon Hill abattoir. The member for Bundaberg spoke about matters which have nothing to do with the Act. To me, this Bill represents an honest attempt at solving the problem of pesticide residues before it arises.

There is no doubt that the public has a very high regard for the meat industry and the supervision that is accorded to it. The consumers have a very high regard for the meat industry. I have no doubt that in the next few years there will be plenty of emotion generated about pesticides, which can affect all of the things that we eat, particularly meat.

The electorate of Fassifern has two abattoirs. Although they do complain about the very strict supervision of the inspectors, there is no doubt that they hold those inspectors in very high regard. In any discussions I have had with either the butchers or the abattoirs, any complaints have been mainly about the pettiness that these inspectors do display. However, they respect the fact that the inspectors are very strict.

The producers themselves also regard this as very important because they believe that the meat industry has to guard its reputation. As I have said, there is no doubt that the meat industry enjoys a very good reputation in relation to the supervision of pesticide levels.

However, we must be sympathetic of the difficulties that the producer experiences and support him. Certainly most producers spend a lot of money and make a big effort to ensure that pesticides are not found on their farms and properties. However, one has to take into account the number of cattle that are put through dips. The cattle stamp through the dips and pesticides, such as DDT, are pressed into the ground. Quite obviously, that is going to have an effect on the level of pesticides. The Government has to ensure, through its meat inspectors, that the meat industry is not affected by high pesticide levels.

Queensland Country Life reported on the chemical residue conference. Mr Ian Wells, the Deputy Director of the Department of Primary Industries, addressed the recent seminar on chemical residues held in Brisbane. I will outline what Mr Wells said, because it shows that the producers have to worry not only about their own farms but also about the feed that is brought onto their farms.

Mr Wells said—

> "Two-thirds of the 375 chemical residue violations detected in Queensland since May last year had arisen from contaminated feed."

Mr Wells also said that 38 per cent of the violations had resulted from contamination of growing feed, with contamination during storage accounting for 25 per cent. One-quarter of the quarantines had resulted from termite treatment of structures other than feed storages, such as stock yards, power poles and homes. Contamination around old cattle and sheep dips accounted for 8 per cent of violations, while old pesticide containers and carelessness with spray equipment accounted for the remaining 5 per cent of contaminations.

Residues from dieldrin were by far the most frequently discovered in Queensland, accounting for 75 per cent of property quarantines. There is no doubt that as a Government and as members of Parliament we must support the Minister and legislation of this type, which is designed to enforce the inspection of pesticides and which will obviously affect Queensland's meat industry.

Clearly, with 117 slaughterhouses and 1 500 butcher shops round the State, very strict control needs to be exercised. With new innovations such as refrigerated movement

and, as the member for Mackay said, stir fries, it is significant that changes will occur and that legislation is required to overcome difficulties that might arise.

People to whom I have spoken in butcher shops and abattoirs have no major worries. However, they have expressed concern that fruit shops are beginning to sell items similar to those sold in butcher shops. As butchers are now allowed to sell condiments such as sauces, they are worried that operators of fruit shops will also be allowed to sell such products. Because fruit shops do not have the sophisticated refrigeration systems that butcher shops have, butchers are wondering what types of control will be exercised over those products that will be sold from those outlets.

It is obvious that by this legislation the Minister has moved to control products such as meat packaged in cartons, buffalo meat and kangaroo meat. The Minister has already announced that a Green Paper on kangaroo meat and deer meat will be distributed. There is no doubt that Australia has a very high regard for its meat industry.

A report on the chemical residue conference appeared in the *Queensland Country Life* on 10 March. I refer to Dr Phil Corrigan, who said that Australia was close to producing the healthiest, cleanest and most residue-free beef in the world.

The article states—

> "Speaking at last week's chemical residue seminar in Brisbane, Dr Corrigan said the testing program initiated in Australia following residue violations detected in export markets was the most thorough and comprehensive carried out anywhere in the world.
>
> The program had already reduced violation levels from 0.4 to 0.2 percent, he said.
>
> No violations had been detected in United States beef shipments since November last year and the US had removed additional testing requirements and put Australian beef back on normal sampling.
>
> . . .
>
> Dr Corrigan said the detection of residues in Australian beef in export markets had also raised the question of lack of testing of meat imported into Australia.
>
> A comprehensive meat import testing program was now being developed and would soon be introduced in Australia."

The comments of the member for Mackay about the Cannon Hill abattoir have not been supported by the United Graziers Association. It is unfortunate that the Australian Labor Party is criticising the $14.5m that the Government has allocated to take over loans and debts of the Cannon Hill abattoir. The honourable member referred to construction costs and the fact that $1.79m is needed for interest-free payments. That payment will remove the stigma of any mismanagement that might be aimed at the Cannon Hill abattoir.

There is no doubt that the Cannon Hill abattoir will certainly keep competition alive, especially if Borthwicks take over Australian Meat Holdings. The Cannon Hill abattoir is a viable capital city abattoir. It provides a springboard for the control of market prices, which is a very important stabilising force within the meat industry, and a springboard from which new technology can be introduced.

I congratulate the Minister on the details of the $14.5m allocation that he provided. Obviously, within the $14.5m program announced by the Minister a sensible interest repayment system is included. The Cannon Hill abattoir has engaged management consultants to ensure viability. However, there is no doubt that we must all have regard for the hard commercial realities. If the Cannon Hill abattoir cannot come up with the goods, hard decisions must obviously be made.

Following Cabinet's recent decision, the abattoir will now be able to resume its operations, which will be very significant in relation to the throughput of which the honourable member for Mackay spoke.

When considering the taking over of the abattoir's loans and debts of $14.5m, it must be remembered that many jobs have been saved. The article in *Queensland Country Life* stated—

> "The abattoir, threatened with sale or closure in recent years, employs 370 workers and provides service facilities for 14 major and 16 smaller private operators employing a further 200 workers."

Obviously, Mr Gordon Magoffin from the United Graziers Association has given his support to the entire project.

Because it is a very good attempt to quickly grab hold of a problem and solve it immediately, it is my pleasure to support the Bill.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (4.36 p.m.): At present, when the grain industry has suffered some fairly mortal blows, the meat industry in my electorate, right across the Darling Downs and throughout Queensland is the State's most important industry. That does not mean to say that the people within that industry in my electorate are making a lot of money, because many mitigating factors are operating against them. Land in agricultural districts is expensive and it is difficult to make meat-production a viable business. Nevertheless, many people are trying to do so and perhaps a good many of them are succeeding.

Last night in this House, I listened with interest to the Opposition Primary Industries spokesman, the honourable member for Mackay, who generalised a lot but made an excellent contribution to the debate. I was surprised at a couple of the points that he made. I am not trying to rubbish his contribution to the debate, because he gave this House much food for thought.

One of the surprising things that the honourable member said was that he was not opposed to take-overs and that he did not believe that monopolies would flourish because of take-overs. I am not opposed to take-overs, but they frighten me. Unless there is competition in the market-place, many people will find it difficult to maintain an interest in the industry and remain there.

In Queensland it is not possible to prevent take-overs. Therefore, it is impossible to prevent the development of monopolies. However, we must fight back. There must be a way to make it harder for take-overs to occur. I believe that the solution lies in deregulation.

Some years ago it was claimed that too much floor space was taken up with the killing of animals and that no new abattoirs were to be constructed. If an individual or a company has the money, the wherewithal and the courage to establish a meatworks, I would think twice before I stopped that project.

I believe that deregulation is the way to go. Protection should be phased out as quickly as possible. If too much protection is provided to industry, not much can be done. I say to the Livestock and Meat Authority of Queensland: let us think twice before we stop good, honest people who want to have a go.

I believe that Queensland has 117 slaughterhouses, most of which have fairly high standards. However, they are restricted to some extent. If monopolies are allowed to gain too much power, they will endanger our meat industry. One of the ways of fighting back is to make it perfectly simple for an individual to start a meatworks, provided that he can meet the required standards.

During his speech last night the member for Mackay also spoke about quality. I do not say that what he said is incorrect. However, in recent times big changes have occurred in the meat industry in that the hamburger trade takes all the poorer quality meat. I can remember in my younger days going into a butcher shop and buying two qualities of meat—the prime quality or, if a cheaper cut was required, the lower quality. That choice has nearly disappeared because the hamburger trade buys all the poorer quality cattle at a fairly high price, and because of that it is fairly difficult to buy lower quality meat. Most of the poorer quality meat is exported. I cannot say—and I do not suppose anyone can say—that that will go on for ever. However, it certainly has

revolutionised the sale of cow meat and lower quality bullock meat. That has helped the industry.

I now refer to the testing for chemical residues. I would like to congratulate the Minister on the speed with which he acted in that regard. He certainly acted quickly. The testing for chemical residues was carried out in an efficient way. With very few exceptions, the meatworks knew when they had been given a clearance and they could start packing the meat. For that I pay a tribute to the Minister.

One thing that I have never been happy about is the way in which levies are imposed. I know that the cattle council is responsible for their introduction. I have never been a great supporter of people who allow the big fellow to benefit to a large extent and who try to make the smaller producer pay through the neck, and that is exactly what has happened because of the imposition of the levies. It is not fair. I do not think that the people who introduced the levies will go down in history as being the initiators of a fair system. The levies are not right. They should never have been introduced.

I know that the Bill makes provision for the sale of buffalo meat. That prospect does not excite me. I appreciate that the Minister said that he is not trying to encourage buffalo-farming. I was pleased to hear that, because I do not want to encourage it either.

I am very worried about any legislation that lowers the standards that are set for the way in which meat is handled and for the quality of meat that is available to the consumer. I am completely opposed to kangaroo meat being made available for human consumption. If kangaroos are to be shot out in the open, the same should be done with all the other animals, if that is all the quality that is needed. In my opinion, it would be the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard to allow kangaroo meat to be sold in shops. Not very long ago in this country the song *Who put the Roo in the Stew* nearly wrecked the meat industry. I do not want to have to worry about kangaroo meat being in the stew. When I order meat to eat, I want to know that it is good quality meat. I do not want to look at mince and wonder whether or not it contains kangaroo meat.

The sale of kangaroo meat for human consumption should not be considered, because when cattle are killed under hygienic conditions in a meatworks, the meat is quickly placed in cold storage and allowed to hang for the specified time. If kangaroos are shot west of Dirranbandi, or even much closer to the coast than that—perhaps in my own electorate—it is not known how long it will take for the meat to reach cold storage. It is not known whether the meat will be transported under hygienic conditions. I am completely opposed to the sale of kangaroo meat for human consumption, and I want to make that perfectly clear.

Many people in my area have spent a lot of money on purchasing very expensive stock in order to try to produce the best possible meat. That has happened not only in my area but I guess also in your area, Mr Deputy Speaker, as well as in other areas right throughout Queensland. Those people are entitled to some protection. They are producing a good product. The meatworks have spent a fortune on installing stainless steel and other equipment, and advantage should be taken of that.

Last night one honourable member—it could have been the member for Mackay, I am not sure—said that there was too much speed and not enough accuracy in the grading and segregating of meat in boning rooms. I am inclined to agree with him. I suppose that the operations in a boning room have to be fast moving, but in every boning room that I have seen, it appears to me that one would have to be a genius to segregate the meat and get it into proper grades. Approximately seven years ago I had the opportunity to visit Korea. One of the hoteliers there told me that he always bought second-grade Australian meat. On the day on which I spoke to him, he had Queensland meat. He said, "You'd be surprised how much good stuff I get." The reason is that, because of the speed of operation in the boning room, the picking out of the meat is not done as well as it might be.

Feedlots are giving the industry a good deal of trouble both in my electorate and right across Australia. It makes me wonder why. Intensive pig-farming and poultry-farming has been carried on without too much trouble. I wonder whether specifications for feedlots are good enough. Smell is a problem with feedlots; but they do turn out good quality cattle. If cattle have been grain fed, they command a better price.

Another type of feedlot that does not completely grain feed is commencing operations. Cattle are fed maize, perhaps from a harvest store; they are fed differently. Although this new type of operation has its problems, too, it does not have problems to the same extent as grain feedlots. The grain feedlots seem to have a smell all of their own. It is probably in Queensland's best interests to have grain feedlots, but the siting of those lots should be carefully watched. I think also that their specifications should be tightened up.

Together with Mr Deputy Speaker, the honourable member for Maryborough, I was fortunate or unfortunate to be a member of the committee that investigated the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir. The committee made a number of recommendations. It considered that the debt load was too high and that, if that debt load could be reduced, the abattoir would probably be able to succeed. I was mindful that the metropolitan area needed a suitable killing site and also that many producers in my electorate sell cattle to people who have the kill done through the abattoir even though stock comes from right across Queensland and in some cases as far north as Winton. People sell cattle in western districts, such as Roma, and then the kill takes place at the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir. If the metropolitan abattoir had ceased to operate, many people would have been taken out of the market.

Having said that, I point out, as the honourable member for Fassifern said earlier, that the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir is not able to adopt an open-sesame approach and creates as many debts and losses as it desires. That is not the case at all. I have been pleased to hear that the abattoir will engage consultants to see whether it can pin-point what has gone wrong and what is causing the losses.

Last night in this House, the member for Mackay said that the losses were caused by fluctuations in throughput. During the time that I was on the committee, I had access to many tables and facts, but I did not see any marked fluctuations. Although some fluctuations occurred, I did not think they were markedly different from those that occur in any meatworks. I cannot believe that fluctuations in throughput are the cause of the trouble. Another matter that worried me considerably was that the throughput of the abattoir had increased substantially over the last two years. Despite that, the abattoir did not seem to be able to get on top of its troubles.

I am pleased to note that the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir is again operating. The people who are involved in its management surely must know of the seriousness of the problems. I believe that they will fulfil the tasks that they were appointed to carry out and that the abattoir will go ahead.

There is not a great deal more that I wish to mention because I have already commended the Minister on the speed with which he reacted to pesticide residue level testing. Anything that can improve the method of assessing the level of pesticide residue is certainly to be commended. There is nothing in this Act that will be harmful to the industry and I believe that the amendment will be of great benefit.

The meat industry is supporting a group of people in the country during the downturn in the grain industry. Even if the grain industry improves, a lot of people will stay with the cattle industry, particularly those smaller properties which can survive only by diversifying. Some of the properties that diversified, for instance into vegetables—I am not conversant with sugar-cane—which one would think was in their best interests, have had problems with pesticides. That was unfortunate. With a bit of luck and with the good management advice that the DPI will be able to extend from now on, the problem can be removed and there should be no more trouble in the future.

I am happy to be associated with the Bill. The Minister has been very alert in implementing some of these measures in an effort to help the industry. I commend him for the reduction in the price of testing samples of meat for pesticides. That shows that he is alert and is watching the problem. Testing is a very expensive process and therefore it is the best interests of everyone that the price of testing samples is reduced.

I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Primary Industries) (4.52 p.m.), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contributions to this debate. I express the appreciation of the Government for the support which has been apparent from the Opposition benches.

The Opposition spokesman on Primary Industries made a number of comments and I wish to reciprocate. I recognise that the funding that the meat industry itself has implemented for the promotion of its product is one that has to be addressed by the industry. I found the honourable member's criticism of primary producers rather surprising and quite unfounded. Today's primary producer is a businessman and understands that he is operating a small business. He promotes his product on both the local and international markets. In order to do this, he has been prepared to place a levy on producers through various industry organisations. Rather than condemn or criticise them, I was wish to commend them for their attitude.

I am fascinated by the suggestion made by the honourable member for Mackay that red meat promotional activities should occur in Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets.

Mr Casey: I didn't say that.

Mr HARPER: The honourable member did not quite use those words, but I take his point. He said that expensive material promoting red meats in a butcher's shop is of doubtful effect. That promotional material encourages people who are buying meat to consider purchasing other cuts of meat and look at the alternative uses for the various cuts. This might lead to an increase in the sale of the product as a result of the interest created by the promotional material. I doubt if the Colonel would be very happy to have that type of promotional material hanging in his Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets.

Mr Casey: I am not a dill. I recognise that they won't put that up there. I never said that they would.

Mr Gygar: It depends if you classify cat as red meat or not, doesn't it?

Mr HARPER: That is the kind of comment one can expect from the Liberal member.

If credit is given where it is due, it must be admitted that today some very excellent fast food and restaurant outlets specialise in quality beef. Not so very long ago a decent steak could not be bought anywhere, but I think in most of the larger cities throughout Australia, certainly in the metropolitan areas, it is possible to go to fast-food outlets and to restaurants and buy quality beef.

Unfortunately it is a product that does not lend itself, as does chicken, to be placed in a rotisserie and turned over and over for hours on end and still be acceptable to the consumer; it is a product that needs to be delivered fairly quickly. A number of outlets provide good quality roast meats and I believe that the industry itself, and businessmen in the community, have addressed this problem to the benefit of the meat industry. I deliberately use the term "meat", because it goes further than beef; it includes mutton, lamb, pig meats and the like.

I agree that the industry should be looking to our near neighbours. The honourable member for Mackay specifically referred to that point. I support his view that we should be looking to our near neighbours, particularly Papua New Guinea. He referred to having been up in Papua New Guinea and I certainly commend his view. Indeed, the Queensland Government recognises the potential for the State's primary products such as meats,

milk and the like in Papua New Guinea and gives meaningful assistance to that developing nation. However, it is unfortunate that the honourable member's mates down in Canberra do not contribute in the same way. Although the member for Mackay is supportive of our near neighbour, he also has mates in Canberra, some of whom come from not far away from his area. What do they contribute?

Mr Underwood: Hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

Mr HARPER: I suggest to the honourable member opposite that the Federal Government reduced the financial assistance that this nation previously gave to Papua New Guinea. Not only did it reduce that financial assistance, it doubled what had previously been given to what it calls the frontier nations of Africa. So we see money being taken away from our neighbours in Papua New Guinea and $500m being given willy-nilly to the frontier nations of Africa. What hyprocisy, what lack of understanding and what a lack of real support for the truly developing nation of Papua New Guinea, with which we have had such close ties over very many decades, a nation with which we should be continuing to make every effort to have a very close rapport.

In regard to the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir, it is correct, and the Government is very proud of the fact, that it has taken over the debenture loan commitments of the Livestock and Meat Authority so that that abattoir can be placed on a sound basis. In this Chamber I record my appreciation of the work that was carried out by the Government's parliamentary committee in making an assessment of the need to retain the abattoir and of the method by which it could be ensured that the abattoir was retained for the benefit of the people of Queensland generally. It should be remembered—I draw the honourable member's attention to the fact—that it is a public abattoir and that it has an export licence. At some stage it was suggested differently.

I also invite his attention to the fact that a public abattoir still operates at Ipswich. I think he suggested that it was no longer there. It is there, running well, going well and operating at a profit, but I point out that it does not have, and has never had, the insurmountable overhead with which the Cannon Hill abattoir was saddled as a result of an original miscalculation of costs that more than doubled. Although Ipswich has not had that burden, it has been able to operate at a profit. I am confident that the same will now apply to the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir at Cannon Hill. I am sure that it will prove its ability to operate profitably and will continue to provide the competition which is so vital to the cattle market throughout Queensland.

The honourable member for Warrego dealt with Cannon Hill and gave a number of facts. As I have said, Cannon Hill is not just a service works; it has an export licence.

As you know, Mr Deputy Speaker, Cannon Hill has four separate operators, with boning rooms. They have a commitment and the Government has a commitment to ensure that the operation continues. In addition, there is substantial throughput by various operators, on an annual basis, of the order of 150 000 cattle, 27 000 calves, 400 000 sheep and 7 000 pigs. So the Cannon Hill abattoir really makes a meaningful contribution to the killing capacity and to the market competition available in the sale yards of Queensland generally—not only southern Queensland. Some 40 per cent of the kill going through Cannon Hill is drawn from Rockhampton and further north and, as another member mentioned today, from western Queensland. Cattle feed down through Queensland's road and rail systems to be killed and processed at Cannon Hill. In addition, it has a very useful research function.

It might be helpful and constructive to record some of the research work that has been carried out at the abattoir at Cannon Hill. It was the original site for electric stimulation, which is a tenderising process using high voltages. Electric stimulation assists in tenderising the meat by reducing the toughness of the muscle. At Cannon Hill the original work with carcass classification was carried out in conjunction with AUS Meat. Of course, the original work with carcass-recording was also carried out there. In the near future, further developments will be seen in the very structure of the floors and

the processing facilities. The chain method will be modernised, which will be most beneficial to the industry generally.

The honourable member for Bundaberg got onto what has become his hobby-horse in this House. I do not know how many times I have heard him knock the dairy industry and attempt to bring about the demise of the dairy industry in his own area. However, I assure the honourable member that there can be no question of a cover-up of any problem with residues in earlier years. The Government's record in residue control is sound and is one of which, as the honourable member for Warwick said, we are proud. We have achieved a record in dealing with the residue problem that is really second to none.

Nevertheless, once again the member for Bundaberg attempted to embarrass primary producers and tried to scare consumers away from the milk that is produced in his own Bundaberg district. He knows full well that there is no basis for that attack on dairy-farmers. However, his favourite pastime seems to be to knock the farmer. The term that he used was "cattle-farmers".

The member for Burnett is an experienced cattleman who correctly said that Queensland's cattle are the equal of any in the world. Our production and marketing are equal to those in any other cattle nation of the world. However, we need to improve our productivity in the meatworks. By retaining the Cannon Hill abattoir, a significant contribution will be made to increasing the productivity and throughput in meatworks.

The honourable member for Yeronga made his usual contribution to a debate on a primary industry matter. He referred to the severe drought. I agree with his assessment. Not everybody—certainly not a politician living in the closed environment of Canberra—seems to understand the severity of the drought in Queensland.

It is strange that when a flood occurs, there are headlines in newspapers and people suddenly realise that a disastrous situation has arisen. However, when a cancerous growth—and that is the only way in which it can be described—such as drought occurs, people are inclined to place less importance on it. In actual fact, a drought has more significance than many of the floods that are experienced from time to time.

I agree with the honourable member's assessment of the ability of the Cannon Hill work-force. I am sorry that the honourable member for Lytton is not in the Chamber. I commend his constituents because that work-force, from the ground up to the senior executive level, consists of very capable people who are running a good meatworks. That does not mean to say that it cannot be improved, as was suggested by the member for Warwick.

I point out to the honourable member for Yeronga that levies are industry-based. The honourable member for Warwick expressed concern about levies that have been imposed by the industry on itself as a result of decisions made by the Cattle Council of Australia.

I believe that the Federal Government is proposing to legislatively impose those levies on a different basis in the near future. Certainly, the levies have been a matter for decision by the industry, and I agree with that. It is not a Government control. It is certainly not the responsibility of the Queensland Government. It does not have the power to introduce anything of that nature, even if it were so inclined. The decision made by the industry itself has been accepted by the industry.

The honourable member for Lytton raised the matter of A. J. Bush and Sons at Cannon Hill and the issue of odours in the Cannon Hill area. I think that that probably relates in part to what the honourable member for Warwick said in regard to feedlots. For the benefit of both honourable members, I mention that the Government has set in train discussions between officers of the Local Government Department, the Water Quality Control Council, the Queensland branch of the Australian Lot Feeders Association and my own officers with a view to establishing guide-lines for approval by local authorities for feedlot ventures.

As honourable members would understand, it is a responsibility of local government, but it is a responsibility with which the Queensland Government would be pleased to assist. Those discussions have been taking place. In fact, the officer in charge of the Animal Research Institute represented me at a meeting of that body held in January. The Government hopes to overcome some of the problems being experienced in relation to the odours to which the honourable member for Lytton referred.

In regard to employment—the honourable member for Lytton should be, and is, supportive of the action that the Government took at Cannon Hill. As has been mentioned, of the order of 570 people are employed at that meatworks, with even higher numbers during peak periods of operation.

The honourable member for Fassifern made an understanding contribution, as is usual for that member. He gave figures on pesticide residue origins. I think it may be of interest to honourable members that of 277 properties presently under quarantine, 190 relate to dieldrin, 20 to DDT, 32 to heptachlor, 27 to BHC and, for the mathematicians such as the honourable member for Port Curtis, who is adding up the figures, I point out that 8 relate to other chemicals. That makes a total of 277 at present. As a matter of interest, I point out that 119 properties that previously were under quarantine have been removed from quarantine.

I assure the honourable member that there is no possibility of fruit shops being allowed to sell fresh meat. I am not quite too sure what he was getting at. I think that he referred to sauces containing fruit ingredients that at present can be sold by butcher shops. I assure the honourable member that there is no suggestion that fruit shops will be allowed to sell fresh meat. Any outlets selling fresh meat must comply with the health standards that ensure that consumers obtain the highest-qualilty product available.

The honourable member for Warwick, who is a member of my parliamentary committee, referred to a number of issues. He is an advocate of as much deregulation as posssible. The honourable member expressed his strong support for deregulation, which, of course, is consistent with the Queensland Government's policy. Encapsulated in the view of the honourable member for Warwick is that deregulation is the way to go. On balance, of course, the Government has a responsibility to ensure that deregulation is achieved in a constructive manner.

The honourable member for Warwick also raised the subject of buffalo farms. I make it clear that the Queensland Government has no intention of allowing new buffalo-farming ventures to be established in Queensland. The small number of buffalo-owners in Queensland operate within strict guide-lines. New buffalo-farming ventures will not be allowed in Queensland. Because of an increasing demand for buffalo meat, possibly brought about by its novelty value, the Queensland Government has allowed buffalo meat to be brought into Queensland for sale. Nevertheless, there is some demand for buffalo meat. The Queensland Government has been pleased to afford the facility for our fellow-producers in the Northern Territory to use Queensland as an outlet for that product.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. N. J. Harper (Auburn—Minister for Primary Industries) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—

Mr CASEY (5.14 p.m.): By way of explanation to the Minister—I point out that I was misled in relation to the Ipswich council abattoir. The abattoir that closed down a couple of years ago belonged to Fields, not to the council. Clause 4 relates to the Chief Inspector of Slaughterhouses and to the various slaughterhouses in Queensland. To use the Ipswich abattoir as an example—a very real problem exists at service abattoirs or service meatworks, as they are sometimes called. What happened at the Cannon Hill

abattoir is one of the worst examples of the problems that can arise. Over the years, similar problems occurred in Mackay. You probably saw it happen in Townsville as well, Mr Temporary Chairman. Over the years, pressure was applied for export operators to operate from those particular areas, mainly because graziers wanted to enter the export trade, graze export cattle and sell them to the local works, because transportation was easier and cheaper. Service operators would then move in and create a series of highs and lows in relation to kills.

At that time the Mackay Abattoir Board, the Townsville City Council and perhaps the Thuringowa Shire Council found themselves in the very same situation as that of the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir. They finished up being burdened with a great debt by trying to improve the status of the works.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr Burns, last night explained some of the problems relating to the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir in his electorate. My warning is that these problems are occurring elsewhere. The continual pouring of money into facilities of that type is a drain on tax-payers. Some operations are being manipulated by operators for their own purposes and profits.

Many of the slaughterhouses in the south-east corner of the State have export licences and operate in an efficient and productive manner. Unless the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir can match them as a public abattoir, the Livestock and Meat Authority of Queensland should step out of that scene and allow operators to take over the works and not dismiss any employees.

Last night, during the debate on this legislation, one honourable member claimed that the fault lies with the unions. It is not their fault if, one day, an abattoir required 500 people because of the size of the kill and then the next day half of that number are standing around doing very little because not enough cattle are going through the works.

Last night I put forward the alternative that abattoirs could enter into agreements with operators on a quota kill basis whereby particular quotas would be maintained on a daily basis. The honourable member for Warrego spoke about the large number of kills of cattle, calves and other animals. If those kills are averaged out on a daily basis, the maintenance of the works can be justified. The peaks and lows are the problem.

Abattoirs that are operating purely as service works should be licensed on the basis that they meet an average kill over a period—whether it be six months, nine months or whatever. It is important to maintain the throughput of the works so that they remain efficient and their employees are used efficiently in the best interests of all concerned. In that way, the problems could be overcome. I see no problems with that at all. In fact, I believe that it is a very real answer to the problem.

Some people may not agree with my solution to the problem. At present, the operators with export licences who operate the service works, want to continue with their manipulations.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 5 to 8, as read, agreed to.

Clause 9—

Mr CASEY (5.20 p.m.): I wish to raise a couple of points upon which I would like to hear the Minister's comments. Under the proposed legislation, slaughtering of buffaloes will be allowed under permit.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister stated that most of the buffalo-slaughtering will take place in knackers' yards or similar areas and that the meat will be used as pet food. Nonetheless, approval is given to the chief inspector in relation to other types of abattoirs or slaughterhouses. It certainly places a prohibition on most of those.

I am concerned as to whether the exact type of work will be spelt out by regulation. I personally feel that the provision by which work can be allowed at certain slaughterhouses ought not be included in the Bill. I do not see that the number of buffaloes in leisure

parks in Queensland is really sufficient for that to be done. After all, what is done now with the lions from the lion parks and the various other animals that are kept in leisure parks? Crocodiles that are displayed in those parks are certainly not carved up into crocodile steaks when they die. Most of the people involved with those parks dispose of the carcasses in a fairly normal way, either by burning, burying or destroying them. I do not think that there are very many buffaloes wandering around the various leisure parks or zoos in Queensland. That does not cause any great concern. I stress that I strongly support the provisions of the Bill which do not allow for the extension of buffalo-farming in Queensland and which do not allow for a trade in buffalo meat to be developed in Queensland.

Although it is not directly related to this clause, but it is on the same subject—I really do not see any need for allowing buffalo meat to be included in smallgoods in Queensland. This State already has enough quality-type meats, namely, beef, pork, chicken and, as mentioned by the member for Warrego yesterday afternoon, mutton.

Mr Underwood: What about goats?

Mr CASEY: I certainly would not want to see goat meat included in smallgoods. I know that approval is given for the sale of goats' milk. Like the Minister, over the years I spent much of my time in western Queensland and I saw some of the goats that were out there. I know that on numerous occasions they were eaten quite readily by many people.

Recently I read in an article that these days something like 40 per cent of meat, whether it be pork, beef or mutton, is sold as smallgoods in one form or another. It is important to note this, and it backs up what I was saying yesterday afternoon in relation to the changing trends among consumers. People ought to be encouraged to eat quality meats rather than having buffalo included in their smallgoods as an additive.

I have often told the story about my visit to a Japanese meatworks in 1974. It may be of interest to the member for Warrego. Maybe what I saw on that visit put me off mutton a little bit. At one end of the meatworks were huge quantities of old New Zealand mutton, which had been frozen and exported to Japan. In another section was some bright red meat, which I was told was horse meat from Korea. All of that meat was minced together, a bit of artificial colouring and flavouring was put in it, and when it came out the other end of the works in nice sealed plastic packets, it was sliced ham. I do not think that we in Australia want to reach that stage. At all times quality control should be exercised on our beef products, particularly the smallgoods. I see no reason why buffalo meat should be included in smallgoods as well.

Mr HARPER: I take on board the points that the honourable member made. I could not agree more with him that we in Queensland have an ability—and this should be emphasised—to produce a good-quality product. Queensland has the largest beef-export trade of any of the Australian States, and it produces a quality product. There is nothing equal to good Poll Hereford beef, I am quite sure.

Mr Lee: All of Queensland's meat.

Mr HARPER: As the honourable member for Yeronga says, it is the case with all Queensland meat. Because the honourable member is a western Queensland feedlot producer, I am quite sure that he would be an advocate of the British breeds. At the same time, I wish to remain totally impartial and say that Queensland has some very fine quality zebu types of cattle such as Brahman cattle that are absolutely essential in those areas of Queensland experiencing problems with introduced pests.

I come back to the question raised by the honourable member. The exemption that is able to be afforded to permit the slaughter of buffaloes is included to allow those few herds of buffalo in Queensland—and there are very few of them—the ability to have culled animals slaughtered for pet food—nothing more nor less. It is a discretion that rests with the chief inspector of stock. I can assure honourable members that it will not be exercised lightly. As I have indicated, the Government has no intention of allowing

any further development of buffalo-farming in Queensland. The odd herds that presently exist need an opportunity to cull and an outlet for the culled meat.

Clause 9, as read, agreed to.

Clause 10—

Mr CAMPBELL (5.27 p.m.): Clause 10 is basically a very involved clause because it relates to the guts of the meat-testing program. That part of the Bill includes clauses indicating that no compensation will be paid and it also outlines the full scheme.

I was disappointed in the comments made by the Minister earlier. He seemed to think that when a member of the Opposition outlines a problem caused by residues in a particular area, the Opposition is knocking the farmers. The Minister seemed to regard members on the Government side who mentioned the same problem as having considered the matter in depth and as having produced good-quality work in bringing it to the Minister's attention. I find that approach inconsistent.

I have repeatedly raised this problem because in cane-growing areas around Bundaberg, it is serious. The problem is causing great anxiety to those graziers who have diversified into cane-growing. They are faced with a situation in which their livelihood basically is being taken away because, over a decade during which this problem was known, their neighbours used chemicals, under the direction and with the approval of the Government, that contaminated their land.

Studies have showed that the Bundaberg area has had a chemical residue problem since 1976. They also show that approved chemicals used on caneland were blowing onto grazing land. In spite of the fact that the Government knew that had happened, no action was taken. When I raise this issue, I am said to be knocking the farmers.

I believe it is very important that the Government look into this problem. Recently I cited the example of R. and V. Messer, who have a grazing property in a cane-growing area. They have never used the prohibited chemicals, yet the soil on their property contained concentrations of dieldrin of .28 milligrams per kilogram in one sample and in another sample .41 milligrams per kilogram. Officers of the Department of Primary Industries advise that it is safe to put cattle on the land for continuous grazing only where the soil levels are no higher than .02 to .04. The samples taken on the Messer property were up to 10 times higher than the level that is regarded as safe by the Department of Primary Industries.

I am concerned about this issue because more than one family has been affected. I know of an invalid pensioner who has a hobby farm. He has one house cow and a calf. The calf was more a pet to the family than anything else. The family had very little money and the calf was going to be killed for their own consumption. It was taken to the meatworks where it was condemned. The family lost the lot. That calf would have been a major part of their food supply. That was one case where there was not enough food on the Christmas table, because the parents were depending upon that meat to feed their four children.

Mr Stephan interjected.

Mr CAMPBELL: I will tell the honourable member for Gympie who I blame for that. I blame the present uncaring Government and its lack of compassion. Back in 1976 the department knew that this problem had occurred. Now this Government's attitude is that it is not the Government's problem and that these people should take their problem to the courts and institute legal action against their neighbours.

Mr Stephan: Back in 1976 the problem was still there.

Mr CAMPBELL: The problem was still there and 10 years later this Government is allowing it to continue and get worse. The honourable member for Gympie should listen. He will have a chance to speak and I will reply later.

In their use of chemicals these farmers or graziers were acting under the direction and approval of the Government. Exactly the same problem has occurred in Victoria. Yesterday the Victorian Government officially announced that it would implement a buy-back system and that it will pay back up to 70 or 80 per cent of the market value of the contaminated beef. The Government will take the cattle to chemical-free areas for a 12-month period and later on sell them on the market when the level of chemical residue has dropped below the limit.

Mr Lee: They grow a lot of cane in Victoria, though.

Mr CAMPBELL: No. That problem has arisen through the spraying of dieldrin on potato crops in Victoria. This was done under the direction of the department, which at that time stated that that was a safe practice. It has been proved to be wrong.

Mr Stephan: What were they doing using dieldrin on potatoes?

Mr CAMPBELL: They were controlling bugs.

I do not mind the honourable member questioning the example that I have given, but I wish to highlight the attitudes of different Governments. When graziers are put in the same situation, this Government adopts a very uncaring attitude and lacks compassion towards them. This Government should consider the implementation of a program that will allow farmers and graziers to survive. Many of them have a farm that is useless and their whole livelihood has been taken away from them. It is an important issue.

Mr HARPER: It is not unusual for the honourable member to be factually in error in much of what he says. When residue problems were identified during the last decade action was taken by the Government of the day and the offending chemicals were removed from those uses closely associated with livestock. Even today the cane-farmers—whom the honourable member claims to represent—and those people in his own electorate he referred to as cattle-farmers, wish to use those chemicals that are now banned by the Government. They have accepted the ban, although in some cases, reluctantly. What the honourable member either does not know or does not recognise is that this Government gave notice some time ago of an intention to withdraw those chemicals. It allowed reasonable time for an alternative method of insect control to be developed. It was only as a result of the crisis which developed throughout Australia in the middle of last year that action was taken to immediately withdraw those chemicals, despite the added cost and difficulties that this created for cane-growers and other farmers growing horticultural crops.

Over a period the Government has acted responsibly, has identified the problem and taken the necessary steps to ensure that human health is not endangered by these problems. Again, the honourable member is quite incorrect, I suggest, to claim that people have lost their incomes and the totality of their properties. Certainly some primary producers have been very adversely affected financially. Where there was a demonstrated need, the Government has invited them to make application for financial assistance through the Government schemes division of the Queensland Industry Development Corporation. Of course, the fact of the matter is that even those farms that have contaminated soils as the result of treatment over earlier years can still use those farms for some primary production enterprises. If they need guidance, they can seek that from departmental officers. Most of them would know those areas of production for which the lands could be used.

Clause 10, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 11 to 17, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Harper, by leave, read a third time.

LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 12 November 1987 (see p. 4162).

Mr GOSS (Logan—Leader of the Opposition) (5.38 p.m.): This is a fairly straightforward piece of legislation and certainly the Opposition does not oppose it. However, I wish to make a couple of brief points that should be put on the record. The first relates to the part of the Bill dealing with annual reports, which provides—

> "As soon as practicable after the close of each financial year but, subject to subsection (2), in no case later than 3 months after that close the Board shall prepare and furnish to the Minister a report in writing on its operations during that financial year.
>
> The report shall contain a copy of the financial statements prepared in respect of the Board pursuant to the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977-1985.*"

The remainder of the clause provides that the Minister may, by notice in writing, extend the period of three months referred to. My point is that this does not appear to provide that, in the case of this quango, there is an obligation to report to Parliament. In this State I think it is high time for standard provisions on the presentation of annual reports to Parliament rather than that being at the discretion of the Minister.

For many years in this State there has been a debate about the lack of public accountability of the hundreds of quangos, but once again the House is presented with legislation that fails to entrench that requirement, which is what the Opposition sees as the appropriate course. It is, of course, the case that the board is spending public money. If it is good enough for it to do that, the Opposition feels that it is good enough to entrench the requirement that I have referred to in relation to a report to Parliament.

The second point that I wish to make briefly relates to the John Oxley Library collection. The Bill repeals the Oxley Memorial Library of Queensland Act and the John Oxley Library now becomes part of the State Library. There is no real problem with that, but, as is acknowledged in the second-reading speech, for many years the library has been badly squeezed for space and staff. It appears as though adequate space will now be provided. The Opposition welcomes that. However, as far as the Opposition is aware, no provision has been made for the additional staff that will be necessary to maintain and care for that important and valuable collection. In making those moves and adjustments, it is the Government's responsibility to ensure that additional staff are provided for that purpose. The Opposition seeks some response or assurance at an appropriate stage that that will occur, that close consultation will be had with the Library Board of Queensland and that a positive response will be made to requests from that board regarding proper maintenance and care for the assets of the John Oxley collection.

Mr SHERRIN (Mansfield) (5.41 p.m.): I note the Opposition's indication of support for the Bill, so I will keep my comments brief and to the point. The Bill is intended to facilitate the operations of the State Library of Queensland in the foreseeable future. Members are aware that, recently, the State Library closed its doors at William Street, the site at which it had been based since 1902. Of course, early next month it will open its doors at the magnificent facilities at the Queensland Cultural Centre.

It was with some nostalgia that I noted that the library had closed its doors on the old site. I can cast my mind back to the time when I was a high school student. From time to time I was given work to do and I remember going to the William Street library with a number of my student friends and availing myself of the excellent research facilities that were available. I remember spending—I will not say many enjoyable nights—quite a deal of time there myself.

Since my days at high school, I have had many opportunities to avail myself of the facilities at the library. On numerous occasions when I was undertaking my university studies I required material, particularly of a Queensland origin, that was not available

at the University of Queensland library. I made the trek into the William Street library and, lo and behold, I cannot think of a single occasion when the document that I was seeking was not made available to me. I recollect the tremendous co-operation that I always received from the staff at the William Street library whenever I made a particular inquiry.

In more recent years, as a teacher setting papers and assignments from time to time, I always highly recommended the use of the library facilities to my students. On occasions when students took the initiative to utilise the facilities at the library they always reported back to me that they had received tremendous co-operation from staff over the years.

As I said, the new library will officially open in April. It is interesting to note in the legislation and the comments made by the Minister in his second-reading speech that a number of features will operate with the new library in its new location. I am particularly impressed by the allocation of increased space for the collection of the library. It was one of the shortfalls of the old William Street library, through no fault of its own, as it had very much outgrown its facilities since 1902. The provision of the increased space is to be applauded. Quite an extensive amount of the collection was held in almost archival storage in the old library. On occasions, that tended to slow down the handling of requests. When someone wanted a dated document, a search had to be made through the collection storage.

I am also pleased to note that the seating provisions have increased in the new library, which will encourage the public to use the library. One of the successes of the old William Street library, which I am sure will carry over into the new location, was the access afforded to the public. We do not want the library to become the haunt of academics or professional researchers. It must be made available to the general public.

I remember rubbing shoulders with people from all walks of life—people tracking down their family trees, early Queensland settlers and so on—availing themselves of the old library's facilities. If we can encourage wide access to the new library by a whole group of people ranging from young university students to middle-aged people and families, it will be successful.

I am also impressed by the new and improved services and the wider range of services that will be offered as a result of the move to the new premises. It is pleasing to note that the John Oxley Memorial Library collection, which is a consolidated record of the State's past achievements and a great source of historical information about this State, will be afforded pride of place in the new library.

I take the opportunity to encourage the State Library to put a great deal of time and thought into the maintenance of those historical records. Recently, as part of the bicentennial celebrations in my own area of Mount Gravatt, there was an historical display of the settlement of the area, and I was amazed at the dearth of historical material about that area, which was one of the first settled areas of Brisbane in the early colonial days.

Unfortunately, over the years only one or two very diligent people have maintained the early records of family development and so on in the Mount Gravatt area. It is very reassuring to know that the John Oxley Memorial Library collection is available and is providing a record for the whole State. It is great to see that that collection has pride of place in the new library.

I am also particularly pleased to note that the rare books collection will be maintained in the new library. In addition, of particular note from my own educational point of view, is the space that will be afforded to the children's library. As a former teacher and a parent, I know that one of the greatest things we can do for young people and our own children is to inculcate into them the joy of reading.

I have always thought that it gives young people a head start in their education if when they are very young they are introduced to the concept of reading, shown the joy

that they can receive from reading and shown how they can widen their own horizons by reading—that it is not a drudge but something of great joy and benefit to them.

I am very pleased that young children will be specially catered for in the new State Library. A special children's area will be provided. The new State Library will not be a library for adults only; it will encourage young people from a very early age to avail themselves of the facilities available in the library in the tremendous surroundings that exist in the Queensland Cultural Centre.

Of particular note from my point of view, with my interest in technology, is section 64 of the Act. Honourable members are probably aware that in relation to first-time prints, one copy is given to the university library and one copy is given to the State Library. That has been expanded in the Bill to include not only print material but also other forms of information storage that have become available in these modern times. Of course, I am alluding to films, tapes and discs that are published and released in this State. They will also be held in the library. I think that it is a very timely recognition of the advances made in technology for information storage.

The word "archives" in the title of the Bill shows the importance that the Queensland Government attaches to preserving Queensland's public records not only for historical purposes for generations to come but also to facilitate study by researchers and students of public administration throughout this State. Given the important role that the public sector plays in this State, it is appropriate that the Government should be facilitating study by researchers, academics and others interested in this very important area through the State Library.

The Bill is very timely, as the State Library moves very shortly into world-class premises and becomes part of the Queensland Cultural Centre complex. This modern legislation will complement the upgrading of the physical headquarters of the library and will allow for the library to further improve and enhance the delivery of this vital service to all Queenslanders.

I support the Bill.

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Leader of the Liberal Party) (5.49 p.m.): It is not with total support that I speak on this Bill. The Liberal Party supports the development of the library system of Queensland. It supports the move to, and the provision of, the new library premises. It appears to be a fine structure and the Liberal Party wishes the Library Board of Queensland well in the operation of those premises. The part to which the Liberal Party takes some exception is that dealing with the John Oxley Library.

It is interesting to cross the borders of this State and look at some of the developments in other jurisdictions in recent times. Most of the States of Australia—at least the eastern States—have developed special-purpose historical libraries that act as separate repositories for documentation, pamphlets, books and materials of a literary nature relating particularly to the history of the development of their own State. The Mitchell Library, which is located in a special building in Sydney, is very well known. Those people who have visited that library would know that it is a place of enormous interest because of its large collection of historical material.

Before the Oxley Memorial Library was established in Queensland, some of Queensland's very important historical documents were sent to the Mitchell Library. Griffith's papers were sent to the Mitchell Library in the 1920s because a special repository did not exist in Queensland.

The Latrobe Library is located in Victoria. It is interesting to note that, in recent times, administrative structures have been frequently changed and streamlined. Every administration seems to take upon itself the right to put some new geometric lines on paper to restructure and streamline procedures. The Labor Government in Victoria abolished the Latrobe Library, despite the enormous controversy and enormous condemnation of historians and people with special interest in those matters from all parts of the political spectrum. It was not only the conservative historians who attacked

the decision; Professor Manning Clark condemned it, too. As a result of that experience, the Labor State of New South Wales moved to entrench more specifically the independent rights of the Mitchell Library in Sydney. That institution has developed an extremely fine reputation because of the extent of its collection and because of the expertise of those people who maintain it.

It is true that general library training does not necessarily equip people to be good librarians of collections of the historical type. That requires a special bent.

Mr Simpson: They have to have an interest in history.

Mr INNES: Precisely; they require that interest.

There will be good general librarians, good children's librarians and good librarians who really like the deviling work and the interesting work that is attached to looking after historical collections.

Mr Simpson: If they don't understand early history, they don't have an appreciation or a desire to learn.

Mr INNES: Perhaps the library world does not turn them on.

The Oxley Memorial Library has a very interesting history. Firstly, it was started as a result of an excess of money collected for a memorial to John Oxley. The piece of granite and plaque on the bank of the Brisbane River was one of the main items used to commemorate the centenary of John Oxley's discovery of the Brisbane River. Because of an excess of funds, a trust was set up and the money from it was used to found the Oxley Memorial Library collection. The trustees were Professor Cumbrae Stewart, Professor of Law, and the Lord Mayor of Brisbane. The trust deed set out that the persons who would hold the office of Lord Mayor from time to time would become the trustee.

Eventually, in the 1940s, when the reputation of the collection was significant, problems arose with the housing of the collection. It was determined that the property of the trust would be vested in the Library Board of Queensland. At that time a special Act of Parliament was passed that enabled the library to be retained. At that time the special-purpose library had achieved a high reputation. If I leave out the contribution by the Minister, who was the Honourable J. Larcombe of Rockhampton, and look to the Opposition for a statement, I find that the predecessor of the present Premier, the member for Murrumba, Mr Nicklin, who was at that time the Leader of the Opposition, said—

> "The Oxley Library, which was set up not only to foster Queensland and Australian literature, but also to house and care for the records of the early settlement and the early history of this State, should be under the care of the Library Board. I am glad that it is not proposed that the exclusive features of the Oxley Memorial Library shall be merged in the general library set up but that they shall be retained as a thing apart and that the objects for which the library was set up in the first place will be continued."

That statement was made in 1946. Since that time, the Oxley Memorial Library's reputation for that specialised service has grown enormously. Nothing has happened to suggest that the statements that were properly made by members on all sides of the House at that time are not even more true today. One has only to look at the visitation to that library to realise its enormous use and reputation. In terms of physical visits to the library itself, proportionately to its size, it does better than the State's own reference library.

The Oxley Memorial Library's correspondence department is very active in that it facilitates and encourages the gathering and keeping of records in Queensland. The staff of that library have created a very prompt and courteous correspondence section that deals with inquiries about records and information. Indeed, those inquiries often lead to the lodging of material with that library.

On behalf of my elderly constituents, I have contacted the Oxley Library and offered photographs to or floated documentation past its staff which might be of interest to the library. I have frequently been the beneficiary of their expertise. The library has a superb collection of photographs. It is the finest collection available of photographs relating to the history of this State.

As honourable members would expect, the Oxley Library has developed a very special and expert reputation. I am surprised that the National Party Government has introduced this provision into the Act. Because it is a special library with special trusts, hundreds of country families have lodged their family records with the Oxley Library. That is how it was set up, and it looks after such documentation, amongst which one can find records of cattle properties, agricultural properties and even the first banana plantations in this State.

The Oxley Library is acquiring an enormous reputation in Australia in the same way as the Mitchell Library has acquired a reputation. The Oxley Library is acquiring that equivalent reputation and sense of trust with regard to the proper holding and respect for its documentation. I understand that there are people who will think twice about lodging their family documentation with a generalised library.

The present John Oxley Library will be housed in a prime position on the top level of the new State Library premises, but it will still be within the broad structure of the library. There is no guarantee that its staff will not be employed on the same rotational basis as the rest of the library. Nothing is sacrosanct. None of the conditions of the first trust, which this Parliament recognised on all sides as being necessary, valuable and desirable in 1946, will be carried on.

All honourable members recognise and applaud the Savage committee report. Is it the Savage report that causes this? A special Oxley Library committee exists. However, to my knowledge it comprises people who are either members of the committee by virtue of their employment within the State Library structure generally or people who give freely of their specialised historical expertise for that very specialised field.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr INNES: Prior to the dinner recess I was referring to the possible reasons why one would change the legal position and the special situation which had led to the creation and the continued existence of the Oxley Memorial Library. I was looking at it, shall I say, post-Savage in relation to the question of any additional cost. I suggest that no significant additional cost has been created by the existence of the library. I do not think that anybody would suggest that the number of librarian staff employed in the Oxley Memorial Library is too great. I am sure that the people working for the rest of the library would not suggest that their numbers are too great. I would think it is probably a correct assessment that at this time the library generally is hard pressed in terms of staff numbers. From my own knowledge of the use of the Oxley Memorial Library, a high level—an enormous level—of dedication is displayed by those hard-pressed staff who in this day and age—this genealogically dedicated age when more and more people are interested in the origins of themselves, their family and the State—have a number of demands made on them. The same demands are also made on the staff in other libraries such as the State Archives.

As I said before, the danger is that when a change is made in the location of the administration there is almost change for the sake of change. A new broom wants to do something new. On paper they are symmetrical organisations. One is under the umbrella of the State Library. They should all be absorbed under the umbrella of the State Library.

Those who have been around the traps would know that a certain amount of jealousy exists because the Oxley Library has tended to be a more public part of the State Library. Because of the interest in its collection, it is so often used for exhibitions, particularly photographic exhibitions. The John Oxley Library is perhaps as well known as the State Library of Queensland because it is so often associated with displays in which great public interest is shown.

I do not think I am overstating things to say that, because this special little unit receives a deal of publicity, a certain amount of covetous looking has occurred. I am sure that is not the dominant consideration, nor should it be. It is entirely false in the sense of some belief in symmetry and reorganisation. As I said, it cannot be substantially suggested that money is being saved. The presence of a more specialised or differently specialised committee to assist this group, which takes little or no money, can only be beneficial. As I understand it, people who are qualified historians are added to the committee that helps the Oxley Library to assist in the work and the advice that is given to that special situation.

I think it is very unusual that a Government of professed conservative inclination is destroying things that one would have thought were conservative in origin. A great tradition has been set up, both by the endowment of money by the people of Brisbane and by the setting up of a special deed for a specially dedicated library and collection. There is also the attraction to that collection of important personal documents which, as I have suggested, have been frequently given on trust.

In that regard I refer to a speech which was made in 1980 by a former John Oxley librarian, Miss Marjorie Walker. She described the origin of the Oxley Memorial Library and its distinguished—and distinguished in a special way—early start. The board of the library has generalists on it. I think a fair statement about the sorts of persons who make up the library board generally would be that they are generalists rather than particularly noted historians. In the Oxley Library that very special tradition of history is found. Miss Walker talked about the setting-up of the library and the sorts of things that the library did. She described the materials to be found in the Oxley Library as books covering all aspects of the State's history—year books, State and Commonwealth Government Gazettes containing Government appointments, transfers, resignations, proclamations and, indeed, Orders in Council, *Hansard*, the Queensland blue books and the statistics of the State. One would also find the journals of explorers by land and sea, reminiscences of early settlers and books written by authorities on various aspects of Queensland's history, official war histories and even early school readers. All that material was incorporated and held as part of the collection in the library.

The library also holds theatre and concert programs, sporting programs, annual reports of business organisations and cultural societies and souvenir programs of centenary and jubilee celebrations. I am sure that all those local authorities that have recently been writing their centennial histories have inevitably beaten a path to the Oxley Memorial Library. It holds an immense number of photographs depicting people, places, buildings and events that provide a fascinating pictorial history of the development and progress of the State—indeed, the most complete pictorial history. The collection also contains maps of important places and there are post office directories and street directories.

In 1980, Miss Walker described the most significant part of the collection as follows—

> "But the heart of the collection is the manuscript section. Here are to be found diaries and letters, records of businesses and pastoral properties, manuscripts of books, poems and plays, letters from Patrick, Walter and George Leslie"—

who were the earliest settlers on the Darling Downs, as I am sure most honourable would realise—

> "... letters from Sir Robert Herbert."

He was the first Premier of this State. The list goes on and on.

Miss Walker quoted extensively from some of the more interesting letters and diaries which are kept at the library. She went on to describe the people who use the library—

> "Who are the readers who use the collection? Readers come from all sections of the community. The State Governor is a frequent and welcome visitor; students from primary, secondary and tertiary institutions; academics and research scholars; historians; artists and authors seeking original source material; people compiling

> family histories, and local histories for ... celebrations of districts, towns and institutions. As well as those who visit the Library personally, letters and telephone calls are received from throughout the State ... and ... overseas countries."

I have no doubt that all are very diligently, courteously and promptly dealt with. During the last seven or eight years, the library has been adding to the record that was so accurately described by the librarian at that time.

There is an important point I wish to make. I say this to a Government that during the last six months has participated once before in this strand of debate in which the word "trust" has been used. The Government seems to believe that the word "trust" does not mean "trust"; that it has no significance; that it imposes no obligation to those who went before and who gave certain things on certain conditions. I point out that many people have given material to the Oxley Memorial Library on certain conditions, knowing that it was a specially dedicated library.

Today, the library has in its possession personal records held under an instruction that they are not to be used or read for 25 years. There are people who both want to leave something yet do not want embarrassment or the commercial revelation of things that might amount to some type of compromise or bring embarrassment or, conversely, advantage to other people. A wealth of material has been given on very special conditions of trust to the Oxley Memorial Library.

Not a little of that donated material has been affected by the personal level of confidence that has been established by the librarians and the staff. People know that when they go to the library, they do not see an ever-changing feast of mobile people; it is not the usual or more general public service situation. I have introduced elderly people to library staff. Those people have confidence in the staff and have been prepared to hand over their material. As I have said previously, I know people who are worried about the change that the legislation will bring. They are prepared to donate their material south of the border to a specially dedicated library, such as the Mitchell Library, rather than give it to a mere department in a generalist library.

I go back to the Oxley Memorial Library Act of Queensland 1946 and to the statements that were made by the Leader of the Opposition at that time, Mr Nicklin, when the legislation was being debated. He commended the retention of the special quality of the library. The difficulty with regard to the condition relating to trustees was that they tended to be the Under Secretary of the Premier's Department and the Lord Mayor for the time being. The property vested in the trustees was transferred to the Library Board of Queensland, but with a very special rider that was set out in section 3 of the 1946 Act. It reads as follows—

> "3. Oxley Memorial Library to be maintained as a separate library. All books, pamphlets, manuscipts, reports, newspapers, pictures, engravings, works of art, maps and other chattels and property which were comprised in or formed part of the Oxley Memorial Library of Queensland at the passing of this Act and all additions thereto and enlargements thereof which may from time to time or at any time hereafter be made by the Library Board of Queensland (which additions and enlargements the Library Board of Queensland is hereby authorised and empowered to make) shall be housed in the Public Library of Queensland in a separate portion thereof or in a separate building set aside or erected for the purpose as a segregated collection and shall continue to be known as 'The Oxley Memorial Library of Queensland,' which Library shall have as its object the promotion of the study and general knowlege of Australian literature and of literature relating to Australia."

At that time, that general statement was already in practice and it was taken to be a library that was dedicated particularly to literature and documentation associated with the history of this State.

I find it repugnant for a conservative Government, with its obsession with modern symmetry, to be tossing out the history of the 1920s, which was a centenary gift to this State at that time by public-spirited people, prominent and leading academics and people

of historical bent; tossing out the history and the general approval of the success in 1946 of the special library and of its dedication to the future in a specialised sense, albeit under the umbrella of the State Library of Queensland; and tossing out another 40 years of growth in the prestige and reputation of that library and of its specially trained and dedicated staff.

There is a close relationship—as there should properly be—with the general library of Queensland. There is and has been a coincidence of membership in some parts of the Oxley Memorial Library committee. The library has that very special quality, because there are others who are specially qualified and committed to the maintenance of the historical records and literature of this State. That is the way it has been; that is the way the trust intended it to be, and we are the inheritors of the benefit of that trust. Who are we to throw it out? I see no significant benefit proposed by this change in the legislation, apart from some sense of symmetry. What is being thrown out is some 60 years of very beneficial history that has been dedicated to a very special part of the history of this State.

Mr Davis: And also Sir Samuel Griffith.

Mr INNES: Yes, also Sir Samuel Griffith. I do not tire of hearing the honourable member for Brisbane Central recognise his name and evince the importance of that man in the history of this country.

Sir William Knox: Do you know where the Sir Samuel Griffith records are kept today? They are kept in the south.

Mr INNES: In the Mitchell Library, because the Oxley Memorial Library did not exist.

Queensland must not go down the track followed by Victoria, which has been condemned by the historians of that State. Queensland must stay on the right track—the track followed by the most famous historical collection in Australia—which is the track taken by the Mitchell Library after it looked at what happened south of its border. Let us do it Queensland style and honour the trust that previous generations have placed in us. We must maintain a very fine tradition and not attempt to pass the part of the Bill that removes the special status of the Oxley Memorial Library.

I ask the Minister not to proceed with the provisions in clause 4 of the Bill, which in fact repeals The Oxley Memorial Library of Queensland Act 1946, and also not to pass that part of the Bill which repeals and abolishes the committee. I will give an illustration of what can happen when a lack of specialisation takes place. The Library Board of Queensland had proposed that there be a special celebration for the Bicentenary, and that special celebration was to involve a pictorial history of Queensland in book form—after collection and careful sifting of material—containing photographs in the possession of the Oxley Memorial Library. It was to be in a publication produced by the Oxley Memorial Library for the Library Board of Queensland.

That was a very laudable intention. Indeed, some distinguished publications have been produced by the John Oxley Library under the umbrella of the Library Board of Queensland. That work was proposed and commenced. There was even some support from private enterprise; a private publisher was prepared to publish it for the State Library at his cost. At some stage there was a foul-up—some tardiness—and, under the umbrella of the University of Queensland Press, two persons from the Darling Downs embarked upon the same task.

It was a matter of some embarrassment when some of the photographs used in that book, which has not been particularly well received or reviewed, failed to carry the proper endorsements and captions that were supposed to go with the photographs. One may ask, "What about that?", but the reality is that the publishers reproduced some of the photographs that belonged to quite a few Queensland local authorities and individuals. Because the John Oxley Library has a very highly specialised photographic section, quite a few individuals leave their documentation to it and expect people to respect their

ownership, their authorship and to have proper captions put with the photographs. Apparently the errors in that publication were caused by a lack of commitment, of professionalism and of total dedication and expertise, which would not have happened if the John Oxley Library itself had been allowed to continue to produce the book, which was originally a task set for it by the Library Board of Queensland.

These are matters of significance. People do get their bowels in a knot if they give their history on certain trust and understanding to other people and that trust and understanding are not honoured.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: That sounds like a real Leo Gately comment.

Mr INNES: I am not talking about those sorts of knickers or bowels in a knot.

Some local authorities have expressed concern about the removal of that special status of the Oxley Memorial Library and, therefore, about that special confidence they have in that special library about the care of their material. I cannot see any arguments in favour of what is proposed; I see every argument against it.

Mr Scott: Would you say that Mr Austin engineered this?

Mr INNES: Everybody is entitled to learn a little bit as he goes along in life. One thing that the member for Nicklin, Mr Austin, should have learnt from is the exercise or experiment with Newstead House, which did not work. As I recall very well, the Liberal Party used words like "trust"——

Mr Austin: We haven't pulled it down yet, have we?

Mr INNES: No, but it does not work. What the Minister and the Government have done is to destroy a superb volunteer network that was totally satisfied to be involved in voluntary work dedicated to a special place with which they had a special association. I know that in his department, and the Minister knows that in the Government, consideration is being given to handing it back because the experiment is not working properly.

Mr Austin: I haven't heard that.

Mr INNES: Well, the Minister is not keeping his ear to the ground.

Mr Austin: It is not my department.

Mr INNES: I am sorry, it is his former department.

At that time the Liberal Party warned that the abolition of the trusts would create problems; it has, and there has been a falling-away of the support group that came around it. I am telling the Minister to take note of that and not to do it again.

If the Government proceeds with the Bill, it is committing a major affront to the history of the State and to a superb institution that deserves, and has earned the right, to be maintained as an individual and special institution under the umbrella of the State Library.

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (7.50 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to join in the debate. The honourable member for Brisbane Central stated that anybody who lives beyond the last street light does not know what is happening in the rest of Queensland. That is a strange attitude. Although the honourable member may have lived in the west of Queensland, he has certainly lost touch with what is occurring in the country areas. However, I am aware of what goes on in most parts of Queensland. The Government is also aware of what goes on in the provincial areas of the State.

The Bill refers to archives. Queenslanders should recognise the preservation of Queensland's heritage. That has not been done in many areas. Approximately 10 years ago, my own area of Goomboorian celebrated its centenary. It was difficult to ascertain the early history of that settlement. In the early days, it was left to the older people to pass information on from generation to generation.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr Simpson: You had better explain to him where Goomboorian is.

Mr STEPHAN: No, I will not attempt to explain to the honourable member for Brisbane Central where Goomboorian is. When he is on his way to Fraser Island one day, I will take him there.

In the early days, very little attempt was made to document the development of the district and the different methods that were used in developing the roads, the railways, the houses and sporting facilities.

Much emphasis has been placed on the John Oxley Library.

Mr Davis: He speaks on behalf of the Goomboorian district.

Mr STEPHAN: The honourable member cannot even pronounce it. It is interesting to witness him displaying his ignorance.

The Minister's second-reading speech pointed out that the John Oxley Library will be a feature of the new State Library, along with the rare books section, the children's library and, of course, the reference library. Included in the rare books section will be the James Hardie collection of Australian fine arts, which has been so kindly donated by James Hardie. If people are not aware of their own history, they will not appreciate the services that the library provides.

The new facilities will open on 11 April. At present the library is in the process of being moved. That move is creating a part of history.

Mr Davis: Who gave you this speech?

Mr STEPHAN: It is there for the honourable member to read, just as it is for anyone else.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister stated that the main provisions of the Bill included the constitution and membership of the Library Board; the functions and powers of the board; the financial provisions, including the establishment of a trust fund which was mentioned previously; and the declaration of the establishment, maintenance and conduct of a library facility as a function of local government. I will deal with that in a moment. It is important in the provincial areas of our community. Other provisions include the preservation, management and utilisation of public records of the State and a requirement that a copy of material published in Queensland is to be lodged with the State Library and with the Parliamentary Library. The Bill provides for a recognition of the establishment and the recording of those facilities.

I am drawing attention to the importance that the State Government is placing on library facilities and what it is doing to encourage those facilities in other parts of Queensland. Local authorities, who have their own libraries, are receiving much support from the State Government, to the extent that this financial year $7m has been allocated to the various libraries throughout the State. In that way the Government is helping the libraries to build up their records and encouraging them to continue the work that they have been doing so well.

Two main subsidy schemes are available. One scheme involves a subsidy for the employment of qualified staff. The other scheme involves a subsidy to allow for expenditure on books and related material, approved miscellaneous expenditure and the salaries of unqualified staff.

I do not believe sufficient recognition has been given over the years to the support and encouragement that the State Government has provided to the various libraries throughout the State. I place on record my appreciation and the appreciation of the library boards and library committees for the support that has been forthcoming from the Government.

There has been quite a change in community attitude in regard to the use of libraries. Gone are the days when libraries were considered to be just a cupboard in the corner, as they were in schools. Libraries are being utilisied and appreciated by an increasing number of people in the community. The Bill recognises this, which is demonstrated by the provision of this new centre. What is happening in Brisbane is being repeated in many other parts of the State.

I thank the Minister for the work he has done and for the enthusiasm that he has shown.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah) (7.57 p.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker——

Mr Davis: Here we go—the old historian.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: The prince consort's last opportunity to be heard.

This legislation creates new problems and new interests for this Parliament. Libraries tend to have a low profile in the community for a number of reasons. However, they are essential. Of course, civilisation has been built around the public libraries. Probably the most famous library of all was the great library at Alexandria, which was burnt down. The destruction of that centre of cultural learning put the world back many years.

Libraries play a very significant role in the community. Although they may have a low profile in the day-to-day affairs of men, when they come up for review in this Parliament, honourable members should examine critically what is being done.

The public library as we know it has approximately 120 000 to 125 000 users a year. The John Oxley Library has about 18 000 to 20 000 users a year. Those people, of course, have specialised interests. The abolition of the John Oxley Memorial Library is an act of vandalism. Victoria learned to its regret, when it abolished the Latrobe Library—a library very similar to the John Oxley Library—what a terrible mistake that was. The abolition of the John Oxley Memorial Library is a great mistake and a huge step backwards.

The Mitchell Library in Sydney, which is internationally famous, gained its reputation by virtue of its very specialist nature. The John Oxley Memorial Library was intended to remain in perpetuity as a memorial library, not merely to be there for 20 or 30 years. This Parliament is about to extinguish it. It is regrettable that more thought has not been given to the abolition of the John Oxley Memorial Library.

The State Archives, which are used by about 8 000 people a year, pose a very special problem. Archives are not libraries, yet this legislation claims that they are part of a library. The philosophy of archives, the way in which they are managed, the duties they perform, the authority that the State Archivist has, which is provided by this legislation—and there is similar legislation in other States—are quite different from those of a library.

Archives contain more than books. Apparently there is some thinking in the mind of the Government that archives are books. Archives are far more than books. They include documents of various sorts, maps, photographs, research material, memorabilia—a great range of material which has nothing to do with libraries.

It is a mistake to incorporate the State Archives under the title "State Libraries". The documents, maps, photographs and other memorabilia have been accumulated by the State Archivist as a result of powers given to him by the Parliament. There is a very special way in which archives should be managed. The philosophy of management of archives is distinctly different from the philosophy of management of libraries.

Throughout the world, archives are preserved by State or national legislation. I have visited quite a few of the great archives of the world. They are certainly not associated with libraries in any way. The skills and qualifications required are different. The philosophy of administration is also different. That automatically places the administration of archives outside the administration of libraries. The legislation shows that another mistake—a very serious one—is being made by the Government.

Where are the State Archives? Does any honourable member know where they are?

Mr Simpson: Near the gaol.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: The honourable member is right; the State Archives are located right next to the gaol, hidden away behind the gaol. One would hardly know where they are.

It is time that the profile of the State Archives was lifted so that they are used more effectively. The State Archives could be easily placed in a building across the road from Parliament House. The old State Library building has been vacated. That building could be redeveloped in a way that would enable the State's archives to be deposited in it. It would also enable members of the public to gain easier access to the archives and to make greater use of them there than at present.

Not so long ago I visited the State Archives of Tasmania. Tasmania's magnificent archives are many times more impressive than Queensland's archives. Incidentally, Tasmania's history is ever so much greater than the history of Queensland. The public access to Tasmania's archives was of a very high level. I have been to archives in Europe and north America. In those places public access is the dominant feature of the archives. However, in this State, seating room is provided for only 22 people. The average daily attendance is 34 or 35 people. Frequently, up to 50 people must wait in a queue in order to gain access to the archives. The people who use the archives do not enter the building, look quickly at something and then leave the building; sometimes, a number of hours are spent by people who use the archives of this State. That is only part of the story.

The other part of the story is that in recent times the State Archivist has refused something like 5 kilometres of material from State Government departments. That material could not be accepted because the State Archivist does not have the room for it or the staff to sort and classify the material. About 1½ kilometres of material has been unavailable to the public because the information cannot be classified. The number of people employed at the State Archives is insufficient to classify the material that it already has, so that certain material cannot be made available to researchers or to the public at large. That 5 kilometres of material that must be retained by local governments and Government departments is being stored all round Brisbane and in other parts of Queensland at enormous cost to local authorities and to the Government when in fact someone should sift through the material. The information that is not required should be sent elsewhere, and the material that is required should be classified and made available to the public.

Because of a lack of funds given to the State Archives, the State Archivist has had to employ prison labour to assist him with his work. As a result of the events that have occurred this year, it is quite apparent that in this State and elsewhere in Australia access to both Commonwealth and State archives will more than double. That was the experience in the United States when that nation celebrated the 200th anniversary of its founding. Although Australia is not celebrating the 200th anniversary of the founding of a nation, it is celebrating the 200th anniversary of the landing of European settlement, and that has created and is creating enormous interest in history in our community. The State's archives play a very important role in our history. Therefore, the demand for their use will be enormous.

I make a plea to the Government: if it intends to go ahead with this legislation and destroy the identity of the State Archives, it should at least provide adequate funds and people to carry out the job for which the Archives were created.

The State Archives play a very important role in the history and culture of our community. The failure to provide adequate funds and services to that operation will hinder a great deal of the work that is done within the community by many, many people—and not just academics.

The Bill provides for an extension of the powers relating to the compulsory acquisition of publications that are produced in this State. For some time, that provision has existed within the legislation in a lesser form. People who publish material in this

State are obliged to send copies of their publications to both the State Library and the Parliamentary Library.

While carrying out research into this legislation, I found that even the State Library fails to submit its publications to the Parliamentary Library. I found also that most Government departments submit no publications to the Parliamentary Library. The law applies to everybody else in the community, but apparently the State Government is exempt. The State Government is the biggest publisher of documents in this State. However, many of those State Government publications that are freely available in many other parts of the community are not available in the Parliamentary Library.

Some time ago, the Premier of this State sent letters to all Government departments reminding them that they should comply with the request to submit publications to the State Library and the Parliamentary Library, although they are not obliged to do so by law. Despite his request, for some reason or another those departments have failed almost universally to send their publications to either the State Library or the Parliamentary Library.

I ask the Government to renew its requests to those departments to ensure that all publications are submitted to those two libraries, as private publishers are obliged to do. Even though the Government has powers of prosecution over private publishers, they still fail to submit many of their publications.

The State's libraries are being taken for granted by this Government, which is deliberately destroying a memorial library that was set up with surplus funds from the centenary of John Oxley's visit to the Brisbane River. A trusteeship, which was to be in perpetuity, was set up for that purpose.

As I said earlier, the abolition of the Oxley Memorial Library is an act of vandalism. The State Archives deserve a higher profile in the community. I hope that the Government will provide the necessary funds to provide them with a better home either close by across the road or in William Street when the building that was vacated by the State Library is properly renovated.

Mr SIMPSON (Cooroora) (8.09 p.m.): I support the Bill before the House. I am concerned that Opposition members believe that, because the home of the John Oxley Library is being shifted, this State will lose something. They expressed concern also about the performance of the people who work in the library, and that its very high standards will not be maintained.

Ten years ago I required information for the centenary of a school which was situated between Yandina and Nambour, in my electorate. I decided to obtain copies of the daily newspapers of 100 years before that time—110 years ago now. I thought that something may be found in them that would interest the students. The library was very helpful. One of the papers contained an excerpt about two Chinamen who had been eaten by Aborigines at Cooktown and another article about a person being eaten by Aborigines somewhere else about a week later. The children found that rather horrifying. However, that forms part of our history.

The dedicated staff at the Oxley Library will be moving into a new home where, I have no doubt, their dedication and performance will maintain the distinction and the importance that the library has achieved. The library's new home will have properly controlled air-conditioning that will help to keep its records in the best possible condition.

The archives, which provide back-up to the libraries, also bear mention. Their records are quite diverse. They are not restricted to just books. It is a misunderstanding that libraries keep only books. They also keep memorabilia, paraphernalia, maps and records and all sorts of things that are presented to them.

The archives also contain great reams of material that appear to serve little purpose but which are in fact important records. For instance, some records are stored below this Chamber in a room with walls that are two feet thick. The room is like a dungeon. It is very secure. It has been retained for the purpose of storing records. It is hoped that

shortly the State Government will have the resources to relocate the archives in a place which will be handy to the library, because much of the material in the archives is used as resource material to meet the needs of inquirers. The Opposition has been overly concerned that the library will not be properly looked after. However, because of its dedicated supporters, the Oxley Library will always maintain its name and standing. I support the Bill.

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Leader of the House) (8.13 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate. I will respond to a few of the points that they raised. In the first instance I would like to respond to a couple of matters raised by the Leader of the Opposition. He expressed some concern about the wording in the Act regarding annual reporting to Parliament. I draw his attention to the Financial Administration and Audit Act, section 46J of which deals with annual reports. It states—

> "As soon as possible after the close of each financial year but, subject to subsection (2), in no case later than 4 months after that close a statutory body shall prepare and furnish to the appropriate Minister a report in writing on the operations of the statutory body during that financial year.
>
> . . .
>
> (4) The Minister shall lay the report before the Legislative Assembly within 14 sitting days from the day on which he receives it."

That covers adequately the point raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

A question was raised about staffing. I am advised that in March 1987 Cabinet approved a strategic plan for the State Library. The need for 37 new staff was identified. However, staff savings as a result of the implementation of the strategic planning process reduced the actual requirement to 27. The 37 new positions will be filled as follows—

	1986/87	87/88	88/89	89/90
New positions	10	8	7	2
Staff savings	2	6	2	—
	12	14	9	2

Honourable members would realise from that plan that there will be adequate staff. However, the staffing provisions of the library will be monitored as the new facility begins to operate.

In relation to matters raised by members of the Liberal Party, the honourable member for Sherwood and the honourable member for Nundah, I am of the view that they are attempting to light a bush fire when in fact there is nothing to light. It is very obvious to me that they are trying to draw an analogy between this legislation and the Queensland Museum (Newstead House Acquisition) Act. There is no relationship between the two pieces of legislation.

I noted with interest that the honourable member for Sherwood quoted from section 3 of the Oxley Memorial Library of Queensland Act 1946. However, he failed to read to this House section 4, which is titled "Advisory Committee for Oxley Memorial Library". For the information of honourable members, the section reads as follows—

> "The Library Board of Queensland"—

I ask honourable members to note "Library Board of Queensland"—

> "shall appoint an advisory committee for and in respect of the Oxley Memorial Library of Queensland. Such committee shall be known as the 'Oxley Memorial Library Advisory Committee' and shall consist of members and associate members of the Library Board of Queensland chosen or added for their knowledge and interest in the field of the collection.
>
> It shall be the duty of the said Committee to advise the Library Board of Queensland from time to time on all matters relating to the Oxley Memorial Library

of Queensland includng the management, custody, care, control and/or enlargement thereof."

I repeat that that section states "... and shall consist of members and associate members of the Library Board of Queensland". I am of the view that perhaps the present Oxley Library committee is unconstitutional under the existing Act because the members of that committee—who indeed do a splendid job—would not qualify to be members. All that the Government is really doing is modernising an outdated Act and bringing it into the twentieth century, which is an important and appropriate step to take. Nothing sinister is contained in the legislation—nothing sinister at all. In fact, I believe that the qualities of the Oxley Library will be enhanced.

For the information of honourable members, its name is no longer the "Oxley Memorial Library", for example, which is part of the title of the Act. The name of the library was changed about 10 years ago by proclamation when the word "Memorial" was extracted from the title. The proclamation under the Public Service Act was made on 31 October 1974. I believe that the honourable member for Nundah was a member of Parliament and perhaps even a Cabinet Minister at the time the name was changed. As the honourable member has said, in historical terms it was very important to this State.

Sir William Knox: I am not worried about the name.

Mr AUSTIN: The honourable member is. He is talking about history. I wonder whether the honourable member protested at the time about the change?

Mr Burns: Will it have a separate section in the library?

Mr AUSTIN: Yes, it will. It will have a separate floor or a separate section. It will have its own name and its own advisory committee. There is simply nothing sinister in the proposals of the Government.

The collection will be housed in much more appropriate surroundings than it was previously. I believe that some of the concerns expressed by the honourable member for Sherwood have been brought about, perhaps, by members of the committee or members of the staff who have lobbied him because they are fearful of the future in terms of their careers. I say to the honourable member for Sherwood that no major changes are proposed. The committee has done a magnificent job. As a matter of fact, the Government will now be able to legalise the committee to allow it to do its appropriate job.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. B. D. Austin (Nicklin—Leader of the House) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—

Mr INNES (8.21 p.m.): I propose to speak on both the Liberal Party's proposed amendments to this clause at the same time, because the arguments are the same. I foreshadow two amendments. I propose that the words "The Oxley Memorial Library of Queensland Act of 1946" on page 2, line 32 be deleted and that the last paragraph of clause 4 relating to the advisory committee and the cessation of this committee be deleted.

I move the following amendments—

"At page 2, omit line 32";

"At page 2, omit lines 37 to 40."

I turn now to the Minister's comments. Firstly, it is completely wrong to say that the present committee of the Oxley Memorial Library is unconstitutional.

Mr Austin: I said they could be. I didn't say they were.

Mr INNES: The simple answer is that it is not. The Minister has highlighted a crucial change. This special library can be moved around, but the Act itself states that it has to be housed in a separate portion of the same building or in the same building, because the essence of the library is the collection and its specially dedicated staff. It must not be dissipated, submerged or absorbed into a broader purposed or tasked situation.

In 1946, under this special Act of Parliament, which was supported by the first Country Party Premier—as it was by the Labor Government—a vehicle was devised as a perfect way of balancing the trusts and the special purposes of the past with the practical administrative problems of housing the library and dealing with the problem of changing trustees.

Clearly the Act reinforced the specialised nature of the library by affording it a special committee, albeit that the committee is appointed by the Library Board of Queensland. The Act contained the special words that the Minister himself read out. They are as follows—

> "... shall consist of members and associate members of the Library Board of Queensland chosen or added for their knowledge and interest in the field of the collection."

The members of the committee had to be specialists. Indeed, there has been a distinguished line of specialists on the committee, because in Miss Walker's speech she outlined the qualifications of some of the members of the committee.

The first committee consisted of a librarian of the University of Queensland, a professor of history and economics, a professor of English language and literature, a justice of the Supreme Court who had a particular interest in literary matters, and so on. Today there are two specially qualified and practising historians who are members of that specialised committee.

I will take a look at the "you beaut" library committee, and in doing so I cast no personal reflection on the existing committee. They are a bunch of generally qualified, intelligent people such as Sylvia da Costa-Roque, who is a journalist, Mrs Schubert, who is a pleasant and cultivated lady, and a doctor from Burdekin, who no doubt is the National Party's representative; but they are a bunch of generalists. This Bill abolishes not only the library, but also its support committee. There will be a committee in which no qualifications are required at all. The committee will comprise seven people who are classically appointed by the Government of Queensland and no qualifications will be either demanded or suggested.

Where there is a special library with a distinguished reputation supported by a specialist committee of appropriately qualified people, I think it is a sham to abolish that and submerge it under a committee of generalists. That is precisely what is being talked about. Why debase the currency? Certainly I draw an analogy with the Newstead House legislation. I do that to highlight the use of the word "trust"; the whole library started with a trust, the trust that was impressed upon the excess moneys raised to celebrate the centenary of John Oxley's discovery of the Brisbane River.

The constitution of the Library states—

> "... the income therefrom and all money which might thereafter be added or given to the said Fund upon trust among other things for establishing and maintaining in perpetuity a library for promoting the study and general knowledge of the literature of Queensland authors and writers and of literature relating to Queensland.
>
> It was thereby further declared that the said library should be located in the Town Hall at Brisbane or such other place at Brisbane as the Trustees should from time to time determine and the Trustees were empowered to lease or acquire suitable

premises in which to keep and maintain the library. By a resolution of the Brisbane City Council of the Ninth day of June 1930, rooms in the City Hall were alloted for the purposes of the said library."

It seems to be a function of the present National Party Government that anything to do with the history of Brisbane, anything to do with the strong, deep concern that publicly minded citizens have had in this State, has to he tossed out. The Government has not raised a simple, logical, persuasive argument in support of the change. It is change for change's sake; it is change because it seems symmetrical——

Sir William Knox interjected.

Mr INNES: As the member for Nundah says, it is a change which vandalises the trust, which destroys the library that is supposed to exist in perpetuity, which takes away and abolishes a specialised committee that has done a superb job and has had throughout its whole record a distinguished membership and which has provided a bureaucratically motivated, symmetrical, single structure covered by a generalist committee, which no doubt will be peppered with people who suit the political persuasions of the Government.

It is a raw deal. We in the Liberal Party oppose it and we propose amendments that I have suggested in an endeavour to make sure that this fine and distinguished library is maintained, albeit in the same building, albeit with persons nominated by the Library Board of Queensland, but with specialists supporting a specialised library.

Mr AUSTIN: The Government does not accept the amendment, nor does it accept the reason or the explanation given by the honourable member for Sherwood. From the tone of the debate, it is very obvious, in my view, that he is trying to deceive the public to the extent that he is trying to suggest that the Government is destroying the John Oxley Library.

Mr Innes: Give a logical argument.

Mr AUSTIN: I will give the member a logical answer, but I ask him to give me a logical answer as to why such a valuable collection can be stored under the protection of a piece of legislation covering two and a-half pages that contains virtually no control at all. I ask the member for Sherwood to give a logical explanation as to why that should be allowed to happen.

What he is saying is that he wants to put his trust in people to do that. Fair enough; so be it. What I am saying to him is that the library itself will be protected. There is no suggestion that the library will be destroyed. It is simply a streamlining procedure that will enable it to function correctly and properly and probably offer more protection than it receives at the present time.

Mr INNES: The Minister has said it is a streamlining procedure that will allow it to function properly. Can he indicate to me how and in what regard has the John Oxley Library failed to function properly?

Mr AUSTIN: I have already indicated that in my response to the second reading.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Burreket): Order! The honourable member for Salisbury will take note that, when the Chair is standing, he will remain in his place and not move around the Chamber.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided—

In division—

Honourable members interjecting—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! For the second time tonight I remind honourable members that, when the Chair is standing, the Committee will come to order.

AYES, 65		NOES, 9	
Alison	Lester	Beard	
Ardill	Lingard	Innes	
Austin	Littleproud	Knox	
Berghofer	McCauley	Lee	
Booth	McElligott	Lickiss	
Borbidge	McKechnie	Schuntner	
Braddy	McPhie	White	
Burns	Milliner		
Campbell	Muntz		
Chapman	Neal		
Clauson	Nelson		
Comben	Newton		
Cooper	Palaszczuk		
D'Arcy	Prest		
Davis	Randell		
De Lacy	Scott		
Eaton	Shaw		
Elliott	Sherrin		
Fraser	Simpson		
Gately	Slack		
Gibbs, I. J.	Smith		
Gibbs, R. J.	Smyth		
Gilmore	Stoneman		
Glasson	Tenni		
Gunn	Underwood		
Hamill	Vaughan		
Harper	Veivers		
Harvey	Wells		
Hayward	Yewdale		
Henderson			
Hinton			
Hobbs	*Tellers:*		*Tellers:*
Hynd	FitzGerald		Beanland
Katter	Stephan		Sherlock

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5—

Mr AUSTIN (8.44 p.m.): I propose to move an amendment to clause 5. The Local Government Act was amended late last year to alter the terminology "Joint Local Authority" to "Joint Local Authority Board". That occurred after the drafting of the Libraries and Archives Bill. It is therefore necessary to amend the Libraries and Archives Bill to reflect the change in terminology now used in the Local Government Act. I therefore move the following amendment—

"At page 3, line 14, after 'Authority' where it twice occurs insert—

'Board'."

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 48, as read, agreed to.

Clause 49—

Mr AUSTIN (8.46 p.m.): I move the following amendments—

"At page 18, line 25, after 'Joint Local Authority' insert—

'Board' ";

"At page 18, line 32, omit—

'Board of the Joint Local Authority'

and substitute—

'Joint Local Authority Board' ";

"At page 18, line 35, after 'Joint Local Authority' insert—

'Board' ";

"At page 18, line 38, after 'Authority' where it occurs the first time and the third time insert—

'Board'."

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 49, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 50 to 73 and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

Third Reading

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Leader of the House) (8.49 p.m.), by leave: I move—

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

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Leader of the Liberal Party) (8.50 p.m.): I wish to bring to the attention of the House the fact that this is the last occasion on which we will see the names "John Oxley Library" or "John Oxley Memorial Library" enshrined in legislation in this House. It is now a matter of leave or licence under the State Library Act as to whether it continues to exist. Now there is no special group of persons, either committee or staff, dedicated to the preservation of this very important part of our history. We in the Liberal Party oppose the third reading of this Bill.

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

AYES, 66		NOES, 9	
Alison	Lingard	Beard	
Ardill	Littleproud	Innes	
Austin	McCauley	Knox	
Berghofer	McElligott	Lee	
Booth	McKechnie	Lickiss	
Borbidge	McPhie	Schuntner	
Braddy	Menzel	White	
Burns	Milliner		
Burreket	Muntz		
Campbell	Neal		
Chapman	Nelson		
Clauson	Newton		
Comben	Palaszczuk		
Cooper	Prest		
D'Arcy	Randell		
Eaton	Scott		
Elliott	Shaw		
Fraser	Sherrin		
Gately	Simpson		
Gibbs, I. J.	Slack		
Gibbs, R. J.	Smith		
Gilmore	Smyth		
Glasson	Stephan		
Gunn	Stoneman		
Hamill	Tenni		
Harper	Underwood		
Harvey	Vaughan		
Hayward	Veivers		
Henderson	Wells		
Hinton	Yewdale		
Hobbs			
Hynd	*Tellers:*		*Tellers:*
Katter	FitzGerald		Beanland
Lester	Davis		Sherlock

Resolved in the affirmative.

REAL PROPERTY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.02 p.m.): In the name of legislative excellence, I seek leave of the House to move a motion without notice.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House can do without the comments. The Minister seeks leave to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

Mr CLAUSON: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Real Property Act 1861-1986 and the Real Property Act 1877-1986 each in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Clauson, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.03 p.m.): I move—

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

This Bill amends the Real Property Acts so as to provide for the implementation of a number of worthwhile cost-saving measures. The first of these measures will result in considerable savings in survey costs for subdividers of land traversed by a road or watercourse.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much audible conversation and movement in the Chamber. Order! Order! Members will expedite their exit from the Chamber or sit down and listen to the Minister.

Mr CLAUSON: At present, section 119(1B) of the Real Property Act 1861 provides that where the Crown issues a deed of grant for land which has a road or a watercouse within its boundaries, and that land is subsequently subdivided so that one or more of the subdivided parts is contiguous to the road or watercourse, then the Registrar of Titles can issue a certificate of title for each of the subdivided parts and "each of the separate and distinct parts of the land on either side of the road or watercourse". This means that in a typical case where a small house block contiguous to a stream is excised from a much larger block, the subdivider is required to meet the substantial survey costs necessary to enable the separate severance of all parcels of land on either side of the stream.

The Bill amends section 199(1B) to provide that if, on alienation from the Crown, a parcel of land is shown as one lot, though intersected by an internal road or stream, subdivisions thereof on one side of the internal road or stream will not create a severance on the other side of the road or stream, unless, in the absolute discretion of the Registrar of Titles, it is deemed necessary they do so.

The second cost-saving measure relates to the advertising of transmissions by death. The Real Property Act 1877 currently provides that all transmissions of interests in land by death are to be advertised in the *Government Gazette*, in a newspaper published in Brisbane and, if the land is in a rural area, in a newspaper circulated in that area. The Bill amends section 33 to remove the need for newspaper advertising of transmissions which are supported by a grant of probate or letters of administration, because in those cases advertising has already occurred as a prerequisite to the court issuing a grant of representation. This amendment will offer considerable direct cost savings to the Titles Office and savings in respect of both time and costs to the community.

Further significant cost-savings will result from the amendment to section 33 of the 1877 Act, which will allow the Titles Office to participate in the document exchange service. Some years ago a private company developed this service, which allows documents normally sent through the post to be deposited and collected by subscribers at centrally located offices in all major towns. This system is an extremely cost effective alternative to the postal service and it is widely used by the legal profession, financial institutions and governmental agencies. The efficiencies that flow from use of the document exchange service will be maximised when the Titles Office is able to accept the lodgment of documents through the system. As well as producing cost-saving to both the Titles Office and subscribing firms of solicitors, use of the system should reduce the number of personal lodgements, thus easing congestion and lessening delays within the Titles Office.

In addition to these significant cost-saving measures, the Bill corrects a small drafting anomaly that occurred when section 19 of the 1861 Act was amended in 1986.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Braddy, adjourned.

JURY ACT AND OATHS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.07 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Jury Act 1929-1982 and the Oaths Act 1867-1981 each in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Clauson, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.08 p.m.): I move—

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

This is a Bill to amend the Jury Act 1929-1982 and the Oaths Act 1867-1981 in order to clarify the procedure with respect to the maintenance of the security of lock-up juries. For many years in the courts it has been the practice for police officers to be sworn to safeguard the security of lock-up juries.

As members are no doubt aware, juries may retire at any time and may be locked up for any length of time. The police officer who safeguards the jury whilst they are locked up works a normal shift. If the jury has not reached a verdict by the end of his rostered shift, he is entitled to the payment of overtime for the period of time he remains. This situation arises in a significant number of trials in the criminal courts.

The budgetary constraints of the Police Department are such that the payment of overtime should be avoided wherever possible. One way of avoiding it is to replace the police officer with another officer at the termination of the original officer's shift. In practice, this has been occurring for some time as a means of reducing the cost to the Police Department. However, the Chief Justice has pointed out that this may result, in some cases, in a lock-up jury being under the care of police officers who have not been sworn in accordance with the Oaths Act.

It is imperative that the Act be strictly complied with, therefore it is necessary to amend the Act to clarify the situation. The Bill simply empowers a bailiff to swear in another police officer at the completion of the original officer's shift. It thereby enables the replacement to occur with ease and, in so doing, will reduce the payment of overtime.

Whilst considering this issue, it also became apparent that the practice of swearing in members of the police force to assist bailiffs in charge of juries has not been given

legislative recognition. As this is considered desirable, the Bill includes a section providing that such police officer is to carry out, in respect of the jury, such duties as he is directed by the court or the officer of the court to perform.

Finally, the Bill provides that the bailiff shall swear to keep the jury in "some safe and private place and provide them with such accommodation, meals and refreshment as the court may allow" rather than keeping them in "some safe and convenient place without meat, drink or fire candle-light excepted".

In all, the Bill gives clear legislative approval to the practice that has developed over the years and, in so doing, also results in a considerable financial saving to the Government.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Braddy, adjourned.

MOTOR VEHICLES CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 8 March (see p. 4934).

Mr UNDERWOOD (Ipswich West) (9.10 p.m.): I wish to raise a number of serious concerns to which the Minister should address himself in this debate. The matters that he raised in his second-reading speech clearly indicate that the amending legislation is actually a clarification of the law. The member for Townsville East will address himself to the case to which the Minister very briefly referred in his second-reading speech. I do not believe that the Minister's speech did justice to the import of the Bill. He should have given more detail so that the House would have a better background knowledge of his views as to why the Government sought to bring this legislation before the House.

The matter of concern is the protection of individuals in cases in which motor vehicles have accidents and there is damage to property and injury occurs.

The original legislation was brought in in 1975 because of the grave concern that was caused by unregistered motor vehicles on beaches, in forests, in parks and other public places—in other words, basically off-road vehicles. The legislation was to provide safety for the public in circumstances in which conflict existed between the public and the use of motor vehicles. A second string to the bow was the preservation of the environment by declaring prohibited areas and areas for regulated use. The Act was amended slightly in 1985.

The question to be asked is: are we here tonight to protect the insurance industry or are we here for another purpose? It is clear that the Bill has been brought forward because of a court case involving an accident concerning a fork-lift. My information is that other fork-lift accidents have occured. The member for Woodridge mentioned a problem that occurred a couple of years ago at the Big Gun fruit barn at Underwood, where a chap under the age of 17 was killed whilst driving a fork-lift. If one is driving a registered vehicle, one is protected for the negligence by third-party insurance. If one does not have third-party insurance, I understand that one is protected by common law.

As the Minister pointed out, in view of the judgment of the court, the scope of the Act extends further than was originally intended—that is, covering off-road vehicles as nominated in the Act. That means that some exemptions exist. The vehicles that are covered by the Motor Vehicles Control Act are covered by the Motor Vehicle Insurance Act. Any vehicle that is exempt is not covered under that Act. The Opposition wants to know what protection is provided under the Act. Why should not people who are injured by a person driving or in control of an unregistered motor vehicle that is not covered by this Act be entitled to claim on third-party insurance? I thought that that would be the proper way to go. Any person injured by a motor vehicle should have

some type of third-party insurance available rather than having to seek redress under common law.

In the case that the Minister cited, I understand that the insurance firm said that it would not pay out because the matter was covered under the Motor Vehicles Control Act. In fact, that was not the intention of the Act and the motor vehicle was not registered under the Motor Vehicles Control Act. That is the clarification of law that this Bill is intending to clear up.

However, the main issue is the protection of individuals. The Minister should provide an answer as to why people should not be granted that protection.

At Dreamworld and many other amusement parks there are motor vehicles of many kinds. Are they covered by this legislation or do people have to go to common law to get compensation when they are injured, when their property is damaged or even, in the case of death, when negligence is involved?

What is the position in relation to a soft-drink factory or any warehouse in which fork-lifts, electric cars or any other motor vehicles are used? These days, one goes to sporting events and sees people who are carrying out the first aid travelling from one end of a sporting carnival to the other on motor bikes when attending to players who require medical attention.

There are numerous examples of situations in which unregistered vehicles are operated. Why should they not be operating to provide greater protection for the public? An answer is needed from the Minister this evening. Honourable members need an assurance that there is full protection for the public in any situation involving injury, loss of life or damage to property.

A number of matters can be addressed—and should have been addressed—in these amendments to the Act over and above the legal question. I call for the setting-up of designated areas for off-road vehicles, be they trail bikes, four-wheel-drives or something else.

The Government is always talking about regulating these vehicles. This Bill does that. However, there is a need for designated areas and a need for co-operation between this tier of government—the State Government—and local government. Assistance needs to be provided in various forms so that people can have designated off-road areas, so that they will be safe and so they will be away from the general public, thereby alleviating annoyance to people who are not involved in the particular pursuit. Not enough has been done in this area.

I am aware that from time to time individuals and some local authorities have attempted to do what I have suggested but they always come up against a brick wall. The first problem is the price of land. These matters must be addressed because off-road vehicles of various types are very popular. The Government needs to tackle this very serious problem so that everybody who needs protection is protected.

I have some other matters that I want to raise. Section 27 of the current Act deals with the power to arrest without warrant. That is a very serious provision——

Mr Austin: That sounds like Senator Richardson's Act.

Mr UNDERWOOD: It may do. I do not know.

I am querying whether this particular provision is necessary. How many times has it actually been used? If it has been used a number of times, it will be difficult to argue against it. However, I want to know whether it has been used frequently, infrequently or not at all. Is that provision really necessary to ensure that the provisions of this Act are carried out?

I also draw to the Minister's attention section 29, which deals with authorised officers taking charge of vehicles——

Mr I. J. Gibbs: Are you talking about the amendment or the Bill?

Mr UNDERWOOD: The Bill itself. In the second-reading debate, honourable members can discuss the Bill in general——

Mr I. J. Gibbs: I was just wondering.

Mr UNDERWOOD: That is fine. I want to clarify a few things so that honourable members can form a view on the success or otherwise of this piece of legislation.

I was talking about section 29, which deals with authorised officers taking charge of vehicles. That was discussed at some length when honourable members debated the Fraser Island legislation. That was quite a heated debate. The Opposition would like the Minister to explain why that particular section of the Act has been necessary and whether it has been successful.

I turn to section 30, which relates to forfeiture by the courts. How many times have vehicles been forfeited through court action? It is important that the Minister and his department explain how successful these serious powers have been in maintaining control over motor vehicles that this Act was intended to cover.

Another matter I wish to canvass—some honourable members might think that it is frivolous, but I think it is important—is the role of the Minister for Community Services. During the recent cyclonic weather in north Queensland, the Minister was seen riding on a bull-bar, I would suggest for the purpose of TV coverage——

Mr Gately: He was showing concern for the people who were affected, though, wasn't he?

Mr UNDERWOOD: The Minister was trying to demonstrate that. I will admit that it was a prank for TV in order to demonstrate that. I think the point is that a Minister of the Crown was setting a bad example to other people. Every year, at places such as Fraser Island, people ride on bull-bars, roof-racks or anything from which it is possible to hang from a vehicle, as it is driven along the beach.

Mr Gately: That's a poor excuse for a debate. The man was up there trying to help people.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I am talking about life and death. The honourable member disgraced himself yesterday. I have cited an example of a Minister whose actions were shown on television. People who should know better see the Minister doing certain things and they say, "If it is good enough for the Minister to do it in a dangerous situation, it should be good enough for us on Fraser Island." I point out to the honourable member for Currumbin that the Minister's actions were a breach of the Traffic Act or the Motor Vehicles Control Act.

The Minister, Mr Katter, was being driven through a flooded area. The driver had no way of knowing that there had not been a wash-out. It is possible that the Minister could have bounced off the bull-bar and fallen under the four-wheel-drive vehicle. Had that happened, it might have been necessary to have a by-election for the seat of Flinders. Such stunts can have a great impact on members of the community. The Minister should have been setting an example.

Tonight I make a call for advertisements to be shown on television during holiday-time and during the fishing season in the winter to point out to the members of the community that they should not take risks that are taken every year on the beaches and sand-hills. Every year, death and serious injuries occur in places that are a long way from ambulance and medical services.

Despite the strength of the provisions of the Act, people still do the crazy things that I have just mentioned. People not only ride on the bonnets of motor vehicles but also speed along the beaches. When a person goes fishing on the beaches on Fraser Island, he takes the lives of himself and his children into his own hands because people continue to speed along the beaches. People do crazy things on motor bikes. Parents also allow their children to do similar crazy things. Because people are on the beach they think that it is a safe area. However, that is not so; it is a very dangerous place.

I turn now to the enforcement of the law. One matter that I have noticed about the Transport Ministry is the lack of enforcement of legislation. That has been caused by a number of factors; firstly, a lack of officers; secondly, a lack of funding to allow police officers to work overtime; and, thirdly, a lack of imagination in the manning of various places and in the way in which the operation of various Acts are supervised. If more officers were available to supervise areas in which people are doing crazy things with motor vehicles and motor bikes, they would certainly be deterred from risking their own lives and the lives of their children and people who are travelling, fishing, swimming and enjoying other recreational activities on the beaches. Those problems must be addressed.

Before Christmas I referred to the case on the Gold Coast of the taxis versus the limousines. A serious problem has existed in that area for some time because the officers of the Transport Department do not have the facilities or are not paid the overtime that is required to ensure that the Act and its regulations are enforced. The Government must seriously address the enforcement of its legislation. The Government can have as many draconian Acts and regulations as it likes, but they are all worthless unless people are provided to enforce those laws. Enforcement officers are not needed from nine till five, five days a week; they are required for odd hours such as at the week-end, in the evening, early in the morning and at other unusual times when people are on the beach doing crazy things with motor vehicles.

If a person is found guilty of speeding, he certainly will slow down in the future. From time to time complaints are made about the methods used by police officers when apprehending people speeding on the roads. However, that is a necessary evil to ensure that people's lives and property are protected. Under the present Transport Ministry, that life and property is not being protected. As the Minister is new to the Transport portfolio, I urge him to tackle the problem seriously and with initiative by providing extra finance and support for the officers on duty out in the field who are trying to do a good job.

The Bill provides for a general exemption. Why is a general exemption needed when one of the complaints addressed by the Minister is that the Act itself is too general? It takes in more than the off-road vehicle. The Governor in Council will have the power to grant a general exemption for various vehicles in certain places.

Under the amendment to section 25 of the Act the Governor in Council may declare public places and exempt vehicles. Why has the Government found it necessary to reinforce the Act with that provision? This is a serious matter upon which the Minister should address this House so that the Opposition can make a judgment on the legislation. The Minister mentioned exempt areas such as golf courses, showgrounds and areas that are used for commercial and industrial purposes. I have already mentioned two cases in which death or injury has taken place in commercial and industrial premises. Why are those places being made exempt? What protection is being afforded to the people who work in those premises?

I have never ridden in a golf buggy, but I understand that golf buggies travel very slowly. However, if a person spends too long at the 19th hole, he still might fall out of a golf buggy, go under a wheel or hurt his foot. What protection will be afforded to golf-players?

At the moment many vehicles are used to provide services for officials and other people at exhibitions. What protection will there be for the people working in show rings at the Brisbane Exhibition and at other showgrounds? People in motor vehicles career around circuits at those shows. What protection will be afforded to spectators at such shows?

What protection will be given to people in situations which, as a matter of policy, this Government believes should be exempt from the provisions of this Act and the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Insurance Act?

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (9.27 p.m.): Perhaps my understanding of the problems that arose following the Supreme Court appeal decision that was handed down in the Brunner case and its effect on the local community might shed some light on the matter for the honourable member for Ipswich West.

I was surprised that the Opposition Transport spokesman asked a series of questions of the Minister. I thought that he would have perused the proposed amendments in the Bill, put forward his party's views on them and informed the Minister whether or not his party supports the legislation.

The honourable member stated that he was going to ask the Minister a number of questions and that he would then make a decision as to whether or not his party would support the legislation. I would have thought that an Opposition spokesman would have had a little more nous than that; that he would have been able to peruse the proposed amendments and make up his mind as to whether or not to support the legislation.

The honourable member for Ipswich West mentioned the Brunner case in which the Supreme Court of Queensland handed down its appeal decision on 1 May 1987. I do not intend to go into the details of that case, because I know that another Opposition spokesman will do so.

As a result of that case, many people have been inquiring as to what position they are now placed in: golfers with golf buggies and farmers and sawmillers who own fork-lifts. The position is that those vehicles were deemed to be covered by the Act and should have been registered and covered by third-party insurance.

The honourable member asked the question: what about those vehicles that are not covered by the legislation? I point out to him that, if they are prudent, most farmers and business people will cover themselves for all possibilities of liability that could arise following damage that is caused to any person by vehicles that they own.

Insurance companies generally write into their policies that their clients must have their vehicles registered, because under the Motor Vehicles Insurance Act an insurance company is not liable to pay for damage that an unregistered vehicle causes to persons on a particular property. In other words, a person who owns an unregistered motor vehicle that is insured may speed along a road and cause an accident. Although he has a third-party insurance policy over his property, business or farm with cover for $1m, if that vehicle is unregistered, most insurance companies will wipe him straight away. They will say, "That vehicle should have been registered and you should have been covered by compulsory third-party insurance." That is the position that the property-owners found themselves in immediately. Because of the findings in the court case the insurance companies told them that they were not covered and therefore they had better register their vehicles.

The Main Roads Department decided that it did not want to collect all the registration fees. Farmers were working out the cost of registering all the fork-lifts on their properties. People who owned golf buggies were saying, "Hell, I have to register this now, but I never take it out on the road." If the golf buggies were ever taken across the road, it was done in a manner that was legal. Those people found that they suddenly had to pay the State Government a registration fee.

Because of that, Cabinet met and made a decision that such vehicles would be exempted, as the original legislation intended them to be. The courts are not to be blamed. Their job is to interpret legislation. However, when weaknesses are found, the legislation is amended in this House, as is happening tonight. Cabinet's decision corrected the problem. It will be noticed that this is retrospective legislation. I think that all honourable members will agree with it.

Following Cabinet's decision the insurance companies knew that they were liable. This Government is not a friend of the insurance companies; it is a friend of the people. The honourable member opposite made an assertion about insurance companies and asked what the Government owes insurance companies. I inform him that it is the

common person who is being protected by the Government. It was explained to the insurance companies quite quickly, after discussion with them, that this legislation would be retrospective, which meant that if any accidents happened in the time before the legislation was enacted, the victims would be covered. That cleaned that aspect of it up. This legislation is quite necessary.

Mr Underwood interjected.

Mr FITZGERALD: During his speech the honourable member opposite asked the Minister approximately 10 questions. Now he wants to ask me questions. If he wants to ask questions he should wait until the clauses are debated.

I certainly do agree with him with regard to the problems that occur along the beaches and when young people get into buggies and unregistered vehicles—off-road vehicles. Problems also occur when young people have too much alcohol on board. Actually, many accidents occur because people are in a holiday mood; they are feeling very carefree, are not paying attention to the normal safety requirements and are not alert. Some of them may have had a few drinks and may be feeling very high spirited.

In one group are persons who are carefree. Of course, people who are carefree have accidents. Because they are feeling very carefree, they are more likely to have an accident. In another group are those who are straight-out careless, who have had a few drinks and are driving vehicles in an off-road situation. They will have more accidents. The next group are the looney hoons who go tearing up and down the beaches and across sand dunes. They do not give a damn. The next group are what I term the homicidal maniacs, and there are some of those around.

Whether a person is driving his vehicle off road, on private property or on a public road, if the ingredients of speed and alcohol are mixed, a dangerous combination exists. The nature of the vehicles is another matter to be considered. Some of the vehicles are not designed for high-speed crashes or for taking bumps at high speed. Because of that they are much more dangerous.

The honourable member opposite referred to people riding on bull-bars. I would be concerned if I saw a moving vehicle with people sitting on its bull-bar. It is not wise for young people to be riding on bull-bars or standing up on the back of four-wheel-drive vehicles. That is very, very dangerous. All over the world people, particularly those on farming properties, ride on the backs of utilities or trucks. However, people should be aware that such behaviour can be dangerous.

I know that the Minister has already announced that he would like to canvass the thought that the permissible blood-alcohol content of young drivers up to the age of 21 should be reduced. This matter should be debated by the community, which should think about the serious problems which face it because of young people who drink alcohol.

It is very difficult for us to legislate for social change. However, it is a challenge to us to work out which way we would like our society to go. For instance, in some of the American States drinking is permitted only after a person reaches the age of 21. Before that age it is illegal to do so. In some of the American States the age at which a driving licence may be obtained is 16. In Queensland there is a mixture of ages, in that a person can obtain a driver's licence at the age of 17, provided he is qualified, and he is legally allowed to drink at the age of 18. In some of the continental countries people are allowed to drink legally at a very young age. The liquor laws in those places are never policed. However, the drink-driving laws are very severe. Australian society has to work out the type of mix it wants. If the .05 limit was properly policed, that would be a great deterrent to young people. That is a debate that ought to take place.

I support the legislation that is before the House because it is very necessary. I thank the Minister for bringing it forward. I know that many of the citizens in my electorate are very concerned, particularly farmers, sawmillers and golfers who wondered

about the legal position as a result of the Brunner case. I thank the Minister for bringing the Bill so promptly into the House.

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong) (9.36 p.m.): I rise on behalf of the Liberal Party to support the amendments. I appreciate that the amendments are necessary following the decision of the court and that the scope of the Act had to be extended further than the Government originally intended.

Clearly, honourable members could debate throughout the evening the effectiveness of the legislation. The original legislation has proved to be reasonably effective. The amending legislation deals with the effects of increased leisure-time. It must be recognised that the community is continually looking for ways to use its increased leisure-time. The motor vehicle is often involved in that.

A previous speaker mentioned that vehicles such as trail bikes are now being used on beaches. The legislation deals not only with the general public but also with drivers and passengers. The use of vehicles for recreational purposes has increased enormously in recent times, commensurate with society's increased opportunity to enjoy recreational time. One finds an increased use of vehicles for recreation, particularly on beaches and in other public places.

The Liberal Party supports the legislation.

Mr GATELY (Currumbin) (9.37 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to support the Honourable the Minister's legislation. I recognise that the Motor Vehicles Control Act Amendment Bill is directed towards off-road use of motor vehicles, but it should be pointed out that numerous accidents involving motor cycles, dune buggies and four-wheel-drive vehicles occur in off-road situations.

I wish to point out some facts about the off-road use of motor vehicles that many young people do not fully appreciate. The definition of "a public place" as a place of public resort open to, or used by, the public as of right also includes the following—

> "(i) a place for the time being used for a public purpose, or open to access by the public, whether on payment or otherwise . . ."

It is important that young people should start to understand the ramifications of these rules. Other instances covered by the definition of "a public place" are as follows—

> "(ii) a place open to access by the public by the express or tacit consent or sufferance of the owner of that place, whether the place is or is not so open at all times; and
>
> (iii) a place for the time being declared by Order in Council to be a place for the purposes of the Act."

Those categories do not include any raceway that is being used for the purpose of racing or testing motor vehicles and from which other traffic is excluded during that use or, indeed, a place that is a road within the meaning of the Main Roads Act or the Traffic Act.

In my former employment some years ago, I gained personal experience in speaking to young people about these matters. They were not aware of the dangers inherent in using public places—for fun, as they saw it, and without posing any danger to themselves or to anybody else. What they did not realise was that they were breaking the law. That is a very important factor when it comes to whether or not insurance cover applies to unregistered and uninsured motor vehicles. It is something that young people simply do not stop to think about. The consequences for themselves and their families could be very serious if they happened to injure someone. The facts are that either the young people themselves or their families could be made bankrupt as a result.

The Queensland Road Safety Council operates a very effective and practical course in motor-cycle riding instruction called the motor-cycle training program. It relates to the safe and responsible use of motor cycles, both on the road and off the road. The program is of 15 hours' duration and takes novice or experienced riders from basics to

advanced motor-cycling techniques. Expansion of the program on a use your own bike basis is presently under way, with courses now operating in 10 centres from Cairns to the Gold Coast. A new centre will also be established in Ipswich this year and I am sure that the honourable member for Ipswich West, Mr Underwood, will be more than happy to know that. This course is truly community-based, with 80 volunteer instructors conducting instruction under the supervision of experienced field officers from the Queensland Road Safety Council.

In 1987 I had the privilege of attending a function held by the then Minister for Transport, Mr Don Lane, for the presentation of awards to officers of that council. I commend the department and the Minister for their foresight in ensuring that such a valuable program is put in place. Too often young people and other members of the community who ride motor cycles are criticised. It is said that they are daredevils and devils of other types. The reality is that council officers give of their own time to ensure that young people are given an opportunity, in the long run, to save their own lives and probably help to save other people from injury through the proper use of their motor cycles.

Before concluding, I wish to thank two oil companies, namely Esso and Castrol, which supply the petrol and lubricants for the motor cycles. The venues at which these courses operate are generally supplied by the major shopping centres which make the space available because they know of the dangers of motor cycles. It is very important that the great contribution made by these responsible organisations is kept in mind.

Mr Underwood almost turned this debate into the second question-time of the day when he referred to certain places and asked whether they did or did not or should or should not have coverage or exemption. I point out that the places he referred to, golf courses and Dreamworld, would have more than adequate public risk insurance and that there is no necessity to have additional coverage.

Mr SMITH (Townsville East) (9.43 p.m.): This is an interesting Bill. If one accepts the view of the honourable member for Lockyer that the Bill is an amendment to cover a deficiency, then it follows a fairly logical course. If, however, one takes another view, which goes back to the time of the establishment of the concept of the nominal defendant—if I remember correctly Sir William Knox introduced that Bill—that was a social milestone because of the problems people encountered before the establishment of that concept.

I believe all speakers in this debate would agree that more and more vehicles of all types are on the road. I take a counter-view to the one advanced by the honourable member for Lockyer, that, rather than looking for further exclusion, there is a very sound case for making the coverage of motor vehicles more universal and following more closely the New South Wales example, not only in coverage but also as to the question of fault. At the present time fighting motor vehicle cases is a lawyer's paradise, because in the long term they are the only ones who make any money out of it.

It is certainly not new to encounter staff problems. All Government departments are facing financial difficulties with the problem of enforcing existing regulations. It may well be that the net has to be broadened to provide the necessary coverage without the paperwork and administration that goes with it. I am concerned about a case that has been spelt out by a number of speakers, that is Brunner v. Eldar Trading Pty Ltd, which ended with a settlement of $17,500. That case shows that, in dealing with insurance companies, people can run into trouble. A previous speaker quite correctly said that the insurance company was reluctant to pay.

That is the sort of thing that has to be looked at. If in fact there is to be a wider coverage of recreational and industrial vehicles, there should be a clear, central authority to determined the outcome of cases involving those vehicles. Civil actions can drag on for a long, long time, cost of lot of money and very often not lead to an equitable result.

I wish to tell the House just how tough insurance companies can be. Last week I was given an example of that when I spoke to a constituent who had been involved in

an accident some four years ago. She told me that, after four years, the insurance people wanted her to pay a bill of some $8,000. What had occurred was that at the time of the accident the investigating constable said that no charges would be laid because no-one was at fault. However, later the Traffic Accident Appreciation Squad, upon a review of the case, decided that my constituent was at fault. Because she was in breach of the Traffice Act, the insurance company claimed, under the comprehensive insurance provisions of the agreement, to have no obligation. That is probably so, but that is the sort of thing one encounters. That is why I cannot accept the thrust of the legislation. I believe that the Government should be seeking to broaden its scope. I am not saying for one moment that each and every vehicle has to be registered; there has to be a way around that.

I have to quote some examples. Tonight I was telling some of my colleagues that the Hotel Townsville is badly sited and has very little parking space. What happens with deliveries is that a semitrailer loaded with beer is followed by another truck carrying an unregistered fork-lift. While those vehicles are parked outside the hotel, for periods of up to half an hour that unregistered forklift operates backwards and forwards across the road unloading beer while the traffic dodges around it. Because it is an unregistered vehicle, that immediately raises the question of what happens in the case of an accident. Does it become a civil action or is responsibility assumed by the Nominal Defendant? Those things have to be well and truly looked at. I keep saying that I believe that the Government ought to be broadening, rather than reducing, the scope of the legislation.

I have already touched on the matter of enforcement. Perhaps the Minister might tell me what the present figures are. I am aware that the number of vehicles that are either unregistered or out of registration in my part of the world is quite phenomenal. Fairly recently I have had discussions with the Main Roads Department police who, during the winter months when the show circuit is going through Townsville, spend half their time rounding up people driving unregistered vehicles. They put it to me that these country folk cannot resist a show, so that that is the best time to catch them. That is uncovering an alarming number of unregistered vehicles.

I put it to the Minister that the Government ought to be looking at some sort of proposition that seeks to spread the load. Obviously at present many people are not paying their registration fees. However, if the load could be spread among more people, those who are presently paying would pay the same or perhaps less. The Government has to look at the alternatives to the present system. Clearly in the future the Government is less likely to have sufficient staff to enforce properly many of today's Acts and regulations.

Another member has already touched on recreational vehicles and I intend to do so very briefly by stating the sort of thing that one can see young people doing. The other afternoon I was driving home near a bicycle track that goes for a considerable distance. On that track were a half a dozen young people riding mopeds. The first fellow had both wheels on the ground, but the following riders each had the front wheel sitting in the carrier of the bike in front. They were going along this bikeway like a caterpillar. I suggest that it will be only a matter of time before such an exhibition injures either themselves or someone else. That is the sort of problem that has to be faced, but I do not know how all those sorts of activities can be policed.

With that, I think I might conclude my contribution. I particularly ask the Minister to look very seriously at the type of system that New South Wales presently has, that is the no-fault system, with broader coverage and less reliance on individual registration and insurance, but in a way that would provide appropriate protection for a wider section of the community.

Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (9.50 p.m.): I am pleased to be able to speak to the Bill. After the decision was made in the court case in May 1987, I made representations to the Minister at the time in relation to the concern of motor vehicle salespeople at having to put registration or dealers' plates on any vehicle that they moved on their own property. I am certain that this Bill will cover those people now. If they are moving vehicles on their own property—not on the road—they will be exempt. I support that

provision in the Bill, because it will give those people some protection. The sale yards are public places. If the vehicles were moved without dealers' plates on them, the dealers feared that they could be held responsible. In that case, they would receive no help from the insurance company. I hope that the Bill covers the motor vehicle salespeople in sale yards.

Hon. I. J. GIBBS (Albert—Minister for Transport) (9.52 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions. I thank the Opposition spokesman, Mr David Underwood, who posed questions on many issues. I am not sure whether section 27 has been used at this stage. It would normally be something to which the police would attend. I do not have that information. To my knowledge, section 27 probably has not been used. If that is the case, I am quite pleased about it. Nevertheless, it is important that that section be there to cover circumstances that may arise from time to time.

The honourable member mentioned insurance. Virtually, this is validating legislation to make retrospective provision to maintain liability under the insurance contracts previously entered into to ensure that public liability insurers do not avoid liability for matters that were presumed to have been covered by their contracts. Because they want to honour all the contracts that were brought into some sort of doubt, insurance groups are very happy about that. As far as the Government is concerned, the integrity of the insurance companies is not in question.

As to the forfeiture of a vehicle—I do not know whether that has occurred under this Act, but it has occurred under the National Parks and Wildlife Act. However, it is good to have the provision to cover the situation.

I turn now to Fraser Island. It is presumed that most vehicles on that island are registered. During most of the peak seasons, the police are on Fraser Island to attend to the very matters about which the honourable member shows concern, and about which we all show concern from time to time. The majority of the people on Fraser Island are well behaved; but it only takes a few to cause a problem. Of course, because he represents a large part of the island, Mr Speaker is concerned very much indeed. I believe that I have answered most of the matters put forward by the honourable member.

Mr Tony FitzGerald, who is a member of my transport committee, showed a very wide knowledge of the issue and researched well all of those aspects.

The member for Toowong, Mr Beanland, backed the legislation, for which I thank him. He realises that, based on the validation situation, the legislation is necessary.

Mr Leo Gately, who is a member of my transport committee, certainly showed that he is aware of the situation.

The member for Townsville East, Mr Smith, mentioned a fork-lift being used to unload trucks at a Townsville hotel. In that case the fork-lift would come into a category that was covered by the Nominal Defendant. He mentioned that insurance people were tough. I suppose that the insurance game is a tough game. However, many of the clients are tough people as well. Nevertheless, anomalies which seem to be unfair occur sometimes. I suppose that the rules of the day apply to the letter of the law. In many ways we may wish that they were otherwise.

Unregistered vehicles are a real problem. The police have picked up many vehicles with faults and many unregistered vehicles as an offshoot of the RID campaign. The Police Department and the Transport Department have to be ever vigilant and on the look-out for unregistered vehicles. So has everyone else. It is dangerous for the person driving the vehicle, but it is more dangerous for anyone else who is involved when no protection at all is given.

The member for Port Curtis, Mr Prest, mentioned vehicles on properties, car yards and so on. The Bill alleviates that problem, as I understand it. The Government hopes that it has sorted that out. If anyone finds an anomaly subsequent to the passage of this Bill, the Government would be very pleased if that person would report it.

I thank honourable members for their contributions. I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. I. J. Gibbs (Albert—Minister for Transport) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5—

Mr UNDERWOOD (9.57 p.m.): The Minister answered most of the queries of honourable members. However, I would like clarification of one matter. I refer to the situation in which a vehicle is not registered under any Act and the owner of the vehicle or the property does not have a public liability policy. It is not compulsory. The member for Lockyer mentioned that farmers have a lot of vehicles and that any decent farmer would have a public liability policy. However, as honourable members know, that is not always the case. It is the exceptions to the rule that cause legislation such as this to be introduced. I understand that the Nominal Defendant would not provide protection in the instance that I have cited. What protection does a person have when there is no requirement to have public liability, no requirement to be registered and no protection from the Nominal Defendant?

Mr I. J. GIBBS: That was never intended to come under this Act at all. Of course, the Government relies on people being astute enough to have themselves covered in the event of an accident. Nevertheless, in the instance cited by the honourable member, it would become a civil matter.

Mr SMITH: Would the Minister not agree that when it is becoming increasingly difficult to police all levels, the Government is really facing a wider situation in which people are not going to be covered under the terms of the Nominal Defendant, and that if there is no responsible owner, someone who can be indentified with the vehicle or someone of substance, the injured person is isolated and, frankly, at considerable risk?

Mr I. J. GIBBS: My comment would be that the Government cannot protect people at all times by legislation. The community at large has to take responsibility for some matters. Those who do not accept that responsibility just have to rely on common law, on civil action. I do not think that people can be protected against themselves.

Mr UNDERWOOD: The Minister agrees that a gap exists and that people do not receive protection in certain circumstances. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Government and this Parliament to bring forward amending legislation. It may not be in relation to this Act; it may be in relation to another Act. Protection has to be provided for people in all cases.

If a person has no knowledge of insurance or non-insurance of the other person as far as public liability is concerned, or of the registration requirements of a vehicle, and suffers injury to health or damage to property, he is left with nothing to compensate him for that loss. I think that is something that should be addressed.

From its generality it is obvious that the legislation was introduced by mistake rather than intent. Because of a legal decision, it has been found that the legislation has very wide-ranging powers. Tonight, honourable members are being asked to reduce those powers. I think that the member for Lockyer let the cat out of the bag; the legislation is being amended because all the rich potato-farmers in the Lockyer Valley who have a large amount of money invested in a number of pieces of machinery are starting to worry about having to pay out so much money in registration fees. I suggest to the member for Lockyer that the poor struggling farmer, as opposed to the rich potato-farmer, as he is, cannot afford to have many pieces of expensive machinery or a public liability insurance policy. Somebody could be hurt and not compensated. The Minister

should go away and ensure that the legislation covers the loophole that has been discovered this evening.

Mr SMITH: As we are talking about farmers, I point out that I can recall when times in Bowen were a little more prosperous than they are now. A very prosperous farmer owned 17 tractors. He did not have to change his implements because he had one on each tractor.

Mr Austin: I am looking for a second-hand one.

Mr SMITH: It might come in handy to launch a boat or something like that.

The farmer owned property on both sides of a road. It was quite clear that that farmer was not going to take out limited registration on 17 pieces of machinery. Nevertheless, he still had to cross the road with his tractors.

Mr FitzGerald: You don't have to register your pieces of machinery.

Mr SMITH: He did not have to register the machinery, but he had to register 17 tractors because he moved a different tractor every time he moved a piece of machinery. I agree that it would be unreasonable to ask that farmer to register all his tractors. However, the legislation ought to contain some provision so that, if somebody is unlucky enough to run into one of his tractors, it is not an exempted vehicle. The unfortunate person might find that the farmer has recently been declared bankrupt. Protection should be afforded to such people under the Nominal Defendant legislation.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: If a farmer owns property on both sides of a road and he wishes to cross that road, he should have his vehicles registered. He should register those vehicles whether he has only one or 100. A farm itself is not a public place. The legislation solves the problem that was raised by Mr Prest. If a vehicle is not registered, a Nominal Defendant situation would apply. The Government is quite happy with the legislation. In the very near future I hope to revise the Act to bring it up to date. I take note of the matters raised by the Opposition spokesman and other honourable members. Without placing an undue burden of legislation, laws and rules on members of the public, I will see how the comments that have been made can be applied to overcome the problems.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr I. J. Gibbs, by leave, read a third time.

ELECTRICITY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. M. J. TENNI (Barron River—Minister for Mines and Energy) (10.05 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Electricity Act 1976-1986 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Tenni, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. M. J. TENNI (Barron River—Minister for Mines and Energy) (10.06 p.m.): I move—

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

The proposed amendments to the Electricity Act 1976-1986 contain a number of important matters of policy and many matters of an administrative nature. I turn first to the most important of these policy changes, the inspection of new electrical installations. Most members of this House will now be aware that, since 1977, electrical contractors have been fully responsible for the inspection of any alterations and additions they make to existing electrical wiring. Despite misgivings from the Opposition and some contractors, this policy has worked exceptionally well.

In fact, as a result of this decision, there has been no increase in the number of electrical accidents despite a very significant increase in the volume of electrical work of this nature.

Under the amendment, the Government proposes to make electrical contractors responsible for the inspection of electrical installations in the new premises, be they domestic or commercial. In recent weeks, the Opposition has made much of this proposed amendment, claiming it will reduce electrical safety standards in this State. Nothing could be further from the truth. Many misleading claims have been made that checks of electrical installations will no longer be undertaken.

I have already said in this House—and I repeat for the benefit of the Opposition—that the State Government will ensure that local electricity boards continue to employ installation inspectors to examine those parts of new installations for which the boards are responsible, namely, from the mains right up to the switchboards. Under the amendment, electrical contractors will now have to accept full responsibility from that point.

I again remind the Opposition that, if contractors are in any doubt about the quality and safety of their work, they can pay their own electricity board to have one of its installation inspectors check their work or pay another contractor authorised by the board to do so. Similar protection is available to customers who can apply at any time to their local electricity board for an inspection. Under the new policy, this inspection will be paid for by the customer in question.

I emphasise that, in the interests of maintaining Queensland's high standard of electrical safety, in future local electricity boards will require their inspectors to undertake spot checks of installations as a further safeguard to electricity-users. In this regard, any contractor discovered performing shoddy or unsatisfactory work will be subject to prompt action by the Electrical Workers and Contractors Board. I make the very clear point that any contractor found committing a serious safety breach risks losing his or her right to operate in Queensland.

Since becoming Mines and Energy Minister, I have taken the view that it is completely wrong for electricity customers collectively throughout our State to have to bear the cost of individual inspections. This Government is strongly of the view that it is up to the individual contractors to bear the cost of ensuring that their particular work meets the required safety standards.

I remind honourable members that the change-over to the new system will result in bringing down the cost of inspecting new electrical installations from $9m a year to about $3m a year. This saving of $6m will be passed on to Queenslanders in the form of lower electricity accounts. All that is needed in the Act to bring about this new policy are enabling provisions. The detail will be filled in by regulations.

I have asked all interested bodies, namely, the Electrical Contractors Association, the Insurance Council of Australia, trade unions with installation inspectors as members and the Institute of Electrical Inspectors, for individual submissions or a joint submission on how their organisations feel the new arrangements should be implemented. Following this advice, draft regulations will be prepared and discussed with these people before they are gazetted. With this extensive consultation I predict a high level of acceptance of this important change. It is no exaggeration to say that, following this change in policy, we will have electrical contractors who will be proud to call themselves master tradesmen, not because they are employers but because they are masters of their trade.

As an adjunct to these proposals, the Bill also provides for the upgrading of the qualifications of installation inspectors, their employment under contract and a widening of their duties.

I turn now to another important change, the proposal to reduce the membership of Queensland's seven regional electricity boards from eight members to five members.

Mr Prest: Shame!

Mr TENNI: Someone said, "Shame!" He does not know what he is talking about.

I remind the House that this proposal is completely in line with the Savage report, which recommended smaller and more expert boards.

Mr Scott: Who is bringing politics into local government? You are.

Mr TENNI: No, I am not.

Over recent weeks, this proposal has been the subject of repeated claims by the ALP and local authority candidates, who are keen to make the State Government the whipping horse for all that is wrong in the world, that local government is going to be removed without a trace from any say in regional electricity management. Nothing could be further from the truth. At present, each regional board has eight members—two Government appointees, five local authority nominees and the Electricity Commissioner.

The Bill provides for electricity boards of five members comprising the Electricity Commissioner ex officio, two members who are Government appointees and two members who are selected by the Government from a list of five names submitted by the local authorities within the area of each board. That is contrary to the statement that Mr Prest made yesterday, in which he made a fool of himself.

The chairman and deputy chairman will continue to be appointed by the Government from the four members, other than the commissioner. Nothing could be fairer to the local authorities of this State.

My duty, as Minister, is very clearly to ensure that the management of this State's electricity supply industry rests in the most competent team of managers available. This very sensible amendment ensures that this goal will be met while preserving the regional interests of local authorities on our boards. Unlike the Opposition, this Government is committed to improving the level of management expertise in our electricity supply industry.

I also make the point that our boards can be run more economically. It is the intention of this Government that the fees will be similar to the standard meeting fees for statutory board members. That will automatically unload the Labor Party members from the board because whereas they are presently receiving $210 an hour, after this legislation is implemented they will receive $25 an hour. The days when members collected more than $400 per meeting, many of which lasted less than two hours, are over.

I turn now to other changes in this Bill. The Bill provides for reciprocity for the holders of certificates of competency for electrical workers issued in other States and New Zealand. At present, an electrician, with an interstate or New Zealand ticket, who wants to work in Queensland, has to approach the Electrical Workers and Contractors Board, produce his or her ticket, pay a fee and receive a Queensland ticket before he can work. It is all done on the strength of the ticket produced. It is the belief of this Government that this red tape can be cut back. In future, it will only be necessary for the worker in question to produce his or her interstate ticket to the employer before commencing employment in this State.

There is also a provision to ban an interstate or New Zealand worker from employment in Queensland if there is any serious breach of electrical safety. On this point, certain offences will be prescribed as ticketing offences. These offences will be those in relation to interference with meters, unlawful connection or disconnection of a

consumer's electricity supply, unlawful depositing of material under an electric line whereby the clearance is reduced to an unsafe distance, failure to comply with a rationing or a restriction order, sale of second-hand electrical articles to which Form 33—electrically safe—or Form 34—not proven to be electrically safe—has not been affixed and offences relating to electrical installation work other than unlawful electrical work by an unqualified person.

On the subject of offences, I remind honourable members that the problem of tampering with meters in this State is an increasing one that is costing the State millions of dollars in stolen electricity. This amendment will go a long way towards addressing not only this specific problem, but other offences where delays in the legal system inhibit proper policing.

There will also be increased penalties for offences against the Act. All maximum penalties, which now range from $100 to $1,000, will be increased. The following maximum fines will now apply—

Simple breach of duty	$ 400
Safety matters	$1,000
Quasi-criminal offences (for example, shooting at insulators)	$2,000

Under the penalty units provisions, in future penalties will be automatically updated.

The amendments also provide for changes to the definitions of "electrical linesman" and "electrical work". The proposed amendment makes it clear that it is part of the work—indeed, the duty of an electrical linesman—to test the correctness of the polarity of a connection of an electrical installation to an overhead service line. The amendment also provides that the repair of electrical articles in a factory is not electrical work, that is, work requiring the employment of an electrical tradesman.

I remind the House that most electrical safety legislation in other States covers only fixed-wiring. In fact, in some States the repair of electrical articles does not even have to be carried out in a factory. Unlike these States, I believe that in Queensland, as long as this work is done in a factory under supervision, it is in the same category as process work and is therefore considered to be a safe practice. However, electrical work done by the home handyman is considered to be a dangerous and unacceptable practice.

I turn now to other changes. The construction of overhead electrical lines for and under the supervision of an electricity authority is defined in this Bill as not being electrical work. It is high time we faced the fact that people who are not electrical workers, but who are expert in this rigging work, can safely build new electric lines on concrete and wooden poles as well as steel towers.

A number of other very sensible changes are included. I point out that both the State Works Department and the Local Government Department have advised the industry that the constructing and repairing of ducts in which electrical wiring is to be installed is not electrical work but building tradesmen's work. The Bill provides for this with the necessary safeguards.

The laying, cutting and sealing, prior to the initial connection of underground cables, is clearly not electrical work and is defined accordingly. Further, to allow expert steel tower workers to repair a badly damaged steel tower or to install a second circuit on a steel tower line, where the line has been physically disconnected from the source of supply and where there is no other live line on the pole or tower, is defined in the Bill as not being electrical work.

It should be noted that many matters where there was need for some caution and proper supervision, when work was not carried out by qualified electrical workers, had become demarcation issues. Frequently, sound common sense was not allowed to prevail.

In fairness, I add that the fault was not always on the side of the unions. There was some lack of common sense on the part of the employers also. However, in the present climate, the matters can be resolved by sensible legislation.

The other amending provisions in this Bill deal with various matters affecting employment conditions, superannuation, tariffs, budgets and finance, approval of electrical articles and annual reports.

I thank the honourable members for their attention and commend the Electricity Act Amendment Bill 1988 to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr R. J. Gibbs, adjourned.

POULTRY INDUSTRY BILL

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Primary Industries) (10.19 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to regulate the poultry industry in certain respects and for related purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Harper, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Primary Industries) (10.20 p.m.): I move—

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

The Poultry Industry Bill 1988 is intended to replace the Poultry Industry Act 1946-1984, which is to be repealed. This Bill retains certain provisions of that Act that are consistent with the present-day needs of the poultry industry and the community. However, many redundant sections have been discarded.

The principal objective of the Act has been revised and can be broadly stated as now being—

"to assist in the development and improvement of the poultry industry for the benefit of producers and consumers alike."

My department's research, extension and regulatory activities in the poultry field are directed towards the achievement of this objective. Specific areas for improvement which have been identified in the Bill include the efficiency of production of eggs and poultry meat; the quality and safety of eggs and egg products; and the quality and health of poultry.

Honourable members may not be aware of the tremendous gains in productivity and efficiency which have been achieved in the Queensland poultry industry during the last 20 years or so. In the period since 1965, the annual production of meat chickens has jumped from about eight million to an expected 50 million in the present year. In terms of chicken meat produced, the increase has been from about 10 000 tonnes to the current level of about 67 000 tonnes annually.

Mr Austin: That's a lot of chooks.

Mr HARPER: I agree with the Minister for Finance; it is a lot of chooks.

The value of this production at wholesale rates is now in excess of $140m annually. During the same period, the time required for meat chickens to reach average liveweight of 1.7 kilograms has been reduced from about 70 days to 45 days. The efficiency of converting feed into chicken meat has also improved remarkably. In 1965 it took about 2.6 kilograms of feed to produce 1 kilogram liveweight, whereas in 1988 this has been reduced to 1.95 kilograms.

In the Queensland egg industry the number of eggs produced per layer per year has risen from about 200 in 1965 to the current estimated level of 260. The efficiency of

converting feed into eggs has improved by about 25 per cent since 1965. I do not think that is matched by humans. About 30 million dozen eggs worth about $42m at wholesale prices are produced annually. The poultry industry and consumers of poultry products have each benefited from the improved productivity and efficiency which has been achieved. On the one hand the industry has been able to contain production costs and actually improve its competitiveness in the market-place. On the other hand consumers have benefited because retail prices of eggs and poultry meat have risen at less than the rate of inflation.

This Bill addresses a number of issues which are important to the poultry industry and to consumers of poultry products. The Poultry Advisory Board has, for many years, provided the formal structure for consultation with all sections of the poultry industry in regard to the Government's initiatives in research of industry problems and extension services to producers. The board has also provided valuable advice to the Government on the poultry industry's needs for laboratory and other services and regulatory programs affecting the industry. The Bill provides for retention of a seven-member Poultry Advisory Board, with five members drawn from the poultry industry.

The Bill also provides for retention of the Poultry Industry Fund and poultry industry precepts. During more than 30 years, the Queensland poultry industry has contributed directly through precepts towards the cost of research, extension and regulatory services provided by the Government for the benefit of the industry and the community generally. This contribution by the industry has assisted the Government to maintain services to the industry in the face of competing demands for services from many other primary industries. This situation is in contrast to that in other Australian States, where no comparable industry contribution is made and where poultry industry services have been drastically reduced in recent years. In retaining precepts, the poultry industry will continue financial support for the current level of research, extension and regulatory services. In recent years the industry has provided about 18 per cent of the funds required for these services through precepts. Again this is a demonstration of Government helping those who demonstate a willingness to help themselves.

Changes in the ownership and organisation of poultry-breeding operations have resulted in a marked drop in the number of hatcheries and suppliers of poultry stock in Queensland. Commercial competition amongst the few remaining stock-suppliers is strong and any lapse in the quality of chickens supplied is likely to be penalised through lost sales. In the light of these changes, registration and regulatory control of stock-suppliers, which formed a significant part of the repealed Act, no longer serve any useful purpose. Accordingly, no provisions governing stock-suppliers have been included in the Bill. In short, this Government is removing those regulatory provisions which are in the present Act.

I am sure that the honourable member for Bundaberg will be interested to learn that advances in the technology of poultry-breeding have led to the development of strains of poultry which can be sexed at hatching simply on the basis of feathering. Previously, sexing of day-old chickens was based on detection of minor anatomical differences by highly skilled operators. Regulatory control of chicken-sexers was necessary to ensure that high standards of accuracy and hygiene were maintained so that purchasers could be assured that worthless cockerel chickens were not sold as pullets. The development of new methods for sexing chickens and commercial pressure for accuracy in sexing have removed the necessity for regulatory control of chicken-sexing, which was addressed in the repealed Act. No provisions governing chicken-sexing have been included in the Bill.

The present Act also contains provisions for the prevention and control of poultry disease. These provisions duplicate powers already contained in the Stock Act 1915-1987 and have not been retained in this Bill.

Although check egg-graders are key persons in egg quality control and in the grading and marking of eggs for sale, their appointment by the Govenror in Council was inappropriate, given the nature of such appointments. In this Bill, a head of power has

been included in the Second Schedule to make regulations governing appointment of check egg-graders. Such appointments would then be made by the Minister or the chief inspector, thus streamlining the procedure.

Powers of inspectors incorporated in the Bill provide for the seizure of eggs and egg products and associated packing materials, containers and the like in cases where an inspector has reasonable grounds to believe that an offence has been, or is being, committed. In the Act to be repealed, power to seize eggs is provided only under the regulations governing the marking and grading of eggs; but no powers for disposal of eggs so seized or for seizure and disposal of egg products are provided.

Mr Davis: Is the china egg included?

Mr HARPER: I thought the honourable member wanted some to throw.

I consider it is important to have these provisions contained in the principal legislation to enforce the provisions governing the sale of eggs and egg products under the Act to be repealed. Similar provisions have been included concerning power to seize eggs and egg products. The Bill also provides power for disposal of seized matters or things by destruction, sale or otherwise and for the recovery of costs incurred by the Crown in connection with such seizure and disposal as a debt in any court of competent jurisdiction. In this way, significant costs incurred in connection with the seizure of eggs and egg products may in future be borne by people who commit breaches of the Act.

The Bill includes a provision to cover circumstances where an inspector may be required to enter a dwellinghouse in the course of his duties without the permission of the occupier. This provision stipulates that, in such cases, a warrant issued by a stipendiary magistrate is required before entry can be effected.

The marketing of interstate eggs in Queensland has been a matter of special concern in the past. The Queensland Government insists that interstate eggs should be of the same quality and wholesomeness as eggs produced and sold in Queensland and should be subjected to the same grading requirements. Recent amendments to the Primary Producers Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1987 have established the power of egg marketing boards to accept interstate eggs for grading and marking and to make a charge for the service. The Poultry Industry Bill 1988 contains the necessary head of power in the Second Schedule to permit the drafting of regulations which may require egg marketing boards or check egg-graders to accept eggs from specified persons for grading and marking prior to sale. This will ensure that interstate traders in eggs will have access to authorised grading floors in Queensland to have their eggs graded and marked for sale in this State. Previously, under the present Act, interstate traders challenged the validity of the Act on the basis that they could be effectively excluded from the Queensland market because grading floors were not obliged to accept their eggs.

Any grading floor required to accept eggs from interstate suppliers for grading and marking will be free to recover a commercially acceptable fee for such services from the supplier.

The Bill contains definitions which have been revised and reduced in number when compared with the present Act.

A general penalty for offences against the Act has been provided in the Bill and the proposed maximum penalty has been set at $1,000 in line with current monetary trends.

In keeping with Government policy, a sunset clause has been included in the Bill, which sets the expiry date of the Act as 31 December 1994.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Davis, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 10.31 p.m.