



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 7 May 2014

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WEDNESDAY, 7 MAY 2014



The Legislative Assembly met at 2.00 pm.

Madam Speaker (Hon. Fiona Simpson, Maroochydore) read prayers and took the chair.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Media Interviews



Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to reaffirm a longstanding rule as to where media interviews can and cannot be held on the precinct. The parliamentary precinct exists to allow the members of the Queensland parliament to conduct their duties. Nonmembers, also known as strangers, who visit the precinct are subject to the rules of the parliament. These rules include standing orders and other directions of the Speaker.

A longstanding Speaker's direction issued by former Speaker Mickel in 2011 remains current in respect of locations for media conferences, media interviews, and other filming and photography. Basically, there are particular areas at Parliament House that may be used for media activities only by honourable members of the Queensland parliament. For people who are not members of the Queensland parliament, media activities are not to be conducted on the precinct unless permission has been given by the Speaker, with the exception of the forecourt of the Annexe and in front of the old House.

I table the direction issued by former Speaker Mickel and ask all members to familiarise themselves with this and communicate the conditions to any guests they may have with them.

Tabled paper: Advice, dated 20 October 2011, from Hon. John Mickel MP to members, relating to media conferences [\[5006\]](#).

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by Members



Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 21 March 2013 I received a letter from the member for Mulgrave about a matter of privilege relating to statements made by a number of members referring variously to the '\$80 billion debt' of the previous Labor government. The member for Mulgrave argues that when Labor left government in March 2012 it left a gross debt of \$62 billion and that—

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members! The member for Mulgrave argues that when Labor left government in March 2012 it left a gross debt of \$62 billion and that any later debt could not be a Labor debt.

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members! Members, I will warn you. I am making a statement. I also note that on page 11 of this correspondence a government member is quoted as saying the previous Labor government projected a debt of \$85 billion by 2014-15.

The nature of political debate is that members engage in argument by discussing opposing viewpoints or different opinions. The matter under consideration here is essentially a political debate as to who is responsible for the debt, not a matter of privilege in which there is prima facie evidence that a member has deliberately sought to mislead the House. I do not intend to take any action in respect of the matter, and I will not be referring the matter to the Ethics Committee. I table the correspondence in this matter.

Tabled paper: Letter, undated, from the member for Mulgrave, Mr Curtis Pitt MP to Madam Speaker, Hon. Fiona Simpson MP, regarding alleged deliberate misleading of the House by members. [\[5007\]](#).

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Intimidation of Members

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 1 April 2014 the Leader of the Opposition rose on a matter of privilege, namely, the alleged intimidation of members of the opposition outside a community cabinet at the Gold Coast. The alleged intimidation occurred when members of the opposition were allegedly filmed by officers of the Queensland Police Service—the QPS—when speaking with members of the public. The Leader of the Opposition alleged that the filming of the member for Bundamba and herself talking to residents clearly amounted to intimidation.

The Leader of the Opposition later wrote to me about this on 3 April 2014. I subsequently wrote to the Police Commissioner about the matter who then responded in writing. The commissioner notes that it has long been routine operational practice for the QPS to film such public events and supports the policing of the event in the case of an offence or allegations against police. The commissioner has provided me with a copy of the footage taken at the venue in question. I am advised that this footage is the complete video record taken by the recording officer and has not been edited or altered in any way.

The footage has been viewed by my office and it supports the statement made by the commissioner that at no time were any members of the Leader of the Opposition's group targeted through filming and that the footage does not appear to contain any images of the Leader of the Opposition nor record her conversations or the conversations of the member for Bundamba. The commissioner's letter acknowledges the concern that may have arisen for the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Bundamba by the perception that they were being recorded. The QPS, through the commissioner, sincerely regrets any concern in this regard. I do not intend to refer the matter to the Ethics Committee. For the benefit of the House, I table the correspondence in this matter.

Tabled paper. Letter, dated 3 April 2014, from the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk MP, to Madam Speaker, Hon. Fiona Simpson, relating to filming by QPS officers, and letter, dated 24 April 2014, from the Commissioner of Police, Mr Ian Stewart, to Madam Speaker, Hon. Fiona Simpson, relating to filming by QPS officers [\[5008\]](#).

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Ardill, Mr LA

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (2.06 pm): I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late Leonard Arthur Ardill, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland.
2. That Madam Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the Members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained.

Leonard Arthur Ardill, better known to all who knew him as Len, was born in Brisbane on 15 March 1931, and later was educated at the Junction Park State School. In the early 1950s, Mr Ardill got involved in his local progress association and then school committees. In 1958, he joined the Australian Labor Party, beginning a long association with the ALP to which he would be granted life membership.

In March 1973, Mr Ardill was elected as the alderman for Sunnybank on the Brisbane City Council. During his time on the council, he rose to become vice mayor from 1982 to 1985 and at various times he served as chairman of the planning and traffic, transport, finance, and environment committees. As a former Lord Mayor of Brisbane, I particularly pay due regard to the work Mr Ardill performed on the Brisbane City Council during the 1970s and 1980s, and his name was well known to me while I was Lord Mayor.

Following a redistribution of state electorates in 1986, the future Premier of this state Wayne Goss decided to move from the seat of Salisbury to the newly created electorate of Logan. The ALP then preselected Mr Ardill to be its candidate for Salisbury at the upcoming state election. On 1 November 1986, Mr Ardill was successful in his election and took his place in this House as the newly elected member for Salisbury.

With the abolition of the seat of Salisbury following a further electoral redistribution in 1991, Mr Ardill moved to the seat of Archerfield. Archerfield itself had been vacated by the current Leader of the Opposition's father, Henry Palaszczuk, who as a result of the redistribution moved to the then

newly created electorate of Inala. Mr Ardill successfully contested Archerfield at the state election of September 1992, and he then continued to serve as the member for that seat until he retired at the state election in June 1998, after having served for nearly 12 years as a member of this House.

I understand that, among many things, Mr Ardill was a strong advocate for public transport and road safety issues while a member of this House, and I note that he served as the chairman of the parliament's Select Committee on Travelsafe from May 1990 to April 1996. He also served as a member of the parliament's Public Works Committee from April to November 1989. I am told that he was probably one of the most knowledgeable people ever to be elected to this parliament when it comes to the history and contemporary issues relating to Queensland's railways. He was a member of the Queensland Division of the Australian Railway Historical Society and was a regular contributor to that society's publications.

Leonard Arthur Ardill passed away peacefully on 4 April 2014 at the age of 83. A funeral service to celebrate his life was held at the Mount Gravatt Crematorium Chapel on Mains Road, Macgregor on 10 April 2014. I place on record the government's thanks for the years of service Mr Ardill gave to the institutions of our democracy and to the Queensland community. On behalf of the government, I take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to Mr Ardill's family and friends.

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.11 pm): I rise to honour the memory of Len Ardill, a former member of this House and a former deputy mayor of Brisbane. From the outset, I acknowledge his wife, Noelene, who is with us in the gallery today, and his friends and family.

Len was born in 1931 into a Brisbane which was very different from the one we know today. He was raised on the family farm at Ekibin, or Tarragindi as it is now known. Just seven kilometres from the general post office, in 1931 Ekibin was on the outskirts of Brisbane city. Today it is a fairly comfortable middle-ring suburb in a city which spreads significantly beyond it.

Len grew up helping his father with the morning milk run. This was in the days when milkmen did not bring separate bottles of milk to each house; they had a large jerry can which filled up people's milk bottles at each stop. Back then people did not lock their houses at night, so Len and his brothers used to haul the jerry can up the back steps in the predawn light to let themselves in and fill up the family's milk bottles. In those days it was not strange to wake up to hearing someone in your kitchen and know they were just filling up the milk.

Delivering milk was tough work for young boys even when their father was driving the cart. One day, however, Len's dad was injured so Len and his brother Wilf had to do the milk run in their father's place. At some stage during the milk run, the horse pulling the cart was startled and bolted down the main street. With milk spilling all over the road, the boys tried desperately to pull the horse up and eventually they ended up crashing milk and horse into a nearby creek. After extracting themselves from the creek and cleaning up the mess, the two boys decided it was too late to go to school and gave themselves the day off. Not surprisingly, they liked it so much that they continued to give themselves days off from school until they were caught. They were just boys being boys, and their childhood reflected different times from what kids experience now.

When Len was growing up on the family farm, helping out with predawn deliveries of milk to the neighbours, no-one would have predicted the role he would have in shaping the city of Brisbane. Len was educated at Junction Park State School, and unusually for the time went on to study at Brisbane State High School. In 1946 he topped the railway exam and started a decade working for Queensland Rail, which would take him around the state—from South Brisbane, to Walloon to Alpha and to Bundaberg.

While Len did not join the Labor Party until 1958, after he had left the railways, his Labor values shone through in that period. While working in Alpha, Len had something of a disagreement with the railway authorities, giving up the house he was entitled to in favour of a fireman with children who only had access to a tent. Len was told by his superiors that he had to live in the house, but he stuck to his principles to ensure a family had a roof over their heads.

By 1948 the Ardill family had moved to Currumbin after the Ekibin farm had been resumed as part of Brisbane's ongoing expansion. In late 1956 Len quit the railways and moved to Currumbin to be closer to his family, where he was surprised to discover that his younger brother Wilfred had the exact same idea at the same time. Len spent a couple of years in Currumbin and met his first wife, Dianne, who had grown up there. Len and Dianne married in 1959 and had three sons in the next five years who would be brought home to a block of land at Sunnybank which Len cleared and levelled himself.

Len was again living on the outskirts of Brisbane city with no water, sewerage or sealed roads. This time it was a further eight kilometres from the Ekibin farm Len had grown up on. Len and Dianne separated in 1971 before Len was elected to council as alderman for the Sunnybank ward in 1973. Len spent 12 years on council and during that period served as chairman of the Planning and Traffic Committee, chairman of transport and as deputy mayor. One of the key projects Len worked on during his time on council was the new town plan which preserved green space for the enjoyment of the local community. It required developers to contribute to the construction of footpaths and playgrounds and helped to shape modern Brisbane. Len knew what it was like to grow up on the outskirts of a city. He knew what it was like to raise children in a new suburb with access to fewer services than people living in established suburbs. He brought that life experience to his role as a councillor and later as a member of parliament, and it helped inform some of his greatest actions.

In many ways the story of Len's life reflects the story of Brisbane's growth over the last 80 years. Len built his life on the ever-expanding outskirts of our city, and when he was given the opportunity to shape our city's growth he did it not only as a councillor but as a man with real-life experience. Len's work in Brisbane City Council has had a major impact on the growth of our city and improved the lives of countless families who have access to parks, green space and public transport services that he pushed for.

Len Ardill was elected to this place as the member for Salisbury in 1986 and he was re-elected in 1989. In 1992, he ran for the seat of Archerfield after Salisbury was abolished. Len served as the member for Archerfield until his retirement at the 1998 election. He was a well-recognised figure around the halls of parliament due to his distinctive sideburns. Over his time as a member of parliament, Len worked hard to represent his constituents. By virtue of his upbringing and his character, Len was able to connect with people from all different backgrounds and properly represent their views in parliament.

One key area Len focused on was road safety—an issue which was close to his heart after the tragic death of his son Bill and nephew Robert in a 1982 car accident. The impact of this tragedy was felt—and I think is still being felt—by the families for many years. In his maiden speech Len clearly articulated that the three focuses of road safety must be education, enforcement and engineering. He worked on engineering solutions during his time in council, and he continued to work on enforcement and education issues in his 12 years as a member of parliament. He made the following call for action in his maiden speech—

I would also make a plea to reduce the speed limit in residential streets from 60 to 50 kilometres an hour. This would considerably reduce the accidents involving elderly people and children.

It took a few years, but the Beattie government legislated this change for South-East Queensland in the late 1990s and extended it across the entire state in 2003. Independent evaluations of the reduction in speed limits have shown that they resulted in significant reductions for fatal, injury and property damage crashes.

Brisbane historian David Gibson AO accurately described Len as a quiet hero. He lived according to his own principles and used his experience living in Brisbane, working as a railway man and as a loving father, to improve the lives of other Queenslanders. Len leaves behind his wife, Noelene, who I mentioned is here today. Thank you, Noelene, for coming into parliament. I know it is very difficult, but we all welcome you warmly and we pay tribute to a lovely man who will be remembered by many people in this House and will be remembered for many generations to come as a man who had a huge impact not just on his local community but also on the state of Queensland.

 **Hon. TS MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.18 pm): My service in this place overlapped with Len Ardill's by three years. I remember seeking out Len's experience and advice as a new backbencher on a steep learning curve. By that stage Len had been here for almost a decade, with 12 years experience as a Brisbane city councillor beforehand. Len had a very particular filing system which made no sense to anyone but himself. His office was filled with stacks of government reports and university publications on all manner of documents, and I see Vaughan Johnson smiling. He remembers Len's office quite well. I thought at the time it was an utterly chaotic system, but once you started talking to him about an issue he would quickly remember a particular report about it, he would shuffle to the back corner of his office, pick out a box and rummage around for a third file from the bottom and sure enough it would be exactly what he was looking for.

I greatly value the guidance Len provided me in my early years as a member of parliament. Len understood that as a parliamentarian you get access to a lot of information that would be difficult to come across in any other walk of life. He believed that parliamentarians had a responsibility to thoroughly research issues and act on the best possible advice. I have tried to follow Len's example as a backbencher, as a minister and now as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

One of the things I remember most about Len is his great affinity with his constituents. Len grew up during the Depression and, like a lot of other people of that era, he knew how difficult it could be for working families. He had firsthand experience of doing it tough, and he joined the Labor Party because he believed that government could help out people when they were going through difficult periods. Like all Labor people, Len passionately believed in government as a positive force for social change. He lived that belief as a councillor and as a parliamentarian. He helped design a city that retained green space and he pushed for road safety reforms, particularly with the sad loss of his son and his brother Wilf's boy.

Len was also a proud advocate for public transport, particularly his beloved train network. In fact, Len is the only person I have ever met who had vinyl records that played the sounds of various train engines so that he could listen to them even when he was not near a railway line. I am grateful for the guidance Len gave me when I first came to this place. I am thankful that he used his life experiences to better the lives of other Queenslanders. To his wife, Noelene, and his family here today, I say that you should all be proud of the difference that Len made to this state and to this city. Vale Len Ardill.

 **Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—LNP) (2.21 pm): It is with great sadness that I rise to speak about the death of Len Ardill. When I first came here in 1989, along with my colleague Lawrie Springborg, Len was one of the central figures in this House. As the Premier said, and it was more accurately said by the Leader of the Opposition, Len was a man who disguised himself very well in many different ways. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned those sideburns, and will we ever forget them? They take you back to the sixties. If anyone wanted to remember the sixties, then seeing a photo of Lenny Ardill would certainly remind them of what the sixties were all about. Lenny Ardill was one of nature's absolute gentlemen. He was a true Labor man. He was a man of compassion and a man of care. His greatest love was his wife, Noelene, and they were often seen together. He talked of his family. I often saw Lenny coming into the House in the morning in that old yellow Holden sedan, and that was a trademark in itself.

For year in, year out, Len sat where the member for Lockyer now sits, while I sat over on the other side. Never at any time did I ever hear the man denigrate anybody. He treated everybody as equals. He went about his business his own way. His greatest passion was rail, and it has been emphasised here today how much he loved rail and how much he cared for rail. If I can say in his defence, in the early 1990s when the Goss government wanted to close down much of the inland rail system, it was Len who stood up singlehandedly against the government to support the opposition in our endeavour to get outcomes so that we could retain those railway lines in western Queensland, north-western Queensland and south-western Queensland. That was how passionate the man was about rail and that was how passionate he was about the needs of others. He certainly had a heart of social justice and he had a heart of care. More importantly, the biggest factor in his life was the people that he represented. He loved people and he cared for that underdog.

At the end of the day, I think all of the people who come into this place could learn a lot from Len Ardill. He was one of those people who did it the right way. His politics were the opposite to mine but I had the greatest respect and admiration for the man. I say this to Noelene and his family today: may he rest in peace, and God bless him forever.

 **Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, before I ask you to pass this motion by standing silently, I wish to add my words of condolence to the family of Len Ardill, and particularly to Mrs Noelene Ardill. Much has already been said about the character that was Len, but there is a great deal of respect for the legacy that he left through his work, particularly with what he did with road safety with Travelsafe. That is an ongoing legacy that is having an impact in the state today, and it is one which I know, as a member in this place, that we greatly respected. Vale. Will honourable members indicate their agreement by standing in silence for one minute.

Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.

Madam SPEAKER: In accordance with sessional order 4(3), question time will commence at 2.55 pm.

PETITION

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3)—

Rainbow Beach, Ambulance Services

From 1,408 petitioners, requesting the House to urgently facilitate the permanent placement of an ambulance and paramedic at Rainbow Beach [[5009](#)].

Petition received.

TABLED PAPER

MINISTERIAL PAPER TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

The Premier (Mr Newman)—

[5010](#) Letter, dated 6 May 2014, from the Director-General of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Mr Jon Grayson, to the Premier, Hon. Campbell Newman, regarding perceived conflict of interest with business interests

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Public Sector Renewal Program

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (2.26 pm): Under Labor the quality of basic government services in Queensland fell way behind that of other states. To address this failure, this government is working to make the Queensland Public Service the most responsive and respected in Australia. Make no mistake, that is exactly what this government is about.

Yesterday I tabled a document which has the latest results of our public sector renewal program and I spoke about the support we are providing for business and for creating jobs. Today I would like to focus on the front-line service improvements that we are delivering, and there is a lot of improvement to be seen in this report.

The long wait public dental list has been slashed from 62,513 in February 2013 to 1,784 in March 2014. The long wait elective surgery list has been reduced by 42 per cent since the change in government, giving us the best elective surgery waiting times in the whole of Australia. Queensland's emergency departments are now exceeding national benchmarks by treating 78.6 per cent of emergency patients within four hours. I know that everyone wants to do even better than that. Ambulance ramping has virtually been stamped out in Queensland and response times have improved significantly. I have a little phone recording here that I made years ago from when a certain Stephen Robertson, a former Labor minister, was on Michael Smith's 4BC radio station. It is a very instructive interview where the minister finally hangs up because he could not handle being questioned about ambulance ramping anymore and he could not provide a response about how the former Labor government would deal with that issue. We have dealt with it, and our health minister has been dealing with the matter quite effectively.

I turn now to education. I can report that 10 new schools are being built in partnership with the private sector and that 80 schools are now independent public schools, with principals and school communities empowered to manage their budgets and provide localised targeted services. When you talk to those school communities, you see the excitement in the eyes of the people there. There is real excitement that they are able to set a course themselves away from centralised control and that they can achieve better outcomes for our kids.

The social housing waiting list has been cut by 36 per cent since 2012. The average wait at the local Transport and Main Roads centre has been almost halved, from 12 minutes in 2012 under the former minister, the current Leader of the Opposition, to seven minutes and 13 seconds—now well under the service standard of 10 minutes. Last week alone we announced 19 new kindergarten services to open this year in Queensland; and public transport results showed 95.8 per cent on-time running, the best ever performance, meaning 18,000 more passengers in South-East Queensland arrive on time each day. What were the figures like when the current Leader of the Opposition was minister? Let us move on.

Last week 82 new police graduates were announced, taking us to over 750 new police on the beat in total, keeping us well on track to deliver the 1,100 additional police in three years that we promised. Just yesterday, Minister McVeigh announced 10 new front-line service staff to support Queensland farmers. I say congratulations to the minister.

Where Labor failed dismally on basic government service delivery we are succeeding. This report speaks volumes. It is hard evidence that this government is improving standards and value for money, and is increasing accountability in the provision of better front-line services for Queenslanders.

South American Trade Mission

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (2.31 pm): Since coming to government we have made it very clear that Queensland is open for business and we are focused on growing the economy and creating jobs for Queenslanders. We have made it very clear that we support the resources sector as one of the four pillars of our economy and the critical role that it plays in driving the state economy and creating tens of thousands of jobs for Queenslanders.

Our vision to grow the state's mining sector was the catalyst for a recent trade mission to South America, led by me and the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Andrew Cripps, to identify new export business opportunities and to enhance existing relationships with other mining states. Our trade mission visited both Chile and Brazil and included a business delegation of a number of Queensland's leading mining services and mining technology providers as well as representatives from the University of Queensland who have collaborative research agreements with universities in South America.

One of the mission's highlights was a visit to Expomin 2014 in Chile. This event is one of the world's premier mining expositions, with some 80,000 visitors and 1,400 exhibitors from 30 countries around the world. At this major event 13 Queensland companies were among 57 Australian companies showcased at the Australian Pavilion organised by Austrade. Our government recognises that the mining industry potential in Latin America and our agencies have helped many local companies establish business links with the region and Expomin 2014 was a great opportunity to expand those business links. We also believe that there is a need for mining states from around the world to work together as much as possible to share information and learn from each other's experiences as they find solutions to what are common issues.

This concept of a 'loose' confederation of mining states from around the world was discussed by me and Minister Cripps on a number of occasions during our mission with mining ministers from other jurisdictions and other states. There is undoubtedly support for resources states to work together because the issues and challenges that the mining industry in Australia faces are the same issues faced in Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Peru, South Africa, Botswana and Mozambique. All of those places are jurisdictions with whom we, as a responsible state government, will continue to build relationships centred around the shared interest we have in the mining sector.

At this recent mission we were also able to sign agreements with the Chilean region of Antofagasta—and I still cannot say it properly—and the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais. I also took the opportunity to meet with executives of Brazilian mining giant Vale and the major meat processor JBS Swift, who owns major processing plants at Dinmore just outside Brisbane and at Lakes Creek in Rockhampton. We assured them that Queensland was 'open for business' and recognised their contribution to our state's economy and the jobs that they provide for Queenslanders. Our government knows that it is important to promote business opportunities for Queensland companies offshore and we will continue to take an active role in championing the great opportunities in our great state.

In conclusion, I want to thank especially two staff members who accompanied us, Sandy Williams from my department and Sam Laurie from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines. They gave up their Easter holidays and the Anzac Day holiday as well to ensure that Minister Cripps and I could meet the onerous schedule that was involved in travelling in Latin America. Travelling to mining communities, no matter where they are across the world, is never going to be glamorous, but it is the travel that, as a resources state, we must undertake to ensure we have the right connections with other resources states across the world who face the same challenges as Queensland.

Strong Choices Campaign

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (2.35 pm): Queenslanders have shown that they are hugely interested in discussing ways to pay down Labor's \$80 billion worth of debt which has been accumulated over the last 10 years.

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I notice you can't make a comment about that. I speak of Labor's \$80 billion worth of debt and it would have been Labor's \$85 billion worth of debt. In fact, it probably would have been Labor's \$90 billion worth of debt had this government not taken strong action to rein in the deficit and bring the state's finances back into the black.

In the past two days alone I have spoken to more than 12,000 Queenslanders in regional Queensland about their priorities and the strong choices the government faces to pay down debt and fund the roads, rail, hospitals and schools of the future. We have done that through virtual town hall meetings for the Gladstone and Wide Bay areas. Tonight I will be speaking with the Mount Isa region in the same way as we continue our adult conversation with the people of Queensland about the choices that we all face if we are to fix the mess created by those opposite and as we attempt to deal with the \$80 billion worth of Labor debt.

The Strong Choices campaign has given all Queenslanders an unprecedented opportunity to have their say on an unprecedented problem. Since beginning the Strong Choices conversation, more than 43,000 Queenslanders have used the People's Budget tool to make their submission and the Strong Choices website has received more than 186,000 unique visits. The People's Budget tool has helped Queenslanders get a thorough understanding of the options we face as we seek to pay down debt. We can significantly increase fees, taxes and charges, we can reduce services or we can consider the sale or lease of some assets.

Before the government decides on a plan, I am making sure that we have heard from everyone who wants to contribute to the mature debate about the best way to deal with the accumulated Labor debt legacy from the past 10 years, amounting to over \$80 billion. Accordingly, today I am pleased to inform the House that I will be adding another Strong Choices community forum to our already extensive list, with a meeting in Charleville on Friday, 16 May, to discuss securing Queensland's future. While it may come as a complete and utter galloping shock to the members opposite, I have found that people all over Queensland genuinely want to hear about the condition of our state's finances and discuss the choices confronting us. Particularly, they ask how we could have \$80 billion worth of Labor debt. They want to know what can be done to free up funds for vital infrastructure projects, and I expect the people of Charleville will be no different. As a government, we want to be able to invest in that infrastructure to support a growing economy because that will deliver Queenslanders more jobs and greater prosperity wherever they are in the state.

I would encourage any Queenslanders who want to have their say to visit the Strong Choices website and make a submission to government so that we understand their priorities as we look to fix the accumulated Labor debt of the last decade.

Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Achievements



Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (2.38 pm): In 2012 we promised to build a four-pillar economy. We promised to deal with Labor's \$80 billion debt and we also promised we would revitalise front-line services for families. I am pleased to inform the House about how Queenslanders are reaping the benefits of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General's contribution to the government's renewal program to deliver on the government's commitment to increase access to justice, revitalise front-line services, make Queensland the safest place to raise a family as well as reduce unnecessary red tape for Queenslanders.

I am particularly pleased to report that waiting times for hearing minor disputes before the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal have nearly halved since justices of the peace were enlisted and trained to adjudicate minor civil disputes of up to \$5,000. More than 100 JPs have adjudicated 2,685 matters at the five trial sites across Queensland, applying common-sense solutions to everyday issues, slashing the average time from application to hearing of all QCAT minor civil dispute matters from six weeks to 3.2 weeks. It did not happen by accident.

Family historians now have easy, affordable access to more than 1.3 million digitised birth, death and marriage records which can be downloaded instantly onto home computers, tablets and smartphones for \$20, compared to \$39 previously for a hard copy certificate ordered over the counter. I am proud of the success of the youth boot camp trials, which partners with local organisations to break the cycle of juvenile youth crime. Boot camps across the state have already accepted almost 100 troubled teenagers into the programs, teaching them discipline, respect for themselves and others, as well as giving them the skills that will help them get jobs in the future.

Not-for-profit community organisations have also benefited from abolishing liquor permits at fundraising and community events, saving around 3,600 permit applications compared to the previous year, which represents more than \$250,000 that can be reinvested into our local communities. We are

also continuing the reform process by reducing unnecessary red tape in the gaming industry—in particular, community clubs—which will provide benefits for members and local communities more broadly. We have acted on the Commission of Audit recommendation to consolidate and streamline community grant programs for the benefit of our great and hardworking volunteer community groups.

I look forward to continuing our ambitious program for improving the way we support business, delivering our commitment to revitalise front-line services for families and making Queensland the safest place to raise a family. I thank the Hon. Chief Justice this morning for launching with me new technology that will bring the courts into the 21st century. We will introduce legislation tomorrow which will enable judges right around Queensland to have access to expert witnesses without flying the expert witnesses right around Queensland. Only a can-do government can get Queensland back on track and ensure that we remain a great state with great opportunities.

Queensland Health, Achievements

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (2.41 pm): Two years ago commentary about Queensland Health and the Queensland Ambulance Service was defined by phrases such as: ambulance bypass; ambulance ramping; waiting lists; hidden waiting lists; waiting lists for the waiting lists; payroll debacle; underpaid, overpaid and never paid nurses; Dr Patel; and our royal favourite, the fake Tahitian prince.

Earlier this week on the International Day of the Midwife our front-line nurses and midwives in Queensland Health were celebrating their third pay increase since the change of government just two years ago. This increase means that the average nurse and midwife is now almost 10 per cent better off in their pay packet thanks to the LNP can-do government. On average that is about \$245 per fortnight extra in their pay packets. Of course, just two years ago many nurses and midwives and doctors were not paid at all thanks to Labor's payroll fiasco.

It is important to note that significant pay increases that reward and recognise our nurses and all other health workers have been made possible by this government's record investment in Queensland Health. This year the Queensland Health budget hit \$12.3 billion—a record investment in taxpayer funded free public health care in this state. The LNP's \$12.3 billion Health budget provides an 11.59 per cent increase in the Queensland Health budget compared to Labor's last budget in 2011-12. I know the member for Bundamba is absolutely ashamed of the fact that, under Plibersek and Gillard, \$103 million was ripped out of the Queensland Health budget. Labor sacked doctors and nurses in the state of Queensland and, due to their payroll debacle, sacked another 1,500 health workers as well. So Labor should hang its head in shame, as the member for Bundamba is doing today.

Every Queensland hospital and health service shares this record Health funding increase, and their efforts mean that for every dollar spent more front-line health outcomes are achieved. Labor's failed system, that did not properly detect or monitor medical negligence or health complaints, will be reformed from 1 July with a new Health Ombudsman with new powers. As we have seen this week in Rockhampton—and contrast it with Bundaberg almost 10 years ago—our new hospital and health boards will not tolerate the systemic failures of the past. Failures that Labor tolerated, covered up or swept under the carpet are now being exposed and reformed.

This can-do LNP government made a commitment to honestly communicate with the electorate after decades of Labor culture that gave rise to hidden waiting lists and waiting lists for waiting lists. We now publish, in every newspaper and online, waiting list data for each hospital and health service so that the public can see the raw facts and so they can compare how their hospital performs. I am pleased to announce that from next week this can-do LNP government will extend our open reporting of waiting list data. The content will now be expanded to include all categories of surgery, dental long-waits and ambulance response times. Queenslanders can judge for themselves how the LNP's record investment in Queensland Health is delivering in their local community.

I look forward to seeing what those figures say about state-wide emergency access and state-wide surgery waiting times. These figures will show what record Health funding, coupled with new patient focused and localised management through our hospital and health boards, can deliver for Queenslanders. They will show what we can achieve for patients when we value, empower, reward and recognise our health workers—the very same health workers that Labor could not even pay two years ago.

Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Achievements

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (2.45 pm): The Newman government is focused on helping to grow the Queensland economy while ensuring the state's environment is protected and maintained. My department of EHP has delivered a significant regulatory reform agenda which has streamlined its administrative processes, simplified the regulatory burden on business and industry and reduced prescriptive requirements. Our achievements over the last two years include completing environmental impact statements in 2013 for eight proposals which will support \$5 billion in capital expenditure and 6,000 jobs if they are developed as approved.

We have halved annual fees for small sewage treatment plants, benefiting caravan parks and small business operators such as bed and breakfasts in the Sunshine Coast hinterland. We have improved the efficiency and flexibility of environmental licensing, helping thousands of small business owners by reducing the number of environmentally relevant activities by 70 per cent—from 13,000 to 4,000 businesses—saving almost 10,000 businesses over \$6.5 million a year in annual fees. We have halved assessment times for the oil and gas industry around their environmental authority applications. Environmental impact assessments are underway for more than 30 major projects, which will potentially contribute up to \$18 billion in capital expenditure and create 15,000 jobs. We reduced the number of model conditions by nearly 50 per cent, again for the petroleum and gas industry.

We have also committed over \$48 million this financial year for conservation and sustainability activities to ensure that Queensland remains one of the most biologically diverse places on earth. Our most recent achievements include: the funding of 11 front-line koala rescue and rehabilitation organisations to help them expand their services as part of the \$26.5 million investment in the protect our koalas initiative; a new partnership with south-west Queensland local councils and organisations to reduce roadside litter as part of the litter and illegal dumping action plan; the launch of the heritage funding component under the Everyone's Environment grant scheme to provide \$600,000 to 34 groups and individuals working hard to manage, support and interpret heritage sites in Queensland; and we are working with private landowners to declare nine new nature refuges, adding close to a quarter of a million hectares to the nature refuge estate and bringing the total area protected under nature refuges to more than 3.89 million hectares of high-value conservation land.

Those opposite ignored real protection for the environment and instead focused on expanding environmental bureaucracy. In contrast we measure it in outcomes, striking a balance, helping to grow the economy through cutting burdensome green tape and making way for businesses to create jobs while protecting Queensland's environment.

Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, Achievements

 **Hon. TE DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services) (2.48 pm): Before we came into government we made five pledges. One of them was to revitalise front-line services. In my portfolio that means better front-line services for people with a disability, their families and carers; better front-line services for at-risk families, especially their children; and better front-line services for young Queenslanders, seniors and those in need of protection from domestic and family violence.

The quarterly update on Queensland's Renewal Program demonstrated clearly how we have achieved better front-line services in my portfolio. One that is very close to my heart is the Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Trial. Before the 2012 election I visited the member for Bundaberg and the now member for Burnett. They arranged for me to meet with elderly parent carers of adult children with a disability who were very concerned about how their children would be cared for when they themselves were unable to do so. The conversations that I had with these parents left a very great impression upon me, and that is why this government launched the Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Trial. As the quarterly report highlights, the first round alone will provide 39 innovative living arrangements for people with a disability. I was thrilled to go back to Bundaberg recently, a location of one of the successful first round tenders, to both visit the site and to view the plans.

Another initiative highlighted in the report was the Caring for our Community grants. Grants under round 1 were delivered last year and I look forward to updating the House shortly on successful applicants under round 2. As the quarterly report points out, we have had nearly 4,000 online applications for this initiative since July 2012 and this government is committed to making it easier for community groups and other businesses to make applications for small grants using the

SmartyGrants online tool. We want Queenslanders to spend less time filling out forms and more time doing what they do best, and that is delivering for our local communities at the front line. Alongside this we have committed to the National Disability Insurance Scheme—an extra \$868 million that will give Queenslanders with a disability more choice and control over their specialist disability supports. We have also undertaken to reform the unsustainable child protection system to provide more support for at-risk families by accepting the recommendations of the Carmody commission of inquiry. Unlike those opposite, we stick to our promises and in my portfolio we are sticking to our pledge to improve front-line services for Queensland families and the community.

Small Business, Business and Industry Portal

 **Hon. JA STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (2.51 pm): The Newman government is determined to re-empower Queensland's small business sector and equip it with the tools that it requires to prosper and grow. We recognise that our 410,000 small businesses underpin our four-pillar economy, supporting the vital sectors of tourism, agriculture, resources and construction. As outlined in the government's quarterly report, the Newman government has worked diligently to make it easier to do business in Queensland. One of the key ways in which we are delivering this is through our business and industry portal. The BIP, as it is affectionately known, now provides more than 700 online services. Strong visitation to the BIP for the financial year to 6 May 2014 has recorded 1.8 million unique visitors. That is up 114 per cent on the same period last financial year.

Through my travels across the state and meeting with small business operators, I hear firsthand how the BIP is assisting them. The success of the BIP is backed by the most recent customer impact survey for 2013 which found that BIP had saved over \$250 million in time and money savings over the last two years. BIP has made it easier for small and medium sized businesses to supply their goods and services to the Queensland government through the addition of an online tendering tool. From how to prepare a competitive tender to a fit-to-supply diagnostic tool to help businesses determine their supply capability, these tools are all about helping operators to grow their business. BIP also provides access to a series of innovative webinars. Earlier this afternoon I joined Mr Nick Behrens from CCIQ to participate in the latest webinar in the 10-part digital learning series being provided in partnership with CCIQ. So far eight of these sessions have been held, with more than 2,000 small businesses registering from across Queensland. The Newman government is unashamedly pro small business and we are committed to ensuring that this key sector thrives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

Alleged Contempt of Parliament

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (2.53 pm): I rise to give a personal explanation and, in doing so, I refer to the recordings and the transcript I tabled in this House yesterday. I also refer to the front page of the *Gold Coast Bulletin* today. The member for Gaven has made an accusation on the front page of this paper declaring that the recording I made yesterday could in fact be a fake. I can assure him and the other members of the House that this recording is a true and accurate recording and is not a fake. I challenge the member for Gaven to repeat that specific accusation in the House today so that the falsity of his accusation can be tested by the Ethics Committee.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 7 May 2014, titled 'What can I offer you?' [\[5011\]](#).

Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (2.54 pm): I rise to inform the House that, due to our participation in the Select Committee on Ethics and the matters before that committee, both I and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will not be participating in the debate on the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. We feel that that is the appropriate course of action given consultation with the Clerk and after receiving other advice. We reserve our right to enact our party votes on this legislation.

Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill

 **Mr JUDGE** (Yeerongpilly—PUP) (2.55 pm): Like the member for Mulgrave, for similar reasons I will also not be participating in debate on the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill but reserve my right to vote on it.

REPORT

Ombudsman

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Ombudsman a report titled *The water licences report—an investigation into the administration of water licence decision-making under chapter 2, part 6 of the Water Act 2000*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Queensland Ombudsman report, dated May 2014, titled 'The Water Licences Report: an investigation into the administration of water licence decision-making under Chapter 2, Part 6 of the Water Act 2000' [\[5012\]](#).

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Rockhampton Hospital

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (2.56 pm): My question is to the Minister for Health. I refer the minister to revelations yesterday that he was told of concerns regarding 'issues of clinical safety and patient care' at Rockhampton Hospital in the third quarter of 2013, some nine months ago, and ask: what was the minister told and what immediate action did he take to protect patients at Rockhampton?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question: a lot more than she actually did when she was in government with Dr Jayant Patel and a whole range of the other issues that we have seen in Queensland. In terms of what actually happened at that particular time, we saw the nurse whistleblower actively repudiated and intimidated by those members opposite when they sat in government—a complete and absolute denial that there was any problem whatsoever and an active approach by the government of the day to give a one-way business class airfare out of Australia to Portland, Oregon, for the person in question. We then also saw—with the active support of the then apprentice to Gordon Nuttall, the former health minister, who is now domiciled involuntarily at a place very close to the Leader of the Opposition's electorate—the assistant to that such person basically deny that they were told anything whatsoever. Subsequent to that, there was a finding of dishonesty against the icon and mentor of the honourable member for Bundamba. And what did the Labor Party do at that particular time when that person faced criminal charges? It came into this parliament and exonerated that person of criminality.

Without wanting to be verbally in any way whatsoever, I indicated in this parliament yesterday a couple of very specific things: that I was informed last week about a potential issue dealing with this particular surgeon. I think that was on Tuesday. The hospital board then went out and publicly informed its community on Thursday. I understand that it became aware of the concerns surrounding this particular surgeon and that patient on the long weekend around about the Saturday, so it acted within four or five days to inform the public after it was able to gather enough evidence.

To be very clear on what I said yesterday in this place, when I was speaking to the hospital board chairman in around about September or October last year on a visit to Rockhampton he indicated to me that he had concerns about culture with regard to patient safety and quality and incidents at his particular hospital. The honourable member does not understand that this is now the authority of hospital boards. The hospital board chairman did something that the Labor Party never did and that was brought in Vanguard Health to do an independent review of their systems. They then put in place patient safety systems that are an enhancement of the legacy left by the former government over its time in office in Queensland.

Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service

Ms PALASZCZUK: My next question is to the Minister for Health. I note that patient safety quality assurance committees are a legislative requirement under the Hospital and Health Boards Act, passed in 2012, that report to the minister. I ask: when did the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service establish its patient safety and quality assurance committee?

Mr SPRINGBORG: A lot quicker than those opposite, which never established one ever. Theirs was lie, deny and cover up, as they did for years and years and years in office in Queensland. When they were faced with serious allegations around patient safety and harm, they went after those people who were the whistleblowers, denied it, never involved those people who were at the forefront and came into parliament and exonerated the minister, who had lied to a parliamentary estimates committee. They exonerated him of criminality. They exonerated him of a very grievous offence against the Criminal Code.

One of the very important things that we did in the establishment of the hospital and health boards in Queensland, which was very important to ensure that we have the appropriate oversight of patient safety and quality, was to establish an obligation on our hospital and health boards to deal with quality and safety at a local level and also to establish subcommittees of their board around that. In January of this year, the hospital board in Central Queensland established its first patient safety and quality clinician to be involved in overseeing that. That person was a clinical nurse of some significant experience. I can indicate that they have taken these matters seriously, as our hospital boards have done around Queensland.

Previously, we saw centralised control in Brisbane and when these issues arose there was not an appropriate response, because there was no direct connection between the hospital service locally and the central agency. Indeed, what we have heard from the Leader of the Opposition today and from her coterie over there yesterday is an insight into how they would run hospitals in Queensland in the future and that is to abolish hospital boards and bring back central control of the process in Queensland, which so unsuccessfully saw the endemic rise of incompetence and patient safety issues that manifested themselves in Bundaberg in 2004 and 2005 and kept an oversight of a failing system, which is a disparate approach where the Health Quality and Complaints Commission is involved in some part of systemic oversight, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency in Canberra is responsible for the accreditation, registration and notifications and we also have other processes internally.

When the Health Ombudsman starts work on 1 July we will bring together all of those notification issues under one roof so that in the future we will know what is going on. If there is an issue of concern, immediate action can be taken to suspend a clinician. Not only that, if they work in the private sector as well, they will be able to notify those other people where they work so that action can be taken to protect their patients.

(Time expired)

Queensland Health, Department of Education, Training and Employment, Achievements

Mr STEWART: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier further update the House on the government's achievements in health and education as highlighted in the quarterly report on Queensland's renewal program?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the honourable member for his question—I really do—because the quarterly report that was released last week shows that the government is delivering on its election promises to improve front-line service delivery. Indeed, we are seeing superlative front-line service delivery—great improvements in all sorts of areas across this state.

It is clear to me that the things that really matter to Queensland families are the delivery of front-line education and health services and the quality of that service and its effectiveness has been vastly improved from where we were two years ago under Labor. That is what people are saying. They do not buy for a moment the Labor Party's bleating about the size of the budget. Ultimately, the budget is just an indication of the resources in. It is the positive impact out there for the community that we should be looking at.

Let us have a look at education. There will be eight more primary and two more secondary schools than there would have been built under the Australian Labor Party. That is 10,000 more kids in brand-spanking-new classrooms. These new schools will create 500 additional jobs for teachers and 130 additional non-teaching positions than there would have been under the Australian Labor Party. There are 80 additional independent public schools than there would have been under Labor. These schools will be empowered to make decisions that directly impact on students' learning. There are an additional 182 kids enrolled in e-kindy than there would have been under the Labor Party—a program that brings kindy to remote families. Again, I compare and contrast that. We care about regional and remote Queenslanders—

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr NEWMAN:—unlike the member for Mulgrave who is interjecting, who never stands up for his community, particularly against his federal political mates. I ask him rhetorically: when is he going to back a cost-of-living reduction? When is he going to back the removal of the carbon tax? He will not do that, because he always kowtows and doffs his lid to his masters down in Canberra—that is if he is not doffing his lid to the union bosses up here in Queensland.

What about health? Between March 2012 and March 2014 the number of category 1 patients waiting for more than 30 days for surgery has been cut by 72 per cent. Over the same period, the number of category 2 patients waiting for more than 90 days has been cut by 60 per cent and Queensland now has the best elective surgery waiting times in the nation. Ambulance ramping has almost been eliminated and the response times have improved significantly. There are some very interesting statistics in terms of response times in metropolitan South-East Queensland.

The number of Queenslanders on the public dental waiting list is down from 62,513 in February 2013 to 1,784 in March 2014—a massive 97 per cent reduction. This government is delivering on front-line service revitalisation.

Queensland Health, Patient Safety Unit

Mr BYRNE: My question is to the Minister for Health. Will the minister confirm that in mid-2012 Queensland Health sacked 80 of the 120 health workers in the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Service, which has led to what the CQHHS chair describes as ‘systemic failures in our patient safety systems’?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thank the honourable member for Rockhampton for his question. Indeed, I think the honourable member for Rockhampton needs to consider this: the issues of systemic failure that we are talking about have a manifestation that goes back before the appointment of the hospital board. It probably goes back prior to him being here and to the days of his mentor in this place, the former honourable member for Rockhampton, Robert Schwarten. These issues have been going on for some considerable time in his area and I think underline a lack of ability in the old system, which he wants to protect, to be able to address those systemic issues.

I notice that yesterday on the radio the member was bleating about the HQCC. Although I think the HQCC has done some good work, it has not been able to take full authority and control over issues because of the disparate processes that exist through the national framework, which was set up in 2008 and 2009. Indeed, yesterday I thought it was absolutely refreshing when the hospital board chairman was asked on radio, ‘Do you think you have systemic problems?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ Back in the days of Gordon Nuttall it would have been, ‘No, not a problem. It’s all Toni Hoffman’s fault. Doctor Patel is equal to the Pope.’ All of those sorts of things went on. Then Gordon Nuttall came into this place with the honourable member for Bundamba, who was standing there with him, side by side, hip to hip, hand in hand, defending him.

With regard to the Patient Safety Unit within Queensland Health, in 2011 under the Labor government and under its voluntary separation program—and the honourable member for Rockhampton should have asked this question before he was given this question to ask—the honourable member for Rockhampton’s predecessors reduced the numbers from 109 to 83: 109 to 83 people in the Patient Safety Unit and not a word from Robert Schwarten or Bill Byrne along the way, not one single word.

I think it is also important to indicate that subsequent to that those responsibilities of the Patient Safety Unit now reside in the hospital and health services where the work needs to be done leaving a core operation within Queensland Health of 40 people with other resources being transferred to the hospital boards. The real reductions happened under honourable members opposite. That is what happened. The other thing we have done is establish a Patient Safety Board on 30 June or 1 July 2013 made up of clinicians expert in the field and consumers and patients to advise us on the best way to monitor and oversee these issues to ensure patient safety.

Inland Highway

Mr KEMPTON: My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. Can the Deputy Premier please outline how this government is delivering on its commitment for better planning and infrastructure in Queensland’s regions, in particular North Queensland, and elaborate on any future plans to investigate a possible alternative inland highway?

Mr SEENEY: I thank the member for Cook for the question. It is good to get a question about regional Queensland and particularly North Queensland because we see so few questions asked about regional Queensland in this place. In fact, the number of questions being asked in this place by the opposition is apparently reducing. I am told that yesterday for the first time in as long as anyone can remember the opposition asked no questions on notice in this parliament. Despite having 22 staff they were not able to think of one question on notice that they could ask the government. That is the

sort of laziness that we get from the opposition. So it is refreshing to have the member for Cook and other members in North Queensland who are concerned about their regions and who can ask questions about their regions and the planning to correct the infrastructure deficit that we have been undertaking in the last two years since we have come to power.

In regional Queensland the word 'infrastructure' all too often means roads. The primary infrastructure challenge in regional Queensland is about providing the roads that form the linkages that are so critically important for business, commerce, tourism—for everything—in regional Queensland. So it is with North Queensland. We have the major highway, the Bruce Highway, which follows the coastline, and we have spoken many times about the inadequacy of that highway and the efforts that we are going to ensure that the federal government meets its obligation to recognise the importance of that piece of infrastructure and allocate more money to it. There is a major job beginning on the Cooroy to Curra section A that we put \$400 million into which is just the start of the work that needs to be done on the Bruce Highway.

But there also needs to be work done to identify an inland alternative, an alternative that can provide access when the coastal highway is interrupted by natural disasters, as all too often it will be. That means finding a highway that uses the inland roads. They are already there: the Kennedy Highway, the Kennedy Development Road, the Gregory Development Road down to Emerald and the Burnett Highway from the Capricorn Highway south to Brisbane. That network constitutes the ability to identify an alternative to the Bruce Highway that can provide not just an opportunity for access in emergency situations but a real boost to the regional communities in that area. It is not just about ensuring that there is access to North Queensland in times of natural disaster, it is about ensuring that all of those regional communities have the road linkages, the infrastructure, that are important for their future.

Budget

Mr PITT: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. With taxes having already increased by \$1,000 a year for the average family of four under the LNP, will the Treasurer rule out any increases in duty, taxes or royalties above CPI in the 2014-15 budget?

Mr NICHOLLS: Madam Speaker, I got so excited I forgot where the button was to turn on the microphone after getting that question from the shadow Treasurer. It is nice to get a question from him. The shadow Treasurer, if he turns up this time, will be able to hear all about the budget when it gets delivered on 3 June. That is a Tuesday. June is the sixth month of the year. It will be here in the green chamber of the parliament. If the shadow Treasurer and his colleagues can be prepared to turn up and debate the budget we are certainly very happy to have that debate with them.

Let us look at what we have done over the last period of time. When we came to government we had a budget that was in a structural deficit—that is, year in, year out, year in, year out under the Labor Party the government was spending more than it was earning. How much were those expenses going up on average every year? They were going up by about nine per cent a year, year in, year out. Notwithstanding the rivers of gold that were flowing in from a booming coal industry, the best terms of trade that Australia had seen since the Second World War, notwithstanding the rivers of gold that were coming in from the most prosperous property boom that people had seen since probably the 1960s, notwithstanding the increasing amounts of payroll tax coming in and notwithstanding the complete abolition of the petrol subsidy by those opposite, saving themselves \$600 million a year, notwithstanding the 30 per cent increase in tolls on toll roads that Andrew Fraser brought in, notwithstanding increasing the price of registering your car to be the most expensive in Australia, notwithstanding the massive increases in taxes and charges to register a business, notwithstanding all of that, they were still going broke. They were going broke in a boom.

What are we doing? We are now on the path to having a balanced budget for the first time in a decade. For the first time in a decade, unlike those opposite, we will not have to go cap in hand to the bankers of the world saying, 'Please, sir, can we have some more?' Let us look at the history of the Labor Party when it comes into this place and asks these sorts of questions.

Mr PITT: I rise to a point of order. After hearing two minutes of waffle from the Treasurer can I ask you to rule on relevance? It is a very specific question and I ask for a ruling under 118(b).

Madam SPEAKER: You just put a point of order, you do not start putting abuse into your point of order. The Treasurer has time on the clock to answer the question. I call the Treasurer.

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thought I did, in fact, very early on answer that question when I said if the shadow Treasurer bothers to turn up he will find out what the budget will have in it. That is the answer. If he bothers to listen he will also hear the answer. There are two

components to being in parliament that the shadow Treasurer has not yet grasped. One is you actually have to be here and the second part is when you are here you do have to listen. You could add a third part: you might want to ask a question on notice. That is an option, obviously.

Mr PITT: I rise to a point of order.

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. What is your point of order?

Mr PITT: I ask you for your guidance, Madam Speaker. The Treasurer is continuing to refer to my so-called absence from the House. I ask for clarification as to what he is referring to?

Madam SPEAKER: The reason I have not ruled it out of order is I was not aware that, in fact, the member had been absent. I thought it was a turn of phrase that the Treasurer was using, but I remind the House that there is a convention in relation to the absence of a member. There can be very good reasons for that and I ask members to respect that.

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think we should have more questions from the shadow Treasurer when he is here. I am having a good time. Here is our old friend Mythbusters.

(Time expired)

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I appreciate there is a lot of love being shared in the chamber this afternoon but I would ask for the House to come to order.

Strong Choices Campaign

Mr MINNIKIN: My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Is the Treasurer aware of any myths in relation to the government's Strong Choices campaign and are there any alternate views?

Mr NICHOLLS: Can I say from the bottom of my heart how thankful I am to the member for that question. I really am very grateful that he has asked me that question in relation to myths. Before I was cruelly cut short in my time to answer the first question from the shadow Treasurer we were just reliving our old friend Mythbusters, which I have here in front of me—the totemic piece of economic infrastructure from the ALP. It has not changed much in the five years since it was put up.

Of course, the shadow Treasurer asked me about increases in taxes. We turn to Mythbusters, courtesy of the shadow Treasurer, where he talks about increasing fees, taxes and charges. His own fact, or factoid, states—

In the last three Budgets, the government—

That is, their ALP government—

has taken significant steps across the board to fund new services.

Already we have:

- raised land tax and stamp duty ...
- increased taxes on casinos and introduced new liquor licensing fees ...
- Increased coal royalties
- increased motor vehicle stamp duty and we have recently introduced a rise to car registration.

I forgot to mention—no doubt my good friend the transport minister will have it running across his mind—a 15 per cent year on year increase in public transport, on top of everything else. When it comes to credibility about economics and the state's finances, those opposite have none whatsoever.

I thank the member for Chatsworth for the question. In terms of that question, a number of myths are being peddled around the place. That is why it is important for us as a government wanting to have a mature debate with Queenslanders to run our Strong Choices campaign. We have had more than 43,000 submissions and 186,000 unique visits to the Strong Choices website. People do want to be engaged. I know the shadow Treasurer was commenting about the numbers on the website. The numbers are prepared by the independent officers of Treasury and they have also been verified by the former Auditor-General, Glenn Poole, who was appointed by the Labor Party to audit figures. Those are the figures. They are not my figures; they are the Treasury figures.

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Madam Speaker, may I have an extension of time, please? The reality is that the shadow Treasurer says it is outsourcing if I talk to independent Treasury officers—

(Time expired)

Members of Parliament, Police Checks

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is to the Premier. Meals on Wheels volunteers are required to have a Federal Police check. I ask: does the Premier undertake a police check on the suitability of a member of parliament to be a minister of the Queensland government?

Mr NEWMAN: We all know what that question is about, but I will not be referring to anyone in particular because there is a matter before the House. However, I will talk about the principles espoused in a piece of Queensland legislation that I believe is known as the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act, which came through this place in 1986. There are similar pieces of legislation around this nation. For example, there is one that covers federal law and federal offences at the Commonwealth level. There is one in the ACT and most other states and territories have similar legislation. There are differences. The principle in those pieces of legislation is that if people do the crime they should do the time and then they should be allowed to restart their lives. Governments across Australia, clearly on the basis of advice from the legal fraternity, the broader community and commentators, adopted a position that if people do the crime and do the time, then they get on with their lives. That is what the legislation was designed to do.

If at that time parliaments wished to have an exemption or a difference for members of parliament or people wishing to be members of parliament, I imagine they would have written that in. However, to my knowledge I have not seen such an approach in our Queensland legislation. There are specific references to past offences in the Queensland legislation, so parliament contemplated such matters. However, clearly it established very specific matters that would be taken into consideration. For example, they were matters of breaches of the electoral law, disqualifying offences under the Electoral Act. I say to the honourable member that in the past, here and interstate, parliaments have made a call on these matters and the legislation is what it is. If the honourable member is proposing that it change, that is a worthy suggestion. However, I make the point that other states and territories will probably have to be convinced because I think we would need nationally significant laws.

I make a final point for the benefit of those opposite. I know that these days the member for Nicklin is really working very closely with the Labor Party. In 1986, a former leader of the opposition, Wayne Goss, claimed that this rehabilitation of offenders act was key Labor Party policy and they supported it then. If there is to be a change, let the debate begin. If community standards in Queensland and other states have changed since 1986, so be it. I make the point that the law is the law and it is as it stands, and I ask all honourable members to reflect on that.

Education Services

Mr SYMES: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education, Training and Employment. Can the minister please advise the House about how the Newman government has revitalised front-line education services in Queensland?

Mr LANGBROEK: I thank the honourable member for Lytton for his question. The honourable member and I have visited the Lytton special school and the early childhood service in his electorate that received an outstanding recognition award from ACECQA, the federal agency that oversees those services. It is obvious that he shares the passion of everyone on this side of the House for education services and making sure that we have the best into the future. This is about the future of our kids and making sure that they are prepared for life in a growing and vibrant state.

It is important to follow on from what the Treasurer had to say in his answer to the shadow Treasurer about the situation that we inherited. When it came to providing and improving front-line services, we had a number of issues to deal with. We have inherited a situation whereby Queensland has the third highest level of government school enrolments behind Tasmania and the Northern Territory, yet under the former government our state schools were allowed to run down. That is why we had a maintenance backlog. Before we could start improving current services, we had to fix the \$300 million maintenance backlog. Members from all around the House are aware that that is amongst the most significant amount of money that has been given to schools in every electorate in the state. It cost \$300 million to get rid of the maintenance backlog so that parents can be proud to bring their children to state schools, and principals, teachers and associated staff can be proud of the environments in which they work. We inherited that situation and we fixed it.

We have continued to enhance front-line services in a number of different ways. As the Premier mentioned, we have worked all the way through the education system. In early childhood services, eKindy has seen our kindergarten participation rate rise from 29 per cent to 97 per cent. Hundreds of

kids in rural and regional Queensland can now access eKindy services. We have employed extra prep teacher aides and put \$115 million into building new state and non-state schools. We have provided community learning grants and certificate 3 guarantees in training totalling \$89 million. The numbers go on and on. Importantly for the future, the education race is one that never finishes. As the Premier also mentioned, we are planning 11 new schools, 10 in a public-private partnership, to ensure that we plan for the future and the extra students that we will get. For the first time ever, this year the increase in enrolments in state schools is greater than in non-state schools. I want to see a situation where all schools are supported, whether they are state or non-state, but that is where we are really enhancing front-line services throughout education.

Road Infrastructure

Mr KATTER: My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister inform the House what steps have been taken to pursue the concept of the inland highway being fully sealed and opened up to triple road trains following the call by the Premier to investigate alternative solutions, such as these issues, to resolve issues on the Bruce Highway?

Mr EMERSON: I say to the member for Mount Isa that he is obviously not listening because we heard earlier the Deputy Premier give a lengthy explanation of where we are and what we are doing with regard to the issue raised. We do not quite know where the Katter party stands on that. We saw their remarkable performance at about midnight last night where they split their vote. They did not know which way they were going. They did not know whether they were Arthur or Martha.

Mr Knuth: We got you out of bed.

Mr EMERSON: I take the interjection from the member for Dalrymple because he was the highlight of the night—that is apart from the leader of the Katter party and his extraordinary performance in here. It is something that people will talk about for many years. He argued that the Katter party had changed its vote between calling for a division and four minutes later when casting a vote.

This is probably an indication of the intellectual prowess of those in the Katter party or, as we refer to them, the north-west branch of the Labor Party. They do not stand for anything. More importantly, they stand for everything. That is what we saw last night. They did not know whether they were Arthur or Martha.

Let me reiterate for the member for Dalrymple—

Mr Knuth interjected.

Mr EMERSON: The member for Dalrymple is interjecting again.

A government member interjected.

Mr EMERSON: As we heard from that interjection, this is the man who voted against his own party last night. It was an extraordinary vote. I think it was 72 votes to one. Even his own side could not support him. As I said, they stand for nothing because they stand for everything, depending on what minute of the day of the week of the month of the year it is. We saw that again last night.

In summary, we heard an explanation about this issue from the Deputy Premier earlier. As the Deputy Premier has indicated, we are investigating this and we understand what the issues are. The Deputy Premier has addressed the issues in the member's question. I make the point in terms of the Bruce Highway that we are putting a record \$10 billion over 10 years into the Bruce Highway. That is a record federal-state deal that we negotiated and got up.

I remind the chamber that there is one particular party in here that opposes state money being spent on the Bruce Highway and that is the Labor Party. They believe state money being spent on the Bruce Highway is a waste of money and is misspending. That is a disgraceful performance.

Queensland Ambulance Service

Mr CHOAT: My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. I refer the minister to the LNP's record overall health budget, and I ask: does the minister have any information on how the can-do government's investment in the Queensland Ambulance Service is resulting in the quickest response times?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thank the honourable member for Ipswich West for the question. I thank him very much for his strong advocacy and hard work on behalf of his electorate. I am sure that he is seeing the positive manifestation of the record investment of this government in health services and also the improvement in health care in his area. Indeed, there have been outstanding performances right across the West Moreton area.

As I outlined earlier with regard to the LNP government's record investment in health care in Queensland—some 12 per cent almost—it has also brought with it extraordinary performance improvements. We just cannot look at how we count inputs; we need to actually look at what we are buying and delivering when it comes to outcomes for taxpayers' hard-earned money that we invest on their behalf.

There has been an extraordinary partnership which has developed between the Queensland Ambulance Service and Queensland Health. In October last year the QAS and Queensland Health came together as one department, as they should have been all the way along. I pay tribute to the honourable member for Bundaberg, the Minister for Police, for the wonderful work he did in the time that he was the minister responsible for the QAS. Now we have a perfect symbiosis between Health and the Ambulance Service in Queensland. It is delivering in spades for the people of this state.

If we go back two years ago we see that ambulance ramping was rampant across the state. Ambulance bypass was seeing patients being bounced from hospital to hospital for up to nine hours. Indeed, some people died in the back of ambulances. We saw thousands and thousands and thousands of minutes each week wasted as ambulances ramped in hospitals around the state of Queensland. That is now a thing of the past. There have been extraordinary improvements.

I would like to touch on some of those. The QAS paramedics have done outstanding work. I thank them very much for that work. If we look at patient off-stretcher times for the 2012 financial year we find that it was 20.52 minutes. For February 2014 it was just under 18 minutes. That is a 2.5 minute reduction. That saves lives. If we look at the figures for Metro North and Metro South in terms of the time taken to complete a job we find that there has been a reduction of 15 minutes—down from 80 minutes to 65 minutes. That is since the election of the LNP government in Queensland. That saves more lives. There has been a 66 second reduction in code 1 response times. That saves even more lives.

If we look at what we have been doing with the additional resources we see that in the 2013-14 financial year there have been some 60 additional paramedics across Queensland and 155 new vehicles. Well done to the QAS.

Sale of Public Assets

Mr KNUTH: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. In light of the multimillion dollar campaign underway designed to convince Queenslanders to agree to sell our assets, will the minister agree to an independent assessment into the projected income that Queensland could lose due to the sale of these assets over the next 20 years before any decision to sell our assets is made?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for his question because it gives me another opportunity to talk about the problem that we face and the choices that the state, the government and all of us face in coming to a solution. We know the problem. The problem is the \$80 billion worth of debt—that course that we were set on by the Labor Party. We know that, after more than a decade of running things into the ground and particularly since 2005-06 of running deficits, we cannot continue to run the state in the way it was run.

We know that if we are going to invest in the services that a state that is growing, that will have more than seven million people in it by 2035, that will have an extra 650,000 people over the age of 65, and that will need to educate another 400,000 schoolchildren will need, we will need to pay down that debt so that we can free up interest, so that we can grow the economy and so we can afford to build the infrastructure that we will need in future years. Those are the things that we know we are going to need to do in the future. They are certain. We will need to build schools. We will need to provide health services. We will need to put police on the beat. We will need to do a variety of other things as well.

So we have three choices. We can massively increase fees, taxes and charges. I gave a demonstration a little earlier about what the Labor Party solution was. That was to increase fees, taxes and charges. In fact, in the decade from 2001, average state taxes in Queensland went from about \$1,200 a head to over \$2,400 a head. That is one option. The member for Dalrymple might want to consider whether or not that is his option. It is certainly the option that John Battams from the Queensland Council of Unions put forward. He says, 'Increase payroll tax.' That might be something that the member for Dalrymple might want to support as well. I am not sure.

The head of the Queensland Council of Unions, John Battams, says, 'Increase property taxes because only millionaires and billionaires pay property tax.' The member for Dalrymple might want to say whether he supports that. In fact, those opposite, who are in lock step with Mr Battams and Peter

Simpson from ETU—their new-found friends, notwithstanding what the former member for Ipswich, Rachel Nolan, says about it—might want to say that that is their plan. They have been very quiet. Their only plan so far is to have a cup of tea and a lie-down.

The third option is to consider the sale or lease of assets to pay down debt and to invest in new infrastructure. When I was in Emerald talking to the mayor and councillors—the member for Gregory was with me—they said, ‘We can’t see why you still own those things. We would rather you invest in a new dam and put a thousand square kilometres of land under irrigation so we can grow things and make the state bigger and better and provide jobs and our kids with a future.’ There are a wide range of options. Perhaps the member for Dalrymple might want to say what he wants to do.

(Time expired)

Emergency Services, Technology

Mr RICKUSS: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. Can the minister please advise the House how technology improvements in his portfolio are assisting the government to deliver on its commitment to revitalise front-line services?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question, and I certainly can. It is exciting news for the parliament that the Newman government is committed to ensuring our police, fire and emergency services are well equipped with the latest cutting-edge technology. As outlined in the recent quarterly report, we are providing police and emergency services with the resources and technology they need to best serve and protect the people of Queensland—not just now but into the future.

By using iPads and iPhones to access QPS computer systems, officers can obtain crucial information literally at their fingertips, saving thousands of hours and not being stuck behind desks as they previously were under the Labor Party. These tools have been provided to over 500 front-line officers right across Queensland, with another 1,250 devices to be rolled out in time for G20.

Unlike the previous government who tied up our emergency services with red tape and blue tape, this government is committed to revitalising our front-line services and giving them the technology and the resources they vitally need. One example is the Zebedee scanner, which helps police to accurately capture crime scene data in a matter of minutes—a world first in policing. This is yet another way to save police time, allowing them to get on with the job.

Also noted in the quarterly report is that police will have access to upgraded information from the Brisbane City Council CCTV network in an effort to crack down on violence and antisocial behaviour. The new system will enable early detection and intervention of incidents, providing valuable evidence as live vision can be recorded and used later.

Not only are we revitalising front-line police services, but we are also revitalising front-line fire and emergency services. We have successfully launched the one-stop shop for emergency and disaster information so that it can be shared and available in one place. We know all too well that disasters can strike anywhere and at any time and our new SES app has revitalised the way people can call for help. The public can now simply log their request through the online app.

It also offers benefits to crews by providing them with all the information they need about a job even before arriving at the scene. It is not just about the information but about the visual information of what is happening at the scene as well. It saves an incredible 800 minutes of manual data work per storm to get crews out to where they are most needed. We also have the Emergency Vehicle Priority project, or the EVP, which triggers traffic lights to change to green and allows emergency vehicles to drive smoothly, keeping them safe in the community.

The Newman government is getting on with the job of delivering on its commitments to make Queensland one of the safest places to live and raise a family. The police, fire and emergency services are excited about the future direction and the abilities that they are being given by this government for the first time in over 20 years.

(Time expired)

Sale of Public Assets

Mr JUDGE: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier confirm whether a government commissioned assets sales survey has already been completed and results withheld and, if so, will the Premier table the results and detail the findings to the parliament?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the honourable member for the question. I am not quite sure what he is referring to, but I go back to the conversation that we are having with Queenslanders, and it is one that I think the Treasurer has been outlining very clearly today: we were left a terrible mess by the

Australian Labor Party and we came into government with a plan, a strong plan, to restore this state's prosperity and to restore this state's finances. The only people in politics in Queensland with a strong plan to get this state back on track are the Newman LNP government. I am sorry, but the party that the honourable member is a party of—if you can call it a party; well it is the best party that money can buy—and those opposite who are discredited and are too busy doing the recycling trick—

Mr Judge: You're getting \$7,000 a week, aren't you?

Mr NEWMAN: I take the interjection from the honourable member for Yeerongpilly, because he said some very interesting things in the budget debate going back a couple of years ago before he had a loyalty blow-out, when he forgot about the people who stood on the street corner and actually got him elected. He actually said then that the Labor Party left a big problem. I have the paperwork somewhere here, but we could go and have a look at *Hansard* and see what he said. Back then he said there was a big problem with debt and a big problem with deficit. Now clearly he is a debt and deficit denier. What a surprise! What a surprise, coming from the best party that money can buy. Clearly he now has a different point of view. And who shapes those points of view? We show who shapes those points of view. Isn't it interesting watching the way that the honourable member is spending all his time with the Labor Party as well? Supposedly they are a proud, independent party with another voice, but they are not really. They are not at all.

Mr JUDGE: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is a point of order on relevance. The question was very specific. He is avoiding the question.

Madam SPEAKER: Please take your seat. I have listened to the Premier's answer and he addressed the essence of your question at the outset. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: Just to help the member for Yeerongpilly, what did his colleague say who sits beside him? This is what the member for Gaven said in 2012. He said—

We had to have this budget because the Bligh and Beattie Labor governments just squandered every new opportunity, looted every GOC and then finally borrowed, in far too high proportion, just to pay for recurrent expenditure with limited capital expenditure ...

I could not have said it better myself!

Dr Douglas interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: Look, Madam Speaker, the member for Gaven is getting hot under the collar—the man of integrity who sold his principles down the river! This is what he said then. Now he is a debt and deficit denier. Queensland has only one political team with a strong plan to get this state back on track and it is the Newman LNP government and, by gosh, we will get this state back on track and get the economy going!

Social Housing

Mrs RICE: My question without notice is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works. Could the minister please outline to the House how this government has delivered on its commitment to revitalise the delivery of front-line social housing services?

Mr MANDER: I thank the member for Mount Coot-tha for her question. Two years ago when we were elected we inherited an absolute basket case in the social housing system. Let me just outline what we inherited. We had a maintenance bill that was out of control. We had rental revenue that was reducing. So the gap between our revenue and our expenses amounted to tens of millions of dollars. Not only that, we had a public housing waiting list that was over 30,000, and the scary part about that is that that was 50 per cent higher than it was three years earlier.

When this government was elected we promised that we would revitalise front-line services for families. To this end, I launched the Housing 2020 Strategy in July last year. Our objectives included the following. We were going to increase the number of affordable and social housing dwellings by 12,000 over the next six or seven years. We were going to transfer the management of social housing—property management and tenancy management—to the community housing sector, that sector that is fit for purpose in this area, that sector that can provide the wraparound services that are necessary for many of our social housing tenants today who have incredibly high needs. The third major component of that strategy was that we were going to divert tens of thousands of people away from the social housing sector.

What is the result today? The result today is that two years later that 30,000 figure has been reduced to less than 20,000—a whopping 36 per cent improvement, which is an amazing figure. How have we done that? We have done it a number of ways: by following the strategy that I outlined last

year with Housing 2020. In this financial year since this program was announced we have put around 4,600 people into social housing dwellings. What we have also done is we have given people an alternative to social housing. Rather than just turn up at a housing service centre and automatically think that you would go on the social housing list because you are eligible, we have looked for alternatives. We have provided nearly 17,000 bond loans. That barrier to people getting into the private rental market has gone now that we have done that. We have also increased a program called RentConnect, a match-making service between those looking for something in a private rental market and real estate agents. We have assisted over 9,000 people in that way over the last financial year. We are committed to revitalising front-line services, and we are doing it in the social housing sector.

Grayson, Mr J

Dr DOUGLAS: My question is to the Premier. I note the letter from the Premier's director-general tabled yesterday, and I ask: has Mr Grayson advised the Premier of the person or entity to whom he has divested his interests in the private companies listed in the letter? And is the Premier satisfied those recipients are unrelated to Mr Grayson in a personal or business sense?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the honourable member for the question. I say to him that given Mr Grayson wrote the letter yesterday—and we can see the date on it—I think he should be given some time to do that. I certainly will be interested in his statement to me, as he is required to make by the Integrity Commissioner, on that matter. I assure the House that of course I will be taking an interest in that and assuring members if in the future anybody wants to ask me a question of my comfort in relation to those matters.

While I am on the subject this afternoon, there are some things which I think the leader of the Palmer United Party needs to assure the House about. The leader of that party was challenged earlier to stand up and say some things in the House to back up his rather worrying claim in terms of the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. I urge him to do that. The honourable member might want to stand up in here and make some references to the serious allegations made in relation to a former iconic tourism resort on the *7.30 Report* last night. I note that many members would not have seen that, but I would urge them to look at ABC iView to see some very concerning allegations made by small investors—I believe a former Palmer campaign manager. There was some very interesting commentary which I think the leader of PUP should respond to in this place. It needs to be dealt with.

There are other questions. In recent days we heard about an official of the party who had a criminal record for drug trafficking interstate. I think the record was only three or four years ago. We hear a lot from the opposition, the Palmer party and the Katter party that the government should answer questions. Well, it is a two-way street. Anybody who comes in here should be accountable. It is time that the member for Gaven, as leader of the PUP, came into this place and provided some fulsome answers to what I have said this afternoon. I also asked a rhetorical question yesterday—well it was not so rhetorical—about the circumstances in 2012 when the member for Yeerongpilly dodged a possum.

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

Madam SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr JUDGE: The Premier had the police minister investigate that internally, as a matter of fact—

Madam SPEAKER: Order! That is not a point of order.

Mr JUDGE:—and it was found there was nothing in it. It is true. You know it.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member under standing order 253A for a frivolous interjection.

Mr NEWMAN: There was certainly some innuendo in the question asked about Mr Grayson and they clearly cannot take it. Come in here and make an explanation. There are a few matters that should be answered about the possum, the garbage bin and restitution. We would like to know in terms of the honour and integrity of the House about when the honourable member careered off the road, collected a wheelie bin, continued for some metres and crashed into someone else's car. I have not heard an explanation of that ever in this House, and I certainly would like to hear what happened that night.

Transport and Main Roads

Mr GRANT: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister please advise how the government is delivering on its commitment to revitalise front-line services in Transport and Main Roads?

Mr EMERSON: I thank the member for Springwood for that question. I can tell the House, as the Premier indicated earlier today, that customer service centres in Transport have worked very hard to reduce the wait times for customers. As the Premier indicated, in the two years we have been in office we have turned around Labor's poor record on customer service centres, seeing wait times cut by almost 40 per cent. Under Labor people were waiting more than 11 minutes on average at our customer service centres. We have reduced that to seven minutes. I can indicate to the House that in March we cut that to below six minutes. That is a great result and a tribute to the people at those customer service centres. We have made changes in training and procedures because we all know how frustrating it can be if we are waiting too long, but to see a 40 per cent reduction is significant.

In the short time I have to answer this question I might mention some of the results at some of those centres. I remind the House that the transport minister at the time in early 2011 was the now Leader of the Opposition. In Ipswich, for instance, in January to March 2011 under Labor the wait time was more than 14 minutes. It is now less than six minutes. In Greenslopes it was more than 11 minutes; it is now less than six minutes. In Cairns it was more than 12 minutes; it is now less than six minutes. In Brisbane city it was more than 12 minutes; it is now less than six minutes. As I said, on average it is a 40 per cent reduction in the two years we have been in office. In March we had it below six minutes. As I said, it shows that the Newman government is focused on delivering front-line services, making the experience for Queenslanders much better in transport. There is more we can do. There is more that we will do. But we will do a lot better than Labor did under the now Leader of the Opposition.

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

MOTION

Order of Business

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (3.57 pm): I move—

That government business orders of the day Nos 1 to 5 be postponed.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Revocation of Protected Areas

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (3.57 pm): I move—

- 1) That this House requests the Governor in Council to revoke by regulation under sections 32 and 70E of the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* the dedication of protected areas and forest reserve as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today viz—

Description of areas to be revoked

Gadgarra Forest Reserve	An area of about 0.1 hectare, described as lot 3 on pl an AP14635, as illustrated on the attached sketch marked "A".
Springbrook National Park	An area of 1.181 hectares, described as lot 2 on SP264960, as illustrated on the attached sketch marked "B".
Hays Inlet Conservation Park 2	An area of 0.8550 hectare, described as lot 511 on S P187345, as illustrated on the attached sketch marked "C".

- 2) That Madam Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection for submission to the Governor in Council.

With such a large and diverse protected area estate in Queensland, there is the occasional need to revoke the dedication of small areas for very practical and valid reasons. Careful consideration has been given to each proposal and in each instance consultation has occurred with affected stakeholders and state and local government agencies. Native title matters have also been considered in relation to the above proposals, and in each case it has been determined that the action may proceed.

I will now outline the background briefly on each proposal. Gadgarra Forest Reserve will see a revocation of about 0.1 hectares situated 39 kilometres south of Cairns. The proposal will give effect to the Wooroonooran Indigenous Land Use Agreement between the state and the Dulabed and Malanbarra Yidinji people.

The proposal for Springbrook National Park is for the revocation of 1.181 hectares from Springbrook National Park situated about 20 kilometres south of the Gold Coast. The proposal will correct the erroneous cancellation of an easement that occurred upon dedication of the national park, restoring legal access to land adjoining the national park.

The proposal for the Hays Inlet Conservation Park 2 is for the revocation of about 0.855 hectares from Hays Inlet Conservation Park 2 situated about 27 kilometres north of Brisbane. The proposal is to ratify the duplication of Anzac Avenue at Rothwell and provide for the construction of an intersection from Anzac Avenue to the proposed Moreton Bay Rail Link Rothwell train station. I recommend that the House support the revocation of parts of the protected areas and forest reserve specified in the proposals.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

CRIME AND MISCONDUCT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 19 March (see p. 708).

Second Reading



Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (4.00 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I start by thanking the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its consideration of the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, which I will now refer to as 'the bill'. The committee tabled its report on the bill on 30 April 2014 and I will shortly table the government's response to the committee report. I will also table a correction to the explanatory notes to correct a typographical error on page 4, where it states that one of the changes to the definition of 'official misconduct' to 'corrupt conduct' was to change the conditional 'would' to 'could'. This should read change the conditional 'could' to 'would'.

I take this opportunity to thank those organisations and Queenslanders who made written submissions or appeared at the public hearings to assist the committee in its consideration of the bill. In starting the debate on the topics, I think it is important that the House recalls just why the CMC was in desperate need of reform. This is not something that was plucked out of the air, but it reflects a pattern of behaviour that needed to be addressed. The simple fact is that, if things had been allowed to go along as they had been, the CMC would have driven itself into the ground. It was an organisation crippled by irrelevance, warped priorities and a lack of direction.

It is important to also look at what the Crime and Misconduct Commission was just over 12 months ago. It was leaderless. Not only had its former head, Ross Martin, resigned in the wake of the shredding scandal but his acting successor, Warren Strange, fled the state for a position in New South Wales just days after being appointed to the CMC position. The tenure of its former chairman, Justice Moynihan, had also been cut short. The CMC oozed incompetence. Through its inattention, confidential documents from the Fitzgerald inquiry were either released to the public—potentially threatening the lives or wellbeing of witnesses—or shredded. It had lost focus, spending time and money chasing the inconsequential, while serious crime seemed to take second place. It tried to blame others for its poor internal management and staffing arrangements—a tactic that was resoundingly disproved by the PCMC in its report on the shredding of the Fitzgerald documents in April 2013.

When we look at the maladministration of the CMC over the past few years, I think we have to understand that this is not the organisation that was set up following the Fitzgerald inquiry in the late 1980s. The Fitzgerald inquiry, I submit to the House, would not and could not have done its job properly if witnesses or whistleblowers knew that they would be compromised some 25 years later by the release of information that potentially put their lives at risk. People in the late eighties who put their names forward—understanding that their names would never be published in the future or released to media outlets—and people who were responsible for whistleblowing certain information to the Fitzgerald inquiry would have had no idea that information relevant to the subject of the complaint

would later be shredded by the very organisation that was given the power and the resources like none other in Australia to uphold the integrity and the secrecy, the confidential nature of the documents, and the identification of these whistleblowers and witnesses.

As I said, when people were putting themselves forward as whistleblowers back in the eighties and were giving information to the Fitzgerald inquiry, they would never have pondered that in 2012 and 2013 their information would be identified to third parties and their information that they gave for good cause and just cause would be shredded. The CMC blatantly let down the witnesses, and those people were compromised by the CMC's actions. The processes of the CMC were potentially corrupted. The CMC had become an organisation with no accountability, no integrity and no transparency, and it undermined the integrity of the process. The CMC would have us believe that over the last few years it has been the virtuous bastion of democracy. I think from everything we have seen over the last two years it has been anything but that.

Before getting into the debate on the aspects of the bill, I want to draw the attention of members to some of the information that has been around in the last couple of years. When I make allegations of maladministration, incompetence and a complete lack of integrity and I say that the CMC has undermined the integrity of the processes by the unauthorised release of information from those whistleblowers, I could not for a minute think of how the whistleblowers from some 25 years ago felt when they got the call in 2013 to say that the information they gave that led to the arrests, led to the Fitzgerald recommendations and led to the establishment of the CJC at the time had potentially been released. I could not bear to think what those people would have thought when they received the phone call that said that not only had their identity been released but the information they gave in good faith to the Fitzgerald inquiry had now been corrupted because it had been released to third parties.

Members will recall that this parliament had to act on that most serious matter. We had to move immediate legislation not to bring the documents back but to stop the unauthorised publication of the documents. As I said at the time in all seriousness, the third parties that received the information received it lawfully by the release of the information from the CMC. Although one would never consider that the information should have been released, the fact is that it was.

When I have been watching the debates in relation to the amendments to the CMC over the last six to seven weeks, I have been concerned with some of the commentary out there that holds the CMC up as this last bastion of democracy. If anything, we have to be reminded that this bastion of democracy failed Queenslanders. It let Queenslanders down because of its incompetence and its maladministration. The most unaccountable body potentially in the nation—but certainly in Queensland—let Queenslanders down. How could anyone watching and viewing from the outside what the CMC has been up to in the last couple of years have any confidence at all that the CMC could appropriately deal with these matters, when it is an organisation that could not even retain the confidential identity of informants and whistleblowers for that very important Fitzgerald inquiry.

I want to take members back. The Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee have dealt with this matter, and their response was tabled in parliament. As I said, there are things that have concerned me in the commentary and from some of the submitters—even Mr Fitzgerald himself somehow now attacks the government for wanting to reform the organisation that led to the destruction of documents from his own inquiry. I want to make it abundantly clear that this organisation is not the great organisation that some commentaries have held it out to be. It has serious flaws, so much so that a former High Court judge—one of the most experienced and most respected jurists in the land—condemned the CMC and what it was up to in the report that we commissioned in 2013.

I need not remind members of the issue the PCMC had to deal with in relation to one Ms Kathryn Ellis. I have talked about it in this House before. Kathryn Ellis was a member of the Labor Party. Kathryn Ellis's husband, Mr Nolan, was the business partner of Bruce Hawker. Bruce Hawker was Anna Bligh's personal strategist. During the campaign in 2012 Bruce Hawker and Mr Nolan were photographed at a restaurant having coffee together. Let me put this together for members. There was Bruce Hawker, Anna Bligh's and the Labor Party's personal strategist, having coffee during the election campaign with Mr Nolan, who was his business partner.

Members know that the honourable the Premier at the time, the leader of the LNP, was subjected to some of the worst gutter politics that I think any commentariat would have seen in Queensland. People can make complaints—legitimate complaints—to the CMC. The Labor Party used the CMC as a political football. It was found out, unfortunately 12 months after the 2012 election, that Kathryn Ellis was employed by the CMC, she was a member of the Labor Party and her husband

was a member of the Labor Party and a business partner of the Labor Party strategist. What members may not recall was that not only was Kathryn Ellis a member of the Labor Party and everything else I have just said, she was also acting Misconduct director responsible for complaints and investigation when Campbell Newman was investigated by the CMC.

Where has the commentariat who was condemning these reforms which will make this organisation a strong, independent watchdog been in the last seven weeks? Where has the commentariat been talking about that issue? You cannot get any more political than a member of the Labor Party being responsible for investigating other members of political parties and determining who conducts those investigations. Where is the commentariat condemning the CMC for allowing that to happen?

For 12 months I had the burden of responsibility as the complainant to deal with that issue. I could not talk about it to any member of this honourable House because of the secrecy involved in the CMC and the PCMC at the time. I had to continually write to the PCMC asking for updates. I had to continually write to the CMC saying, 'This matter has dragged on for some 12 months. Where is it at?' Why was Kathryn Ellis still employed at the CMC? Why was Kathryn Ellis not required to tell the CMC about her Labor Party affiliation? Why was Kathryn Ellis not required to tell the CMC that her husband was running the Labor Party campaign in 2012 against Campbell Newman and the LNP?

The CMC allowed Kathryn Ellis to be in that senior acting position of such a political nature while she herself was a member of the Labor Party. That was the situation for 12 months. As the complainant, I could not talk to any member of parliament about it. I could not talk to the Premier about it, who was the subject of the complaint. For 12 months I had to follow up with the PCMC and the CMC behind closed doors about what on earth was going on so much so that I called on the PCMC to make interim reports to the House to let us as members of the House know where the investigation was at. I believe in a strong, independent corruption watchdog. I believe in it, but I lost confidence and faith in this independent watchdog that was no longer independent, an independent watchdog that allowed a member of a political party to conduct investigations into other members of political parties and that let the situation go on for 12 months.

What was the outcome of that investigation? There were some adverse findings against Kathryn Ellis in that she should have disclosed her Labor Party affiliation. There was going to be a recommendation to terminate her employment. But alas, Kathryn Ellis left the CMC before any termination could take place and no responsibility for any issues was taken. The CMC was happy; they wiped their hands and life moved on; Kathryn Ellis was out of the equation. I acknowledged at the time—and I think it was acknowledged in the PCMC report—that Kathryn Ellis resigned or retired from the CMC for health reasons. However, for 12 months an investigation ensued in relation to Kathryn Ellis that led to a finding that there should have been a disclosure of her Labor Party links.

The Labor Party have said a lot about the CMC reforms that this government has instigated. The Labor Party have said a lot about former justice of the High Court Ian Callinan. What they have not said much about is Kathryn Ellis, Labor Party operative in the CMC. They have not said much about that. What the Labor Party have not said much about is how the bastion of democracy, the CMC, could shred 4,000 Fitzgerald documents. They have not said much about that. They have not said much about how the CMC allowed the disclosure of information that could have risked the lives of whistleblowers dating back to when the Fitzgerald inquiry took place.

If we look at all these issues—the fact that Kathryn Ellis was a Labor Party operative in a senior position at the CMC, the fact that the CMC allowed lives to potentially be put at risk from the unauthorised release of documentation, the fact that the CMC had become the Labor Party political plaything, play toy, by referrals of matters to the CMC, the fact that the CMC shredded 4,000 documents from Fitzgerald—are they not worthy of being addressed? Are those issues not enough to say, 'That's it. Enough is enough. It's time to end the politics of the CMC. It is time to end the shenanigans. It's time to end the maladministration of the CMC'? That is why this government took the position we did in getting one of the most respected jurists in the country, the Hon. Ian Callinan, and Professor Nicholas Aroney from UQ law school to conduct an inquiry in relation to the CMC.

It was not just this government talking about these issues of the CMC two years ago. Let us look at what some other people have said at that time. In March 2013, the Hon. Ian Callinan and Professor Nicholas Aroney said—

The CMC lacks insight into its position in relation to constitutional government and the exercise of its own powers. It seems resistant to any suggestion that there may be better ways of doing its work and organising its affairs than it currently does.

...

We also thought the CMC overly sensitive to criticism.

That was contained in their report on page 208.

In referring to the CMC's response to questions concerning the Fitzgerald documents, Callinan and Aroney stated—

The failure to disclose these events earlier by the CMC is a serious reflection on its own transparency. How can it claim a right to educate others in integrity when it itself has been shown to be lacking in transparency?

Let me repeat that one because that speaks for itself. Callinan and Aroney said—

The failure to disclose these events earlier by the CMC is a serious reflection on its own transparency. How can it claim a right to educate others in integrity when it itself has been shown to be lacking in transparency?

That was in the report on page 208.

In its own report to this House in April 2013, the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee said—

The Committee notes that, in this instance, there have been multiple failures by senior officers to comply with the various frameworks and policies of the Commission, the failure in respect of the Governance framework being just one example ... The Committee found failures and a poor culture of governance within the Executive Management, the LSU, and Information Management.

That was recommendation No. 17 of their report in April 2013. So we have had a former High Court judge, Professor Nicholas Aroney and the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee of this parliament making those comments. The Leader of the Opposition even said in March 2013—

The breach of this confidentiality is therefore a very serious matter. Revelations by the CMC this week that an administrative error had resulted in a number of documents being wrongly classified so as to allow for their access by the public from the State Archives must have sent a shudder of fear down a number of the spines of former witnesses to the Fitzgerald inquiry. Even though over 20 years have passed, the threat to witnesses still remains real.

She went on to say—

I would like to thank the Attorney, the Treasurer and the Deputy Premier for giving me and the Independents an opportunity to be briefed on this bill tonight. It was necessary. This is unprecedented. We have not seen anything like this, I do not believe, in Queensland before. It is crucial that as a parliament we consider these matters in light of what has come before us in the last few days.

Members can find the Leader of the Opposition's comments at *Hansard*, 7 March 2013, page 606.

The *Courier-Mail* editorial of 9 March 2013 said—

It is a pity that Mr Martin left the CMC in this stage because his last week was filled with more questions than answers. The State Government must get to the bottom of the administrative debacle that resulted in sensitive documents relating to the Fitzgerald inquiry being improperly made available to Queenslanders.

I have struggled, honourable members, to find a single ringing endorsement of the CMC's performance. It is not just a matter of chance that these comments have been made; they reflect deep and widespread community anxiety at the time that the CMC was failing in its important duties.

I reject entirely the various attempts by commentators to rewrite history. If they think the CMC was doing its job to the best of its ability, they are seriously deluded. People cannot be expected to have confidence in the ability of the CMC to do its job if it refuses to acknowledge the mistakes of the past. The government is giving the revised CCC the tools and the resources that are necessary to make sure that they can do the job that Queenslanders expect. Queenslanders expect the CMC not to be politicised.

I do not have to single out the members in this House who know all too well about the politicisation of the CMC. I do not have to single members out because you can pick up any newspaper, you can pick up any media and you can ask the commentators. The CMC has failed in its duty to deliver a transparent body with integrity over the last few years. The icing on the cake was the shredding of the Fitzgerald documents. It was the unauthorised disclosure and release of information that could have put the lives of citizens of Queensland at risk and it was the fact that Kathryn Ellis, a Labor Party operative, was allowed to continue in her role at the CMC investigating the candidates of political parties and members of parliament. All the while when she was investigating, making the call to investigate, or even had a minor involvement in the complaints process, she knew her Labor Party links. She would have known that her husband was down the road having coffee with Bruce Hawker, who was planning the gutter politics strategy that we saw from the Labor Party in the 2012 election campaign.

I reject completely the assertion that the CMC is (1), doing its job; (2), fulfilling the obligations that are required of it; and (3), fulfilling its functions and purposes under the legislation; and I reject the assertion that Queenslanders have confidence in the current administration in terms of how the CMC operates under its current legislative framework.

I call on the commentariat who have had a lot to say about these reforms in the last seven weeks as we have been debating this committee, including Mr Fitzgerald himself. What does he say about the shredding of 4,000 documents from his own inquiry? What does he say about the maladministration of the CMC? What does he say about the plethora of chairmen who have resigned and gone off to other jobs? There has been a complete lack of administration in the CMC, and I do not think he would expect that the CMC of today is what he envisaged back when he made the recommendation for the CJC.

So as I said earlier, honourable members, look at the issues that we have been talking about: Kathryn Ellis, a known Labor Party operative; the shredding of the documents in the CMC; the maladministration of CMC; and the time it takes to investigate matters. As I said, I do not have to point out the honourable members in this House who have gone through the crazy processes of the CMC, only for it to be found that there is no case for them to answer. But they have a cloud over their head, sometimes for over 12 months, because the CMC has not prioritised its functions and dealt with the issues in a timely way. No-one—not through our courts, not through our QCAT and not through our CMC—should have a cloud over their head for such an extended period of time. They cannot get on with their lives and careers are wrecked and damaged, all because we have a body that cannot administer itself appropriately.

It is not that there is a lack of resources. The CMC is funded \$50 million annually by the taxpayer, which was recently increased by another \$7 million to \$57 million, and yet the opposition claim that over the last two years we are getting rid of resources from the CMC and cutting things from the CMC. They are one of the most resourced crime and corruption bodies in the nation, but I would also suggest to people looking from outside that they would be one of the worst-performing crime and corruption commissions that we have in the nation.

It is no secret that there has been controversy around these amendments. There has been great debate and, as I said, I thank all of the submitters to the parliamentary committee. We said we would listen and take on board a lot of suggestions, and I hope in good faith that honourable members will see the amendments that I am about to talk about go some way to alleviate some of the concerns.

I would just implore people in the commentariat who continually attack these reforms to look back to two years ago. Do not forget what the Hon. Justice Ian Callinan said. As I said, he is one of the most respected jurists by all sides of politics in the nation. Do not forget what the PCMC said. Look at what Ian Callinan said; look at what Nicholas Aroney said; look at what the PCMC said; look at what this government said; look at what the opposition leader said back in 2013.

The Leader of the Opposition announced a policy for a major restructure to the CMC; in fact, the opposition leader was going to split the CMC. Honourable members may recall the last time a leader of the Labor Party talked about something that was so sick they were basically going to abolish it and start again.

Mr Cripps: Queensland Health!

Mr BLEIJIE: Queensland Health, I take the interjection from the honourable Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. Anna Bligh, the Premier at the time, said that Queensland Health was so sick that they were going to abolish it and they were going to split it. The opposition leader follows in her footsteps and essentially says, by her comments that I have previously quoted into *Hansard*, that the CMC was so sick they were going to restructure it. They were going to set up two bodies. But why not fix the body that we have? Why throw the baby out with the bathwater? Let's use the good elements of the CMC, but let's strengthen them. That has always been this government's commitment: to strengthen the CMC.

I know some of the provisions have been controversial and they have generated debate from the commentariat. But as I read commentators even today in relation to this, where were these commentators when the Hon. Ian Callinan produced his report and talked about the dysfunction of the CMC? Where was the commentary with respect to what the Hon. Ian Callinan was talking about at the time they produced their report? Where were the commentators that now hold the CMC up to this great spotlight and say, 'This is a fantastic organisation. Why are you touching it'?

The CMC has to be accountable. This is the people's House. The people elect the members of this House every three years. This parliament reigns supreme in democracy. The people have their say through the members elected to this House. For years the CMC has sat outside as an unelectable, unaccountable body answerable to no-one. Honourable members will remember that the PCMC and the CMC held their meetings behind closed doors on every available opportunity. There

was a veil of secrecy about the CMC and the PCMC. It was this government that moved amendments last year when we were fixing the issue of the CMC in terms of the destruction of documents and the release of unauthorised information. It was this government that opened the PCMC hearings so that Queenslanders could see what was happening and they could see this unaccountable body be held accountable for the first time in its history.

Parliamentarians were embraced with opportunity, particularly the members on those committees, to grill the CMC chair and to grill the CMC commissioners about the performance, the structure and the administration of the CMC. I want to quote a couple of comments from the Hon. Ian Callinan when he reviewed it. I implore the commentariat to go back a couple of years and to look at where this all started. In no particular order, these are some of the comments that the Hon. Ian Callinan made. He said—

The comedy of errors does not end there.

He also said—

There are, in our opinion, several other problems with the CMC's performance. It appears to have embraced bureaucracy and bureaucratic language and practices too eagerly.

He also said—

The CMC lacks insight into its position in relation to constitutional government and the exercise of its own powers.

Remember, colleagues, that this is a former High Court judge—a judge of the highest court in the land—commenting on the Crime and Misconduct Commission. He said—

The CMC lacks insight into its position in relation to constitutional government and the exercise of its own powers. It seems resistant to any suggestion that there may be better ways of doing its work and organising its affairs than it currently does.

He goes on further to say—

We had the impression that the CMC would much have preferred to frame the questions that it was willing to answer, to the questions we chose to ask.

What the former High Court judge was essentially saying is that it did not want to answer his questions; it wanted to give him the answers that it wanted to provide. Again, it gets back to the accountability and integrity, or lack thereof, in this organisation. He goes on further—

An instance of this was its repeated request that we submit to a lengthy presentation by it at the beginning of our work. When we did seek a presentation later it was petulantly refused because we had been unwilling to receive it at a time of the CMC's choosing.

To paraphrase, a former High Court judge is saying that the CMC acted childishly because it was not willing to give a presentation to a former High Court judge because it wanted to do it on its terms and not his terms. He then went on further, if honourable members wanted any more proof and if the commentariat wanted any more proof about the CMC, to say—

We also thought the CMC overly sensitive to criticism. At one stage we were told, that our criticism of a CMC recommendation (to the effect that as a matter of public interest, different courses should be or should have been adopted) could 'undermine' the responsibility of the Parliamentary Committee's oversight of the CMC. In asserting this, the CMC did not, we think, take into account the Constitutional freedom of political communication which allows we believe, criticism of a body such as the CMC, members of Parliament, the Parliament itself, and its committees, including the Parliamentary Committee.

If honourable members recall, the Hon. Ian Callinan has had a lot to say about political communication in the High Court—the implied freedoms of political communication. Finally, he said—

It is now a matter of public record that the CMC failed badly in 'information management' in relation to the Fitzgerald Inquiry documents. It may even be that a worse failure was the CMC's continuing default over many months in repairing (so far as it could repair it) damage that the release could cause, and not transparently revealing voluntarily what had happened. It is an irony we think that the CMC rebuked us for suggesting that the bureaucratic term 'information management' had an Orwellian ring to it. The failure to disclose these events earlier by the CMC is a serious reflection on its own transparency. How can it claim a right to educate others in integrity when it itself has been shown to be lacking in transparency?

They are not my words. They are not your words, Madam Speaker. They are not the words of members of this House. They are the words of the Hon. Ian Callinan—a respected jurist in the nation and a former High Court judge respected by all sides of politics for the way he handled himself on the High Court and the decisions he made on the High Court.

In this debate let us not just look at the reforms and the necessary reforms to make sure this body is accountable to the people of Queensland—not to us, not to the government but to the people of Queensland who elect their representatives to sit in this place and to serve on committees. Let us look back two years and look at the disasters that have led the government to doing what it has done. That is the past. If we look to the future of the CMC, it has a bright future. It has a future where it can be held to be accountable, it has a future of transparency, and it has a future of accountability—sadly lacking, over the last six years particularly.

I turn to some of the objectives of the bill. We unashamedly want to ensure that public confidence in the CMC is returned, timeliness of investigations is looked at and operational and corporate governance structures within the CMC are fixed, because you cannot have a chairman run the organisation and decide matters while also dealing with the budgetary outcomes of the organisation. We want to ensure that CMC internal complaints practices and internal complaints management systems for misconduct matters are fixed, and this bill will do that. We want to ensure that processes, internal processes and practices of the CMC are fixed. We want to ensure that the personal conduct and works performance of Queensland public services are improved.

We know that this bill reforms the governance structure of the CMC and it will be renamed the CCC, the Crime and Corruption Commission. Despite some of the criticism out there, I think corruption has far more grandeur in the scheme of things than misconduct. This is going to be the Crime and Corruption Commission. We are changing the definition of 'official misconduct' to 'official corruption'. Members may not know that last year the CMC received approximately 5,000 complaints from members of the public about politicians, local government, departments and public servants. About 69 led to an investigation and the majority had no case to answer. As I said, none other than a few members of this House have had to experience the likes of investigations by the CMC.

We want to ensure the research functions are more focused and relevant to the functions of the CMC, and we are going to do that by helping the CMC prepare the three-year research plan that it puts to me—it prepares it and puts it to the minister. We are going to strengthen the transparency and accountability of the commission by expanding the role of the newly named Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner.

For all of the commentators and the agitators who are so disgusted with these reforms that we believe and we know will improve the CMC, where is their support for the likes of bolstering the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commissioner to deal with the CMC directly? No more under these reforms will the CMC investigate itself. I forgot to mention when I talked at length earlier about Kathryn Ellis in the CMC. Not only was she a Labor Party operative in the CMC, but upon the allegation the CMC investigated the issue itself, with the PCMC sitting in secrecy and having meetings to ensure that it was handling the issue. The CMC should never have investigated potential corruption in the CMC by its own officer. The independent Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commissioner should be the one to investigate those issues, and this bill gives the power for the commissioner to do that.

But where is the commentariat playing all of the scary music supporting these reforms? Where is the commentariat supporting the reforms to say that the organisation that was there two years ago has been derelict in its duties? These reforms go a long way in fixing the mess of the CMC that we have seen creep in over the years and the politicisation of the CMC that we have seen creep in over the years.

I turn now to the committee recommendations, and I do apologise to members of the House that this is a lengthy contribution to the second reading debate. But I think this is a serious debate. It will be the Crime and Corruption Commission and Queenslanders have lost confidence in integrity and accountability of the Crime and Misconduct Commission. I think it is important that we put on the record the facts: where we have come to and where we are going, because the future is bright for the CMC—the CCC. The future, with accountability and integrity and with parliamentary committee oversight, is bright for the CMC.

The committee made nine recommendations and sought clarification on three. The government welcomes the committee's recommendation that the bill be passed and we accept it. I turn to other recommendations made by the committee majority, noting that I will also address later in my speech some issues raised in the dissenting report and by some of the submitters to the committee.

The committee majority's second recommendation proposes an amendment to the bill to provide the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee with a veto power over the appointment of commissioners. It appears that this recommendation was made in response to the 19 written submissions that expressed concern that the bill's proposal to remove the requirement for the parliamentary committee's bipartisan approval for the appointment of commissioners would pose a risk to the independence of the commission and would undermine public confidence that the commission could act independently of government.

Currently, the bill provides that the parliamentary committee is to be consulted prior to the minister nominating for appointment a person as commissioner. Although the government acknowledges the concerns raised by the submitters, the government is also cognisant of the varying

requirements of other jurisdictions for similar appointments. As noted in the table in the DJAG written response to the committee dated 24 April 2014, Western Australia appears to be the only other Australian jurisdiction that requires its parliamentary committee to give bipartisan approval for the appointment of its commissioner to its Corruption and Crime Commission. New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia give their parliamentary committee an ability to either approve or veto the appointment. In Tasmania, the parliamentary committee is consulted prior to the nomination of a commissioner for appointment. Also, there is no requirement for a commissioner to the Australian Crime Commission to be approved or otherwise considered by a parliamentary committee prior to the appointment.

Providing the parliamentary committee with a right of veto is what most interstate jurisdictions have opted for. Therefore, the government accepts the committee majority recommendation No. 2. I will be moving an amendment to the bill during consideration in detail to provide the parliamentary committee with a right of veto over the appointment of commissioners.

The committee majority also recommended in its recommendation No. 3 that the term 'corruption' be redefined to separate the terms 'police misconduct' and 'corrupt conduct' in response to concerns raised by the Queensland Police Union of Employees. The government has not accepted this recommendation. As noted in the committee's report, the bill replaces the term 'misconduct', which is currently defined in the act as a drafting tag to mean 'official misconduct' or 'police misconduct' with 'corruption', which results in the misconduct function being called the corruption function. As a result, 'corruption' is defined to mean corrupt conduct or police misconduct.

As I noted, this is a drafting tag only and, under the provisions of the act, when the CMC is to deal with the conduct of a police officer, that is police misconduct. It will unequivocally be dealt with as police misconduct and not corruption. Therefore, in no circumstances would the conduct of the police officer be prosecuted as corruption.

Committee majority recommendation No. 4 addresses the issue raised by two submitters, including the commission, that the new title of the commission, the Crime and Corruption Commission, will be confused with the Western Australian Corruption and Crime Commission in that both are CCCs. The government is of the view that the new title of the commission will not be confused with the Western Australian Corruption and Crime Commission and, therefore, does not accept the recommendation to include the word 'Queensland'.

The government does not accept committee majority recommendation No. 5 that requires the bill to be amended so that there is consistency with the two offence provisions, section 216 and new section 216A, which deal with a person making a complaint. This was an issue raised by the Queensland Law Society in its submission to the committee. The main difference between the two sections is that section 216 requires the commission to have issued a person with a prior notice to say that the complaint is frivolous and the person then makes a subsequent complaint on similar subject matter before a prosecution can be commenced. The purpose of new section 216A, which implements in principle recommendation 3D of the report by the Hon. Ian Callinan QC and Professor Nicholas Aroney, is to make it easier for the commission to prosecute complaints made intentionally for improper purposes and to act as a deterrent for people who wish to make a complaint for ulterior purposes. The government does not accept there should be a prior notice requirement for complaints made in such circumstances.

The committee majority recommendation No. 6 proposes that additional examples be added to the list of the examples of what may be an exceptional circumstance to avoid the requirement of a complaint being made by way of a statutory declaration. These additions are when the complainant is a child or a person who has a personal or physical disadvantage that may result in the making of a statutory declaration difficult or impossible. The government accepts this recommendation and I will be moving an amendment to the bill during consideration in detail to insert these two new scenarios as examples of 'exceptional circumstances'.

The committee majority recommended in recommendation No. 7 that the bill be amended to require the minister to consult with the parliamentary committee on the approval of the proposed research plans prepared annually by the commission. The bill amends section 52 of the act to require the commission to prepare three-year research plans to be provided to the minister annually for approval. The main concerns raised in a few of the submissions to the committee about the proposed amendment was whether the parliamentary committee would be the more appropriate approving authority and that the proposed amendment jeopardised the independence of the commission. The bill implements in principle recommendation No. 12 of the Callinan-Aroney report which, in fact, provides for a more limited ability of the commission to determine its own research agenda.

The government agrees with the committee majority that the parliamentary committee may have a role in providing input into the proposed research plan and accepts this recommendation. I will be moving an amendment to the bill during consideration in detail to provide that the parliamentary committee will be consulted prior to the minister's approval of a research plan or amendment to a research plan prepared by the commission.

The government notes the issue raised by the committee majority about the amendment in clause 74 of the bill and also in section 146ZQ of the act where there is no provision that facilitates the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commissioner's tabling of documents in the Legislative Assembly. The government therefore accepts this recommendation, which is recommendation No. 8, and in that regard I will be moving an amendment. The amendment will provide that in new section 314A the parliamentary commissioner will provide the documents to the Speaker, who will be required to table the documents in seven days. However, in the existing section 146ZQ, the amendments will provide that the assumed identity reports prepared by the commission are provided to the chairperson of the parliamentary committee, rather than the parliamentary commissioner, who will be required to table the reports within 14 sittings day.

The proposed amendment to section 146ZQ mirrors the similar requirements in section 314 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, as these reports are more appropriately provided to the parliamentary committee rather than the parliamentary commissioner. The parliamentary commissioner has been consulted about these amendments and I understand supports the proposed amendments.

The committee majority in recommendation No. 9 proposes that the proposed new section 292(g) be combined with existing section 292(g) to ensure that reviews on the structure of the commission are undertaken at the same time as the oversight committee's review of the activities of the commission—that is, every five years.

At this point it is timely to discuss concerns raised in the submissions about the new upper governance structure of the commission. Of the submitters who discussed these amendments in the bill, each had their own view on what would be the most appropriate structure, the commission's role and the relationships of and the role of each of the commissioners. Common themes raised in the submissions included that the chairman and the chief executive officer roles were given too many powers under the bill, that the chief executive officer position should not be a voting member of the commission, the removal of the civil liberties interest of the legally qualified commissioner, the removal of the requirement that at least one commissioner be a woman and increased maximum term of commissioners from five years to 10 years.

The Tasmanian Integrity Commission is the only other interstate agency similar to the commission with a board-like governance structure. The other commissions have one commissioner or chairperson who is responsible for the performance of the functions and the exercise of the powers of the relevant commission, but with an ability to appoint a deputy or assistant who helps the commissioner or chairperson. Other jurisdictions provide for legal qualifications for appointment as a commissioner with no reference to an interest in civil liberties or being a woman. I note that there is variance in the maximum terms of appointment of a commissioner across the other jurisdictions ranging from five years to 10 years.

As I stated in my explanatory speech when introducing the bill and as pointed out in the explanatory notes to the bill, there are many views on what is the most appropriate governance arrangements for the commission. The government has examined the various governance arrangements for similar interstate bodies and has arrived at what it considers to be the most suitable for the commission to carry out its various functions and exercise its powers. However, as the government is genuinely committed to making sure that the upper governance structure works, the bill inserts the new provision 292(g) in the act that allows the parliamentary committee to conduct periodic reviews of the structure of the commission. The proposed new section 292(g) provides flexibility to the parliamentary committee as to when it reviews the structure of the commission. The new clause does not mandate when the periodic reviews occur and this will be at the discretion of the parliamentary committee as and when required.

The committee majority recommendation would result in the parliamentary committee not being able to consider, should the need arise, if the upper governance arrangements are working effectively or not until mid 2016. For this reason, the government does not accept committee majority recommendation No. 9.

As I stated above, the committee majority also raised three points for clarification, which I will now address. The committee majority has invited me to clarify whether the commission will be able to demand a statutory declaration be submitted in the instance where a complaint is made without an accompanying statutory declaration and the commission requires a declaration to test the veracity of the complaint. The committee majority has also requested I clarify the various meanings of the terms 'complaint', 'information' and 'matter' and confirm in what instances a statutory declaration is required under the bill and in what circumstances a statutory declaration is not required.

At this point, I note that many of the submissions to the committee were opposed to the statutory declaration requirement for complaints, arguing this would prevent persons who had genuine and real complaints from making those complaints and there was a significant risk the commission would be prevented from investigating serious corruption. The policy intent of the bill is that complaints made to the commission must be by way of a statutory declaration. If the complaint is not made by way of a statutory declaration, the complaint cannot be accepted by the commission or otherwise dealt with by the commission, except for in the limited situations provided for in the bill. For example, the commission may accept a complaint without a statutory declaration if exceptional circumstances exist.

The government considers this requirement will ensure the commission receives only genuine complaints and will deter people from making vexatious, malicious, vindictive complaints for ulterior or mischievous purposes. However, the government will, to clarify any confusion about when a statutory declaration is required and what is 'information' or 'matter', seek amendments to the bill. I will be moving during the consideration in detail stage of the debate of this bill, amendments to clarify when a statutory declaration is or is not required and to clarify what 'information' or 'matter' is by providing a list of examples. The examples of what is 'information' or 'matter' are based upon those included in the commission's submission to the committee. The amendments I will move will also provide that a disclosure made under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 to the commission, known as a PID, does not need to be made by way of a statutory declaration. This amendment addresses a concern raised by the Queensland Ombudsman in his submission to the committee.

The majority committee has invited me to clarify which 'meetings' or 'hearings' of the parliamentary committee that the new clause 302A(2) is to apply to. As is noted in the government response to the committee's report, which I will now table along with the erratum to the explanatory notes, the government understands the term 'meeting' is an umbrella term and covers any time when the committee members gather together for the conduct of its business and may involve situations where other people or organisations are invited or summonsed to attend the meeting.

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 62—Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, government response [\[5013\]](#).

Tabled paper: Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, erratum to explanatory notes [\[5014\]](#).

It is the intention of the new clause 302A to require all meetings of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee to be public, except when it decides it is necessary to close the meeting for the reasons allowed for in new clause 302A(2).

I will now address some of the other more significant issues that were raised in submissions to the committee. Clause 17 of the bill raises the threshold of when public officials are to notify the commission of corrupt conduct in section 38, so that notification is only required when the public official reasonably suspects corrupt conduct. This is to ensure that the duty of a public official to notify the commission arises only where there is a real possibility that corrupt conduct is or may be involved, rather than where there is a mere suspicion that the conduct involves corrupt conduct.

The Queensland Law Society in its submission to the committee recommended that the amendment to section 38 should be better drafted as 'a suspicion based on reasonable grounds' as this imports objectivity into the test and makes the need for objectivity far more obvious for the person with the relevant suspicion. Such an amendment is not required because the dictionary in schedule 2 of the act already defines the term 'reasonably suspects' as 'suspects on grounds that are reasonable in the circumstances'.

The changing of the term 'chairperson' to 'chairman' was the subject of concern in 12 of the submissions and has also been raised in media reports. The government's position is that the term 'chairman' does not refer to any gender and given section 32B of the Acts Interpretation Act 1954, words indicating a gender includes each other gender. The use of the term 'chairman' will not prevent an appropriately qualified woman from being appointed a chairman of the commission. However, having listened to the concerns of the community, in a bill to be introduced into the parliament in the not-to-distant future we will move amendments to the Acts Interpretation Act to ensure in future

people who take on positions in government on any board or body can use their preferred title. That way we are not individually addressing each particular piece of legislation, we are addressing it through the Acts Interpretation Act and people can refer to themselves as they wish in the future.

Nine of the submissions discussed the bill's removal of the commission's prevention function for corruption, with many suggesting that prevention was an integral part of the commission's role to investigate complaints. Some submitters were concerned about the ability of the Public Service Commission to take up this role or the capacity of units of public administration to deal with corruption without the additional support of the commission's anticorruption training and education activities. The Public Service Commission's new CaPE service will provide the requisite advice, support and assistance to public sector agencies.

There are mixed views in the submissions made to the committee about various amendments in the bill requiring the commission to focus on and investigate only serious corruption or systemic cases of corrupt conduct. These amendments align with the government's vision of a commission that deals with only serious corruption matters and whose finite resources are not diverted to less serious matters that are more appropriately dealt with by any other government agencies.

Concerns were raised in several of the submissions about the amendment in clause 6 to section 4 of the act to provide for the commission's primary and secondary purpose. The division of the commission's purpose in this way was in no way intended to suggest that the commission's corruption function is not important or that the government does not think fighting corruption is important. We did call it, after all, the Crime and Corruption Commission. Given the concerns, and in all the circumstances, the government has decided that it is prudent to remove the reference to the commission's primary and secondary purpose as provided for in the bill. I will be moving an amendment to clause 6 of the bill during consideration in detail of the bill to remove the reference to a primary and secondary purpose of the commission.

The transitional provisions in the bill, and in particular the clauses providing for the continuing appointment of the acting chairperson, have generated concerns in four of the submissions and have also generated media attention. As noted in the explanatory notes to this bill and in my explanatory speech, these amendments will provide stability in the leadership of the commission and facilitate the smooth transition into the new governance arrangements. The committee majority agreed with the purpose and intent of these transitional amendments to provide for the continuing appointment of the acting chairperson, acting part-time commissioners and part-time commissioners.

Addressing the dissenting report prepared by the non-government members of the committee, the member for Rockhampton and the member for Nicklin, the dissenting report includes 32 recommendations which do not support the bill or the amendments included in the bill or seek additional amendments to the bill. The dissenting report recommendations are primarily derived from the concerns raised in the submissions to the committee and which I have addressed in my speech today or in the government response. For this reason, I do not propose to address each of the 32 recommendations individually. I simply state that the government does not support the dissenting report.

If I start where I left off some 57 minutes ago, this government believes in wanting and having a strong, independent Crime and Corruption Commission. There have been words over the last week that I think have dumbed the debate down with respect to reforms to the CMC. This was a body worthy of reform, this was a body in desperate need of reform. I want to thank the Hon. Ian Callinan and Professor Nicholas Aroney from the UQ law school for their review, I want to thank former federal police commissioner Mick Keelty for his review and I want to thank the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee for its review. They all reached the same conclusion: here was a body in desperate need of reform, a body that was surrounded by maladministration, a body that was surrounded by political opportunism, a body that had political operatives in it investigating other candidates and politicians.

I firmly believe, despite all the criticism that I have personally received over the last six weeks while this committee has been deliberating, that these reforms are overdue. These reforms are necessary to ensure that if the Queensland community is to have any faith in the integrity and accountability of an organisation designed to protect Queensland's citizens from corrupt behaviour and organised crime then the only way forward is with these amendments. The only way forward is for the CMC to accept its problems of the past and to accept there is a bright future for a strong, independent watchdog in this state, a watchdog that will still go after the likes of Gordon Nuttall, a watchdog that will still chase fake Tahitian princes, a watchdog that will fight the criminal gangs and enforce the government's strong laws against criminal gangs to ensure this state is the safest place to raise a family.

All that we are attempting to do today is make sure we have a body that is accountable to the people of Queensland through the parliamentarians who are elected by the people who come in here and debate these important issues. I implore all honourable members to support the CMC reform because only then will the CCC truly be an independent watchdog fighting corruption and organised crime in this state.

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.00 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. I want to leave the House in absolutely no doubt that the opposition opposes this bill. Today is the day members of this House decide if they want to protect the legacy of the Fitzgerald inquiry or turn back the clock. What Tony Fitzgerald did was introduce landmark reforms to protect all Queenslanders from corruption and from dishonesty. He gave our state an uncommon morality with his most significant recommendation, the establishment of the Criminal Justice Commission. Tony Fitzgerald addressed head-on a culture that led to misconduct and a general contempt for our justice system.

What the Newman government is doing today with the introduction of this bill is taking away those hard-fought for freedoms and trampling on the most important reform in our state in a generation and what is now accepted as an essential component of public administration. The Queensland of those dark pre-Fitzgerald days was one of brown paper bags loaded with cash. It was a world where police and politicians could be bought and get away with it. It was a state where corruption was par for the course. It was a place where there were limited means to stop this corruption and where protest and whistle blowing were greeted with an iron fist.

On 11 May 1987, the ABC's *Four Corners* program aired its now famous 'The Moonlight State' program by Chris Masters, exposing allegations of police corruption in Queensland. For years there had been reports and rumours of corrupt activities within what was the then Queensland police force and within successive governments; yes, even former Labor governments. As the Fitzgerald inquiry revealed, it was structured and institutionalised, but rarely exposed. Stories of payoffs and corruption had been reported by various media outlets. In January 1987, the *Courier-Mail*, under then editor Greg Chamberlin, published the first in what was to become a string of stories by Phil Dickie that exposed the seedy underworld in which corruption was allowed to flourish. With then Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen and a mainly compliant backbench of Liberals and Nationals in the coalition government, it appears that at that time heads were buried in the sand. However, by the mid-1980s there were some in the National Party who would not tolerate allegations of corruption any longer. They were people such as then Deputy Premier Bill Gunn and then Attorney-General Paul Clauson.

As luck would have it, then Premier Bjelke-Petersen was distracted by his 'Joh for PM' campaign and Bill Gunn was Acting Premier. As police minister, he had heard all the stories about corrupt activities and payoffs, but they were always denied by a police commissioner who was to end up in jail for those very activities. Bill Gunn wanted an end to the rumours and allegations once and for all. In the wake of the ABC's 'The Moonlight State' program, he and Paul Clauson worked together to draft a proposal to establish an inquiry to tackle the problem once and for all. Fortunately for Queensland, in those days we had an Attorney-General who took his job very seriously, who knew the law and who was prepared to give priority to the state's interests.

I am reminded—and I think all members of this House should be reminded—of an old saying: those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. Unfortunately, some Queenslanders have forgotten the hard lessons of the pre-Fitzgerald era. Worst of all, it seems everyone in the LNP has either forgotten or is deliberately ignoring those lessons. However, I will continue.

In December 1987, Mike Ahern replaced Sir Joh as Premier. Mike Ahern pledged to implement the Fitzgerald recommendations lock, stock and barrel. As far as the National Party was concerned, Mr Ahern had signed his own political death warrant for daring to make that promise. Let us think about that for a moment: the leader of the National Party government made a commitment to clean up our state and for that he was rewarded by being challenged and then bumped as Premier.

Tony Fitzgerald presented his report on 3 July 1989. It was a landmark report. In the months and years that followed, we saw four Liberal and National ministers jailed, a police commissioner jailed, and numerous corrupt police charged and convicted. In the dying days of the National Party government led by Russell Cooper, the legislation to establish the then Criminal Justice Commission was introduced. As the then shadow Attorney-General Dean Wells said of it—

This is possibly the most important piece of legislation of this parliament.

He said the CJC was important because it is 'the body that will keep the government honest'. Dean Wells is also worth quoting because he added—

We cannot trust the Nationals to appoint the people to the Criminal Justice Commission and we cannot trust the Nationals to appoint the commissioners.

That is the very heart of the issue. We have come full circle. After the institutionalisation of bipartisan appointments in the years that followed the initial creation of the CJC, we are back to where we started. We cannot trust the LNP to appoint the people to the Criminal Justice Commission and we cannot trust the LNP to appoint the commissioners.

When I look across the chamber, it does not appear that there are any Bill Gunns, Paul Clausons or Mike Aherns. Maybe there might be one and I will come to that a bit later. I see an uninformed Attorney-General, an arrogant Premier and LNP backbenchers sitting in silence as the Fitzgerald legacy—as this report—is trashed bit by bit. Because some members in this House are new, I urge all members to pick up a copy of the Fitzgerald report and read it. This is the history of our state. This is our unique Queensland history. This is the history that we have to treasure. This is the history that we should never trash. As I said earlier, those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

The proof will be in whether the government, the members here tonight, support this legislation or whether they have the courage to stand up to those who are taking our state backwards. On this side of the House we will be reminding voters as often as possible if this government goes ahead with the plans tonight. We will be reminding Queenslanders that it is the LNP that has been determined over this term not just to weaken our state's corruption watchdog but also to tear down our state's corruption watchdog. This government wants to remake in its own image what should be an independent corruption watchdog. Corruption not only destroys good government but also destroys governments themselves. That is the important lesson that the LNP fails to acknowledge.

Queenslanders have no time for police or political corruption. They do not swallow the line, 'Don't you worry about that' or its modern equivalent, 'Nothing to see here'. Those of us who do remember the pre-Fitzgerald era also remember how corruption diverts the government from delivering to the people it is meant to serve. Cronyism, special deals, hidden agreements and the like mean that Queenslanders who deserve the government's attention never get it, but those with deep pockets who are willing to pay for favours monopolise it. Today, the bill before us puts our state at a crossroads. I am sure that, like me, most Queenslanders find it disturbing that we are at a crossroads they thought we had left behind some 30 years ago.

Today we decide whether we are the sunshine state or we return to the moonlight state. Queenslanders will be watching to see how we vote today. History will ultimately judge those who vote for the unnecessary, politically motivated and destructive elements of this bill. Nobody on that side of the House should forget that voters will eventually get to have their say. This bill is a travesty. It completes the dismantling of the Fitzgerald legacy that was started by the Borbidge government and it heralds a return to the days of Sir Joh—the days where corruption and cronyism flourished in Queensland.

Much is wrong with this bill. It is an attack on the independence of the body that is charged with fighting serious crime and corruption in this state. It is an attempt to politicise the appointments to that very body and undermine the confidence of Queenslanders in its independence. Most right-thinking Queenslanders are opposed to this bill. The submissions received by the committee are a testament to the opposition to this bill that is before us. The most significant change in this bill is the removal of the requirement for bipartisan support for the appointment of the commissioners, in particular the chairperson. This goes to the very heart of it.

I am advised that the member for Stafford commissioned a ReachTEL poll in his electorate. This is very important. I will read some of this into *Hansard*. All members should take note because if this is what the polling is showing in the member for Stafford's electorate, it will be showing up in other members' electorates as well. So listen very closely. The question was 'Of the following, how do you think the head of the CMC should be chosen?' The results were: by agreement of the entire parliament, 73.2 per cent; solely by the government of the day, 10 per cent; unsure, 16 per cent. Some 73 per cent of people polled in the member for Stafford's electorate believe that there should be bipartisan agreement on the appointment of the CMC head. There are other very interesting statistics in that poll. For the benefit of the parliament, I will table that document so that it will be in the records of parliament and form part of history.

Tabled paper: Reachtel survey questions and results on the Crime and Misconduct Commission from a poll in the Stafford electorate [5015].

I know that the Premier and the Attorney-General have both made a lot out of the fact that in his report back in 1989 Tony Fitzgerald did not specifically recommend that bipartisan support be required for the appointment of the commissioners. What the Fitzgerald report recommended was—

The government should consult the Criminal Justice Committee about the appointment.

It did not specifically say what form that consultation should take, but what I am certain of is that it did not envisage the sort of consultation envisaged by this bill. All that would be required, as the bill stands, is for the PCMC to be told who the proposed appointment is before they are appointed. Common courtesy would dictate that as a very minimum, but even that was not afforded the committee when the acting chairperson was appointed then reappointed last year.

Let us go back in history so we have it all in perspective. The parliament decided in 1989 that the best way to ensure public confidence in the anticorruption watchdog of this state was to have bipartisan support when setting it up. That is why then Premier Russell Cooper sat down with the then leader of the Liberal Party, Angus Innes, and the then leader of the Labor Party, Wayne Goss, and nussed out exactly how the body would look. It was bipartisanship in more than just a name. It was very real. It is the approach that should still be taken.

If there is any doubt what Tony Fitzgerald had in mind for the CJC and now for the CMC then it would be a simple matter to ask. The Premier and Attorney-General have been more than happy to go back to the Fitzgerald report to justify their actions. They have been a little more reluctant to go back to Tony Fitzgerald himself. Why? Because they know what the response would be. In fact, Tony Fitzgerald has been more than willing to let us know his views on this bill, and in particular his views on the issue of bipartisan support.

In explaining why he made a submission to the committee, despite the overwhelming evidence that it would have little influence on a committee heavily stacked in favour of the government, he said—

... I can't leave open the possibility that it might be incorrectly suggested that I don't object to the Bill.

Tony Fitzgerald goes on to describe the intent of the bill—

The Bill before this Committee takes the final step needed to remove the Commission's independence entirely and bring it completely under government control.

They are the words of Tony Fitzgerald. He continued—

Using its parliamentary majority, the Liberal National Party has appointed five of its members to this seven person committee and, as all members of the committee are doubtless aware, it recently sacked and re-stacked another committee which attempted to '*enhance the democratic process*' and then fabricated a reason for doing so.

The circumstances aren't encouraging but, given the public turmoil in Queensland, particularly in relation to criminal justice, I can't leave open the possibility that it might be incorrectly suggested that I don't object to the Bill.

The Liberal National Party's present huge parliamentary majority makes effective, independent oversight of public administration more, not less, essential. Democracies need to control the human frailties of those in power in order to protect the rights and well-being of others.

Tony Fitzgerald's history and the inquiry report and the initial attempts by the Borbidge government to overturn the Fitzgerald reforms make interesting reading for any student of politics or history. I think it is beneficial to repeat it here as part of this debate so that people have a very true understanding of what was really going on.

I will continue to quote Tony Fitzgerald. He stated—

Following a Commission of Inquiry which exposed some of the criminals in the National Party and the Police Force, reforms were introduced during the late 1980s and 1990s. One important reform recommended by the Inquiry was the establishment of the Criminal Justice Commission (now the Crime and Misconduct Commission).

The Commission was established to continue the work of the Inquiry and, in doing so, prevent crooked politicians and police again running the State.

Although it has not always functioned smoothly, the Commission is a constant reminder to all public officials that misconduct risks exposure and punishment and it has, until now, acted as a reasonably effective brake on the misuse of power and curtailed criminal activities.

However, the nature of its work is such that it is never far from controversy.

It is resented by all political parties, each of whom has taken steps to dilute its effectiveness when in power, and hated by politicians whose improper activities it obstructs or exposes. To some, it symbolises the loss of an era in which the power and influence of their party and its adherents were effectively beyond challenge.

Both major political parties blame the Commission's imaginary bias when it exposes misconduct involving one of that party's members or exonerates an opposition member. Its workload and exposure to controversy are significantly increased by politicians making allegations against each other for political advantage, sometimes without any substantial basis.

Like all organisations which has a significant workload of difficult work, it makes mistakes. However, its mistakes do not explain the irrational vendetta which has continued for a quarter of a century.

Soon after Mike Ahern, the Premier when the Inquiry reported in 1989, undertook to implement the reforms which it had recommended, the National Party replaced him with a committed opponent of reform, Russell Cooper, who a couple of months later led the party to its first electoral defeat in a generation.

The National and Liberal Parties (in coalition) next gained power when a government in which Robert Borbidge was Premier and Cooper was Police Minister was elected in 1996. The Borbidge Government quickly demonstrated that the coalition parties had learned nothing from their previous experience.

He goes on to state—

The Borbidge Government continued to pursue the Commission.

In late 1997, it introduced amendments to the Criminal Justice Act and a new Crime Commission Act. The Commission was subjected to supervision by a Criminal Justice Commissioner appointed by the Government and both the Commission and the Crime Commission were made responsible to a Government Minister instead of Parliament.

The Bill before this Committee takes the final step needed to remove the Commission's independence entirely and bring it completely under government control.

The Borbidge Government was voted out of office in the 1998 election, in which its primary vote went down by almost 18 per cent and it lost 11 seats, and the Liberal National Party next gained government on 26 March 2012.

It soon turned its attention to the Commission.

In October that year, the Government announced the appointment of the Honourable Ian Callinan, ... AC, QC., assisted by an academic from the University of Queensland, to review the *Crime and Misconduct Act* ...

Callinan had ably represented the National Party Government during the Inquiry which led to the establishment of the Commission.

When the Inquiry was established in 1987, the National Party Attorney-General was advised and influenced by a small ambitious group of Justice Department bureaucrats. The Attorney-General appointed one, John Sosso ... as Secretary to the Inquiry.

Sosso didn't last long in that role but returned to the Justice Department which, as the Inquiry's report notes, did little willingly to assist the Inquiry. Later, when Borbidge was Premier, Sosso was Deputy Director General of the Premier's Department. He is now the Director General of the Department of Justice.

In contrast to Sosso, neither of the Bill's principal public proponents, the Premier, Campbell Newman ... and the Attorney-General, Jarrod Bleijie ... experienced life in Queensland when criminal politicians and crooked police ran the State.

Newman did not arrive in Queensland until 1993. Bleijie, who was born in 1982, was a child in his early primary school years when the Inquiry reported in 1989. It seems unlikely that he followed its revelations between the ages of 5 and 8.

What is very interesting, though, is Fitzgerald's analysis of the Newman government's motives in bringing forward this bill. He fully understands the determination of the government to bring down the corruption function of the CMC and reduce it to a body that combats organised and serious crime in Queensland. He set out very clearly in his submission the attack on the judiciary, on the legal system of this state, on the lawyers who have the audacity to represent their clients. He stated—

The Bill before this Committee meshes neatly with the Government's "law and order" propaganda and the Liberal National Party antipathy towards the Inquiry reforms. It is unnecessary to discuss the Callinan report, which has been overtaken by the Bill, or even the Bill in detail. I have scanned the Callinan report's Executive Summary to satisfy myself that, as I expected, Callinan did not recommend the government's outrageous proposal in the Bill that it and it alone decide on senior appointments to the Commission irrespective of the views of the Opposition or advice of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee.

Mr Berry: Neither did Fitzgerald.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They do not want to hear Fitzgerald. Let it be noted. He goes on to state—

The Government has already appointed an unsuitable Acting Commission Chairman and, in order to protect him from investigation, dismissed members—

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Could the Leader of the Opposition please take her seat. The AG has a point of order.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is fully aware there is a select ethics committee inquiry occurring as we speak with respect to the person she just mentioned. She should honour the respect and give the dignity to the House that it deserves.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I did not mention anyone.

Mr Bleijie: You mentioned him.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I did not.

A government member: It's true. You did mention him.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I did not.

Mr Bleijie: You just said we have appointed the most unacceptable person—

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am quoting Fitzgerald.

A government member: No, you did.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am quoting Fitzgerald.

Mr Bleijie: Well, you should not be talking about it at all.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am allowed to quote Fitzgerald.

Mr Bleijie: You should not be talking about a report to the committee.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is the report to the committee. I am allowed to quote.

Mr Bleijie: You know the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am not saying it; I am quoting Fitzgerald.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, just as a general warning on this debate, it is important to be aware of what is proceeding before the Ethics Committee. At this point there has not been any breach of that. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you very much. I am quoting exactly from Tony Fitzgerald. I will continue. He goes on to state—

The Government has already appointed an unsuitable Acting Commission Chairman and, in order to protect him from investigation, dismissed members of the parliamentary committee which was inquiring into his inappropriate conduct and appointed other committee members whom it presumably considers to be more compliant.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will go on.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I just advise the Leader of the Opposition and all members that that is a breach of the standing orders and the Leader of the Opposition—

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will withdraw that last paragraph then.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:—may withdraw and proceed with more care, please, in this speech.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you very much. I am going to continue to quote from other sections of Tony Fitzgerald's submission to the committee.

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have every right to read out what Tony Fitzgerald has had to say in relation to—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! I will judge. When the member says—

Ms PALASZCZUK: They do not want to hear the truth.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:—I will make the judgement at the time. The Leader of the Opposition has the call. But, again, I have given some very clear guidance to the Leader of the Opposition in terms of what she can and cannot say under standing order 271. Perhaps I will take a moment to read that for the sake of the House. It reads—

Restriction on debating matter in the House

A matter referred to the ethics committee must not be debated in the House until such time as the ethics committee has reported on the matter if, in the opinion of the Speaker, such debate could prejudice the matter.

Again, I give guidance to the Leader of the Opposition from standing order 271.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Sure. I will go on. The Attorney-General appointed Callinan and Aroney to undertake a review of the CMC. Then the PCMC conducted a review into the release and destruction of Fitzgerald inquiry documents. Then the Public Service Commissioner appointed Mick Keelty to conduct a review of the CMC. None of these reviews recommended removal of the requirement for bipartisan support. Let me say that again: none of these reviews recommended removal of the requirement for bipartisan support. Every three years the PCMC conducts a review of the CMC. Never has this review recommended removal of the requirement for bipartisan support.

When asked about this issue at the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee hearing into the bill, the Director-General of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, John Sosso, was unable to identify any evidence that the current position of requiring bipartisan support is not working. So, applying the logic that the Premier and the Attorney-General have applied to this question, they contend that, because the Fitzgerald report did not recommend bipartisan support, there is no need for it. If the reviews of the act and the CMC have not recommended removal of the bipartisan support, if Callinan-Aroney and Keelty did not recommend it, why is it then in the bill?

Similarly, amongst the 38 submissions made to the committee on the bill, none supported the removal of bipartisan support. In fact, it was the most vehemently opposed of all the amendments in the bill. I would like to go through the submissions and provide a few quotes. Former chairperson Robert Needham said—

In my opinion, this is a most retrograde proposal which should not be implemented.

...

The only attempt at a rationale that I have heard was in a statement by Mr Bleijie in a television interview where he stated words to the effect that the removal would “take politics out” of the appointment process. This statement is either naive or disingenuous.

Rather than taking politics out of the appointment process, the removal of the requirement for bipartisan political approval will ensure that the appointment is seen as political.

This goes to the core of the issue: the government of the day will control the appointment process. The government of the day is politicising—politicising—the role that will then become the chair of the new commission. The Bar Association of Queensland said—

Of most concern to the Association is the removal of the requirement that the appointment of all commissioners must be with the bipartisan support of the parliamentary committee. This requirement was both the symbol that the Queensland Parliament was committed to a Commission that was independent of partisan opinion and the single most effective means of achieving that independence.

Former commissioner Hon. Doug Drummond QC said—

The abandonment of the requirement of bipartisan support for the appointment of commissioners including the chairman will, by itself, guarantee that the Commission is unable to do “what it was always meant to do”, namely to tackle serious corruption independently of government control.

The Australian Lawyers for Human Rights stated—

The omission of the requirement for bipartisan support of nominees is of crucial importance as such a measure is destructive of the commission’s independence from the Executive.

Former chairperson Professor Ross Martin QC stated—

Others have detailed the reduction in independence arising from this step. I join in advising against the removal of the need for bipartisan support as it presently arises.

The Law and Justice Institute stated—

The proposal to remove the need for bipartisan support for the appointment of the Chair of the Commission will dismantle a cornerstone of the Commission’s independence that has stood since its inception ... it cannot be supported.

We are seeing here a trend: no-one is saying that they do not support having a bipartisan appointment to the chair of the commission. It has stood since its inception. If it has stood since its inception, where is the evidence that it needs to change? I note that the Attorney has said that he wants to bring this in line with the appointment process in New South Wales, in particular, ICAC. There are some problems with this because it is not a bipartisan appointment. Frankly, if New South Wales uses a different system, let it use it. Here in Queensland the bipartisan appointment process has stood the test of time. There is no reason to remove it. I cannot see any evidence to remove it. I would like to know whose idea it was to remove it. Why is there a problem with having a solely independent chair who has bipartisan support? What is the problem with having an independent chair? For Queenslanders to retain public confidence in the commission, in the independent nature of the work that it does, the appointment of the chair must be bipartisan.

Mr Bleijie: Who did you recommend for Chief Justice?

Ms PALASZCZUK: This government wants to trash this history. I am not taking interjections.

Mr Bleijie: Tell us who you recommended for Chief Justice.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This has nothing to do with that.

Mr Bleijie: In the spirit of cooperation, who did you recommend?

Ms PALASZCZUK: For goodness sake! Madam Speaker, I am not taking any interjections.

Mr Bleijie: Grown-up opposition, who did you recommend?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I did not interject once when the Attorney was on his feet—not once.

Mr Bleijie: And I did not attack you.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am not attacking you.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Members! I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Bleijie: You just said something about my age.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I quoted Tony Fitzgerald, in fact. I never said anything about your age. I quoted Tony Fitzgerald. Here is a copy of his report. Have you read his report?

Mr Bleijie: Here is a copy of Ian Callinan's report. Have you read it?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, I have read it.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I note that comments are not being directed through the chair, and these interjections are getting away from the debate that is the subject of the bill. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me continue with the Queensland Law Society, which stated—

The Society's strong view is that the Commission must be an independent and apolitical anticorruption institution and that to be otherwise is to detract from Queensland's democratic institutions.

The Society is significantly concerned about the effect of this proposed change, as it has the potential for the senior positions in the Commission to become:

- at worst—overtly politicised, or
- at the least—open to the suggestion of political interference.

Professor Charles Sampford stated—

Removing the requirement for bi-partisan support of appointment to the Commission abandons a very important innovation in Queensland's integrity system of which we should be proud.

David Gow, on behalf of five former commissioners, stated—

The removal of a fundamental provision designed to guarantee, as far as possible, the independence of the CMC will compromise its independence. In the long term, the community's confidence in the integrity of government at all levels—including political levels—will be weakened.

Professor Brown stated—

These processes, especially in respect of the requirement for bipartisan support for the appointment of the chairman under s.228 of the Act, have been central to the independence and reputation of the Commission, and promise to continue to be so. While innovative at the time, such requirements continue to point the way forward as provisions from which other institutions and jurisdictions can learn.

By contrast, removing them—especially in the absence of any published policy rationale for doing so—simply suggests that the Government of the day is taking a short-term view of how it might most easily assert greater control over an integrity institution that, in fact, the general public relies on to function with independence from the Executive that it is principally tasked to help oversight.

The Attorney-General appears to have had a change of heart in relation to bipartisan support. His attitude today, as on many issues, is in stark contrast with his attitude when in opposition. In November 2011 when he was shadow Attorney-General, he publicly called for a more bipartisan approach to the appointment of the new chairperson of the CMC following the resignation of the Hon. Martin Moynihan. He released a media release at the time which stated—

I acknowledge that the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee, on which the LNP is represented, is currently working with the Attorney-General and considering applications for a new CMC chairperson.

However, because we are on the cusp of an election, it is important the process is more open, transparent and public. The Opposition must be fully involved so Queenslanders have every confidence the right person will lead this vital institution into the future.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me repeat it so he can hear very clearly what he said in his own words.

Mr Bleijie: I know what I said because I said it, and it was just before the election.

Ms PALASZCZUK: 'The Opposition must be fully involved so Queenslanders have every confidence the right person will lead this vital institution into the future.' They were the words of the shadow Attorney-General at the time.

Mr Bleijie: What date?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Right at the time beforehand. At that time bipartisan support of the PCMC was not enough for the Attorney-General. What an incredible about-face. There is absolutely no support for the removal of this requirement. Many of the people who have made submissions pointed out there was no perceived deficiency that it is proposed to address. It is, in reality, a purely political measure which seeks to give the government some degree of control over the integrity framework of this state. It is in stark contrast to the Attorney-General's own views and his own words that he used when in opposition. In opposition he wanted more transparency and more openness.

The opposition is totally opposed to the removal of the requirement for bipartisan support for the appointment of commissioners, in the same way that it has been opposed to the appointment and then reappointment of the acting chair on this basis. The opposition has repeatedly called for an appointment to be made in the long term on an appropriate basis including bipartisan support.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Well, I am not going to be in conflict so if you could just bear with me. Let me be very frank. The Attorney-General has made a few very interesting comments in the House. In relation to the current CMC he used words to the effect that it has some 'warped priorities'; it has 'lost focus'; it 'blamed others'; and he wants to 'end the politics'. Nothing can be further from the truth. What the government wants to do here tonight is to trash the legacy of Tony Fitzgerald.

Mr Choat: Oh, rubbish!

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, it is not. I have given you the full history. The majority of you were not elected in this House when these issues—

Government members: You weren't either.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, I wasn't but I was around and I remember it very well.

Mrs Frecklington: Give us a break!

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Members! I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Tonight is an attempt to wind back generations and decades. Tony Fitzgerald took Queensland from a place we do not want to return to. We are now in a place where we have confidence in our independent corruption watchdog here in Queensland.

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Members!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Madam Speaker, they have an opportunity to put their names on the speaking list. There is a speaking list being circulated and they have every opportunity to put their names on it. I did not interject on the Attorney-General once when he was on his feet. Not once did I interject. This is perhaps one of the most serious votes that we will take in this House. At some stage tonight—and I do not know whether it will be midnight or the early hours of tomorrow morning when there is not much media scrutiny and not much ability for people to tune in and listen to what is happening in this place—

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Oh, Madam Speaker!

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Members!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is such a serious issue. They can interject and laugh and dismiss it and not understand the true history behind it, and they may not even understand public sentiment, but I know that the member for Stafford understands because he did a poll and he understands that the issue is alive in the community. I understand that this issue is alive in the community. I travel across the state, and when I was recently in Bundaberg a couple sitting next to me said, 'We cannot believe what this government is doing to the CMC.' People in this House think the general public do not understand what this government is intending to do here, but the government is taking the people of Queensland for granted because they do understand. They understand that what this government wants to do is very real and they understand the importance of having an independent chair of the CMC.

What this government is seeking to do tonight is to politicise the CMC. It is something that is unacceptable. It is something that is completely and utterly disgraceful. It is something that the opposition does not accept, and I am quite sure there will be other speakers who will also speak against this. What I have clearly demonstrated is that the people who have submitted to the

committee in relation to this issue have been very clear in their support for the bipartisan appointment of the chair and the commissioners of the CMC. There has been no contrary evidence provided by the Attorney-General or anyone from the parliament in relation to why this needs to go. Why does the Attorney-General want to do it now? Why does the government want to take this action now? It is because they have had a long-term vendetta against the CMC.

Queenslanders deserve to have a very strong anticorruption watchdog in this state. It is something we have fought for for generations. Why is it important to have an independent anticorruption watchdog? Look across the border to what is happening in New South Wales, where ICAC is investigating and there are revelations daily. There has been the loss of a Premier and the loss of recent ministers and I think there are a number of members who are also under scrutiny. We do not want to return to a place where corruption and misconduct can flourish. We can help stop any of this flourishing in Queensland by making sure the public has confidence in its anticorruption watchdog in this state. What better way to give the public that confidence than to say we support having an independent chair that has the support of the whole of the parliament, that has bipartisan support—

Mr Davies: ICAC doesn't have that.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, it does not have that, and I do not support the ICAC appointment. I support—

Mr Davies: You just said what a great job it's doing.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, I talked about what is happening down there. If you had listened—

Mr Bleijie: You said you supported what ICAC is doing but you don't support ICAC.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I did not say that at all and do not put words in my mouth, Attorney.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Please direct your comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Queenslanders need to have confidence. There has not been any change until now and Queenslanders need to pose some questions. Why is this happening now? Why all of a sudden does the LNP—this Attorney-General, this Premier and this Deputy Premier—want to control the CMC? They control the committee, and if the amendments are brought in the government of the day will control the appointments. How is that going to be perceived in the public as being independent? It will not be perceived as independent, and the public will no longer have confidence. That is the situation.

Today is the thrashing of the Fitzgerald legacy by this government. Today is the unwinding of those reforms. I am concerned that, if this proposal goes forward and the LNP is able to appoint their own people without bipartisan support, we may see in the future a culture of misconduct and corruption. I have grave concerns. I do not want Queensland to go back to those dark days of the moonlight state and to reliving that history which I retold in great detail here. I want a Queensland that is strong and resilient. I want a Queensland that says no to corruption, where police are free to go about their jobs and stamp out corruption in this state.

One of the most important organisations in this state is the Crime and Misconduct Commission and it must be free to investigate whoever and whenever it wants to. I repeat: it must be able to investigate whoever and whenever. However, if you politicise the appointment of the commissioners and the chair, Queenslanders will not have confidence because there will be a perception of bias. There will be a perception that if something negative is coming to the government then they may not act. I want to know that Queenslanders and this parliament have confidence in whoever is the chair and whoever are the commissioners.

Tonight is going to be a very, very easy decision for some people to make, especially those on this side of the House. It may be somewhat more of a difficult decision for some members on the other side of the House, but time will tell. Please let me reiterate that Queenslanders out there and members of the community do understand these issues. You are all putting your heads in the sand and you are all fools if you think for one moment that people out in your electorates and people out in the wider communities do not understand what you are planning to do. The people of Queensland are smart people. They understand exactly what is happening, just like they understand exactly what Tony Abbott is planning to do in the federal budget and just like they understand what the Newman government has been doing with the sacking of workers and the breaking down of services—

Mr BLEIJIE: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance pursuant to the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They clearly understand what is happening.

Mr BLEIJIE: Point of order, Madam Speaker!

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I have heard your point of order. There is a bill before the House. We are debating the second reading of that bill and I ask that the member keep her speech pertaining to the bill. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Queenslanders want to have confidence in their anticorruption watchdog in this state. Queenslanders deserve nothing less, and they do not want anything more than the feeling of confidence that whoever is the chair in the commission has the free-ranging ability to investigate anyone, including any member of this House regardless of their political party. I hope that would never happen—I honestly hope that members are doing the right thing—but it means that if you want to have the confidence then it must have the bipartisan support.

We reject the amendment that the Attorney is putting forward in relation to the way appointments are made in New South Wales. Am I concerned about what is happening in New South Wales with the ICAC hearings? Yes, I am concerned. However, we want to ensure that that does not happen here in Queensland. We can only ensure that if we have full—

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I don't think the member opposite should be talking about that.

We can only ensure that if we have full confidence in our anticorruption watchdog. I am going to leave my comments there. Other members of the opposition also have things to say in relation to this bill.

In conclusion, as I have said, this is perhaps one of the most important votes that this parliament will have. I urge all members to consider the issues very, very seriously. I do not think that the government has put enough thought into this issue at all. They do not understand the consequences. However, I will tell Queensland what a future Labor government will do. Regardless of what this government does tonight, a future Labor government will restore the bipartisan nature of the CMC, the anticorruption watchdog in this state. We will ensure that any appointments to the CMC and the commissioners are made with the bipartisan support of the parties represented in this chamber. We believe that that is important for democracy and we believe that it is important for the future investigation of corruption and misconduct. Queenslanders deserve nothing less, and that is our commitment.

Tonight the government will trash the CMC. It will wind us back decades to a place that we need not be, and they stand condemned.

 **Mr BERRY** (Ipswich—LNP) (5.51 pm): I consider myself to be a little bit of a Nostradamus because on a couple of occasions just prior to the election in 2012 I actually made two predictions: one that Campbell Newman would win Ashgrove and the second that Wayne Swan would never deliver a surplus budget. I do not know whether I just have that vision or whether I am just politically adept. I am going to make another prediction. I am going to make a prediction that this bill will be passed and that the Labor Party will not change back to bipartisanship.

Ms Palaszczuk: No, we will.

Mr BERRY: It will not.

Ms Palaszczuk: Yes, we will. You won't be here.

Mr BERRY: We shall see. I might say that I unreservedly rise to support the passage of the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 through the Assembly. I think that the people who listen will actually understand why I unreservedly support the bill. I say to the Leader of the Opposition that I was around. I mean no disrespect but, quite frankly, her view of history and mine seem to differ quite substantially.

In recent years there were warnings that the Crime and Misconduct Commission was not as efficient as Queenslanders would have expected. For instance, the release of the Fitzgerald documents was just the tip of the iceberg. There was also the unauthorised destruction of documents. The CMC received an injection of funds of \$7 million last year and it now has a budget of around \$57 million per annum. It is a reasonable expectation of all Queenslanders that the CMC should be equipped to be able to move quickly on organised crime. Also, Queenslanders do expect the CMC to be ahead of the game in detecting and prosecuting outlaw bikie gangs, which have been identified very clearly from various reports as having been involved in a number of criminal activities and are a substantial part of the criminal organisations in Australia. Perhaps if the CMC had been in the game, a steady stream of incidents which have plagued our media may not have occurred. We know about

the illegal prostitution; the robbery; extortion; manufacture and distribution of illegal drugs; murder; drive-by shootings; involvement in industrial union activity, particularly standover tactics; and drug importation.

I think I can firmly stand here tonight and say to honourable members that the CMC has not provided a bang for Queensland's buck. It really just has not performed. I will provide some hard data which will suggest that that is right. We all remember the murder at the Sydney airport, the shooting of a bystander at a Gold Coast shopping centre, the fracas on the Gold Coast at the two restaurants where fights broke out and the bail-up of the police watch-house. They did not ease the concerns of any Queenslanders. In fact, I thought that their position was fairly clear; and, through the media, the position is that they wanted change. It was very clear that the CMC was not effective. There is something on which I agree with the Leader of the Opposition and that is that the life of the CMC squarely rests on the public having confidence in it.

The Independent Commission Against Corruption, which we all know as ICAC, is the equivalent corruption-fighting body in New South Wales. Many of my colleagues have indicated that it works on a veto system, as does the majority of those bodies in other states. I will examine the bipartisanship provision to drill down as to what that really means and perhaps why it is not effective. The Police Integrity Commission is also an organ within the crime-fighting arm of the New South Wales government. There are some things we need to stop and think about. The CMC employs about 300 people. ICAC has 120 people. The Police Integrity Commission has about 100 people. So the state of New South Wales, which has probably double the population of Queensland, operates with 220-odd people and the CMC operates with 300 people. If that does not cause some alarm bells to be ringing, particularly when the Leader of the Opposition stands up and places ICAC and the PIC on a plinth and heralds their success, something is going wrong. We need to fix the CMC. We need for it to be the leading corruption body. It has got the history. It should have improved on its model. It should be the knife-edged fight against organised crime in this state and it is not.

The Police Integrity Commission deals with about 5,000 complaints of which only nine are given anonymously, which is probably 0.02 per cent of all the complaints. I will come back to that because statutory declarations play a part. It clearly indicates—and one would have to be blind Freddy to not work this out—that there needs to be some reform to the agenda. The government responded by holding an inquiry headed by a High Court Justice of Australia and a renowned academic in Professor Aroney, and they found that there needs to be change. I am not entirely sure that the Leader of the Opposition went so far as to challenge the credentials of the Hon. Ian Callinan. One can only work on the presumption that she did not. Therefore, we must hold that the inquiry brought about a model for change and, effectively, this bill is about change.

Quite frankly, there are so many things in this bill we would like to debate and discuss, but it would appear that bipartisanship has politically risen to the fore, and that is the difficulty. In the 1980s, after the Fitzgerald inquiry—I might pause for one moment to confirm that Tony Fitzgerald did not state anything about bipartisanship. It was a point in time where Queensland had virtually had a heart attack and it was at that moment, as I understand it, that the then Premier Russell Cooper decided that bipartisanship was a good idea. Is it a good idea today? I think the proof is in the pudding. Let us look at the brief history of this parliament.

I might just encompass it to say that politics is always adversarial, and that is clearly seen if one refers to *Hansard*. The examples that I am going to point to are when the bikie laws came out and we had bipartisan support. Not more than six months went by when the Leader of the Opposition withdrew the Labor Party's support and said, 'Oh, it's not working.' How can one have bipartisanship when a party cannot even honour their vote in parliament? I am not criticising the Labor Party for having done that, because politically it was probably the right thing for that party to do at the time. That is just the nature of politics and the way it works. I understand the reason why the Labor Party needs to hang its hat on bipartisanship. It needs to because it has the support of various people who—perhaps by their credentials rather than what they say—espouse bipartisanship as being the only model.

I read the hundreds of submissions that came in, and I was looking for anything that helped me make a connection between bipartisanship and the functioning of the CMC. We appoint Supreme Court judges, but that does not necessarily mean that they side with conservative or radical politics. It just does not follow. Regardless of who it is, people of that ilk and stature take up the position because they want to make a difference. Let's, for a moment, examine the model that is proposed in this bill. The model is not dissimilar, if not identical, to what happens in America. I am of course leaving aside all the models in Australia, including ICAC, which say that the veto is an appropriate mechanism.

This bill goes one step further by improving bipartisanship, and that is what makes this bill work so that it can again be at the forefront of anticorruption fighting as in the days of the Fitzgerald inquiry. It has improved it in this way: the Attorney-General recommends a chairman. That recommendation goes to the parliamentary committee, which has the right of veto. The committee might be government loaded in terms of more government members than opposition members, but I suspect it would not take too long for the committee to examine the proposed chairman. They can call him in and ask him questions about his role, what he wants to achieve, how he wants to achieve it and how he sees the role of corruption fighting for the next 20 years, and all of those matters can be examined in minute detail. Not only that, but what can also be examined are his credentials.

I believe that, as this bill becomes an act and as this act unfurls, in fact we will start to have chairmen and chairwomen who will be at the forefront of corruption fighting. We might well go overseas to find somebody who will tackle crime. We might find somebody interstate, because there will be a panel of experts. That is not dissimilar to the Fitzgerald days when we had commissioners of police who came from various places around Australia. I expect that it will be even stronger as time passes, because we now live in a world of speciality, in an environment of changing models of corruption and we need to be ahead of the game. That is the point about all of this: having a chairman whose credentials are scrutinised, having him cross-examined and re-examined on his modus operandi and what he wants to achieve, makes for a safer chairman. If the opposition—whoever that may be at the time—is effective, they will find any kinks in his armour and it will be not dissimilar to what it is here today. We will have the media scrutinising any decision that the government may make. That is a far better model than bipartisanship, where in fact nothing is examined and just because it is bipartisan, everybody seems to accept it. The way that would proceed is somewhat questionable.

Of course, that is my position as to how I believe this bill will actually take us through the next 30 years of corruption fighting. The chairman really needs to have his mark in the game because really corruption is like a virus; it undergoes metamorphosis and changes quickly. Technology plays a big part in that, and I do not want to go on about identity fraud and so forth, but those matters will really come into play in years to come and that will be an integral part of corruption as I see it.

I might just turn briefly to the question of the statutory declaration, because it really has not been touched upon. As I have indicated, ICAC were dealing with some 5,000 complaints. I think the significance of that is that only nine complaints were anonymous—that is, people believed that they had something to report. It is not too farfetched to suggest that somebody could attest to something by statutory declaration and then not stand behind it. It needs to have some filter, and that was a recommendation of the Hon. Ian Callinan and Professor Aroney. The emphasis is again on making sure that Queensland gets some bang for its buck. For the \$57 million that we pay in, we need it to be cutting edge. We need to find those golden nuggets that will lead to investigations.

Of course it is the case that we are not all experts, and we need to have a triage procedure that will look for those golden nuggets and carry out those investigations. All Queenslanders know—or if they do not know, will understand—that the CMC cannot be everything to everybody all the time. That just does not happen. It needs to be proactive; it needs to be working with government. But the result of all this not having bipartisanship is the fact that the government is responsible for that organ of corruption fighting. It is responsible for it, and it needs to do things to make sure it is effective; just as the chairman is responsible for corruption fighting and he must deliver.

If I am right in saying that the chairman will not be a barrister or a solicitor or somebody who dabbles in those sorts of matters but is a true crime-fighting professional, he will in fact deliver. It is firmly my view that this bill is taking our state into the next 30 years, and it will change again. This is not something which is stagnant. After all, there has been another act since the act that established the CJC. Even under the various previous governments, there have been changes. There needs to be adjustments, there needs to be tweaking at the sides and it needs to have the confidence of Queenslanders that it is working. I do not think that Queenslanders have any particular view that it has been working effectively given the fact that these bikie gangs have become more confident. It takes years for that to develop. It takes years for them to be able to get out into the crowd and start these fracas.

I want to thank the secretariat. This was a very difficult bill to work on and one which took a good deal of work. I also thank my colleagues for assisting on this 100-page report and one which I think clearly examines the recommendations of the—

(Time expired)

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (6.11 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. At the start I want to thank the secretariat staff—Brook Hastie, Kelli Longworth, Greg Thomson and Gail Easton—for their fabulous assistance and untiring support to the committee. I have to commence my contribution with some reflection on the Attorney-General's introduction to this debate this evening. I found some of it quite surprising—not that I do not agree that some of the issues that he raised are worthy of discussion and consideration, and there are some things that he said that are of concern. But I can tell the House this much: nobody lost a kidney or lost a testicle from the administrative error of releasing documents or shredding them—this sort of feigned protest leading up to this discussion, this manufactured sincerity, this silicon facade. The Attorney-General has been belting the CMC in this House and everywhere else at every opportunity for two years. This is evil vendetta behaviour—two years of vendetta. That is what the CMC has had to put up with and tolerate, and this bill represents the kill shot for the CMC as we know it. It is the coup de grâce.

The Attorney-General spoke for over 30 minutes and did not really address what is in this bill. The 30 minutes was mostly about performance metrics of the CMC. As I suggested earlier, some of that might have merit and be true, but it is not actually relevant to what this bill is about. I recall that when the Attorney-General introduced this legislation I commented across the chamber that this bill would cost the government the next election. Not surprisingly, the Attorney-General did not appear to be in tune with those sentiments at the time. For the record, I submit that there is every chance that this bill will do irreparable damage to the already tarnished reputation of this government. I can be assured of one thing, and so can everyone else here: there will be government backbenchers present here today who will lose their seats because of this bill. The member for Stafford—a very principled man as we all know—will be one such person, I would think. He was not impressed with the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report on this bill and the *Courier-Mail* reported his disquiet when it said—

Assistant Health Minister Chris Davis said he was worried about the potential voter backlash.

I obviously possess a degree of respect for the member for Stafford and I have expressed that to him privately in the past. He has shown that amongst the LNP he is prepared to speak out on issues where the government has gone too far. That takes some courage within the ranks of this government and the backbench. He also said—

I want our government to be responsive—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr BYRNE: This is what the member for Stafford said. They are not my words. This is what the member for Stafford said—

I want our government to be responsive to reasonable public perceptions.

Dr Davis is reported as saying—

I'm just flagging it as an area of great sensitivity within the electorate because the electorate wants governments to be accountable and to be seen to be accountable.

We need to be very careful that we are not actually, or seen to be, reducing our transparency and accountability.

Clearly the government also realises this, as evidenced by the frenetic amount of media being pushed out by the Attorney-General and others. Somehow the apparent obvious merits of this legislation as espoused by the government do not seem to be resonating with many Queenslanders. You can always tell when a government is in trouble because they simply shovel more spin at the problem. Let me put it this way: the Attorney-General is defending the indefensible and no matter how animated, snide or derogatory his persona becomes in this debate it will not mitigate the fact that informed Queenslanders will be horrified by this legislation, and they are. I suppose some in this government might be thinking, 'Well, this will all blow over. Queenslanders don't really care about this sort of stuff. It's eight months or more before the next election. Nobody will really care.' Well, they are wrong. They are completely wrong. I hold Queenslanders in much higher regard. They will remember this legislation and the appalling story leading up to it because they care about it.

The conservatives in this state have prosecuted a permanent assault on the CMC and its predecessors for many years. This history was beautifully represented by Mr Tony Fitzgerald in his submission to the committee. As he said so succinctly, the commission and its predecessor were established to continue the work of the Fitzgerald inquiry and, in doing so, prevent corrupt politicians and police again running this state. That is what this is about. That is what this was created for in the

first place. It represents a bulwark against political and institutional corruption. Mr Fitzgerald refreshes the memories about how the then National Party wiped out Mike Ahern, who was an absolutely committed supporter of the reforms that were necessary, and replaced him with Russell Cooper. Mr Fitzgerald's submission to the committee summarise the attitude prevailing during the Borbidge era.

Government members interjected.

Mr BYRNE: I heard no cries from government members—and I will not tonight—disputing Mr Fitzgerald's recollections. It is absolutely evident that the conservatives in this state have not changed one iota. This government's incessant attacks on the CMC over the last two years have been nothing short of shameful and orchestrated for a specific corrosive purpose. The destruction of the previous chair of the PCMC, the member for Gladstone, during the last sitting day of last year was just part of the ongoing narrative constructed by this government in order to gain control. It demonstrated the lengths to which this government is prepared to go to enshrine absolute control and power at all costs. In the two years that I have attended this House, that was the lowest act of many of the low acts that I have witnessed from this government. But the point is that this is all within a particular and deceitful narrative created by this government and its minions, and it is not hard to establish the influences at play here. It was during the public hearings of the committee that the present director-general of the department, Mr John Sosso, reminded the committee of his earlier role within the Fitzgerald inquiry. The director-general spoke in a fashion so as to apparently alert the committee to his background.

I must say that the performance of Mr Sosso before the parliamentary committee was unimpressive. My impression was of a man who could barely tolerate or be bothered with attending. I have to say that I found his evidence underwhelming and unconvincing. It was interesting because Mr Fitzgerald had specifically mentioned Mr Sosso within his submission to the committee, and this is what he said—

When the Inquiry was established in 1987, the National Party Attorney-General was advised and influenced by a small ambitious group of Justice Department bureaucrats. The Attorney-General appointed one, John Sosso, as Secretary to the Inquiry. Sosso didn't last long in that role but returned to the Justice Department which, as the Inquiry's report notes, did little willingly to assist the Inquiry. Later, when Borbidge was Premier, Sosso was Deputy Director General of the Premier's Department.

Join the dots. It is not that hard. So it is quite easy to see who is behind this legislation, the tactics to this point and who is providing the succour so desperately needed by the Attorney-General. I am reminded of the words of Kipling paraphrasing scripture—

As it will be in the future, it was at the birth of Man

There are only four things certain since Social Progress began.

That the Dog returns to his Vomit and the Sow returns to her Mire,

And the burnt Fool's bandaged finger goes wabbling back to the Fire ...

Burnt fools—that is what the conservatives are. Mr Sosso keeps returning to the site of his own disgrace and the conservative parties keep acting the vindictive fool and burning themselves while torching the corruption watchdog. This history will not be lost on the Queensland public, and I predict that the LNP and its minions will pay a very heavy price for their shameful Machiavellian enterprise and subterfuge. Fitzgerald summarised this nicely when he said—

This Committee's advice to Parliament that the bill in its present form is a gross abuse of power would provide a good start.

The non-government members have provided a very detailed dissenting report with 32 recommendations. This is certainly the most comprehensive report that I have been associated with. It maps out in detail the concerns of the non-government members about this bill. I would hope that, given the considerable implications of this legislation, the government members have taken the opportunity to peruse the entire committee report. I do not intend to regurgitate all of that dissenting report. It is on the public record for Queenslanders to draw their own conclusions. However, recommendation No. 1 of that report is that this bill not be passed.

I want to point out that there were also a large number of submissions to the committee regarding this legislation. I would like to reflect on a couple of those. There were some very impressive submissions. Of those submissions, few could be tendered as wholeheartedly supporting this legislation in any real way, shape or form. Those submissions that contained elements of support were very narrow in their perspective of the entire bill. Some of the submissions came from the most eminent people in this state. Those submissions were largely critical of substantial chunks of the legislation.

It is with those facts in mind that I once again question how the majority of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee could come to the conclusions and recommendations as presented. To my mind, if the committee were constituted by half a dozen educated, apolitical Queenslanders reviewing all of the material provided to them, it would be difficult to imagine that they would have come to the conclusions contained in the majority report. Overwhelmingly, the evidence before the committee was not supportive of this legislation. Once again, the government intends to proceed in its usual arrogant way despite the objections of eminent experts, in many cases people who are likely to have forgotten more about the law, fighting crime and corruption than the Attorney-General and the other members of this government will ever know or learn.

I must say that the submission from the Queensland Law Society was exceptional. Even Director-General Sosso acknowledged that during the committee hearing. Because of the quality of their argument, I would particularly like to focus on matters raised by the Queensland Law Society. The society rightly points out that the new management and governance arrangements are inadequate and, in fact, could never be described as best practice. I believe that this was the intention, as this government would not know the first thing about good governance and best practice. At the end of the day, it is all about control.

Quite rightly, the society raises concerns about shifting the emphasis to organised crime. I know that there are amendments to change that emphasis to be moved by the minister, but the society points out clearly that the crafting of this legislation was poorly considered. The conservatives in this state have always opposed anticorruption components in just about any agency. These sorts of sentiments are again being expressed by senior Liberals in New South Wales as they respond to the revelations in the ICAC hearings. I can bet members one thing: whatever is going on in New South Wales will be going on in Queensland and is probably worse. Why would I say that? Because it is the same brand; it is the same culture; it is the same arrogant, born-to-rule mentality, except that up here it is more arrogant, less intelligent, more absolute and more brutal. These are the hallmarks of this government and the LNP in Queensland and every Queenslanders has seen it displayed.

The Queensland Law Society flagged its concerns, which means its opposing views. The society's rationale for its view is mapped out within its submission and reflects the sentiments of many other submissions. The bottom line is that nothing has been put before the committee or represented to the House that explains in a defensible fashion the legislation's intentions. This bill can only be interpreted as simply another set of measures to reduce scrutiny of potentially corrupt activity. A circumstance where hand-picked commissioners could theoretically establish invisible priorities that would, in effect, insulate corrupt activities or potentially prosecute matters only where there was a clear advantage to the government of the day is a possibility.

The Law Society also takes issue with other elements of the bill, such as removing the commission's preventive function; restricting the research function and requiring the approval of the minister; the idea of delegating the chair's powers to senior executives; the new appointment processes, particularly the removal of the bipartisan support provisions and the inevitable politicisation of the commission that must result; and even the point they raise about the position of the CEO also being a full-time commissioner. That is objectionable from just about any perspective that you want to look at. Of course, there is also the removal of the need for a rights based commissioner and ensuring that the role of the parliamentary commissioner is truly independent. These were all matters that were raised by the QLS and were not addressed at all in any of the responses that really counted. That is hardly a resounding vote of confidence in the Attorney-General or the work of the department. So when we look at the amalgam of concern, basically, for all intents and purposes there is opposition to this bill. Will the government take any notice of that? That is not very likely.

I would like to reflect on some of the specific elements of this bill. Firstly, I refer to the issue of bipartisan support. The Leader of the Opposition has spoken at length about this issue. It is incredible that this government refuses to accept the idea that it is important for an independent commission to not only be independent but be seen to be as well. It is absolutely essential to that independence that both the government and the opposition have skin in the game regarding their confidence in the commissioners and the acting commissioners. There must be members of the government who understand that.

The Leader of the Opposition has already spoken about the results of the ReachTEL poll that was tabled earlier. As part of that survey this question was asked—

Of the following, how do you think the head of the CMC should be chosen?

One option was by agreement of the entire parliament, which attracted a response of 73.2 per cent. It is clear that Queenslanders expect bipartisan support for the selection of the senior positions. To remove that provision is just bloody-mindedness and indefensible. This government does not care what the community perceives as long as it has absolute control and calls the shots at every point.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Members, the member is not taking interjections.

Mr BYRNE: I can assure the House of this much: this step by the Attorney-General will absolutely guarantee that the commission turns into a political football. This step will result in the commission being damaged unnecessarily and distracted from its core and important business. Over time, there will be a cumulative and corrosive consequence.

I suspect that this is what the government is aiming for in the long term, anyway. This is a government that wants to recreate the halcyon days of the 1980s with the white shoes, the brown paper bags and the old boys club running the show. Queenslanders will not wear it. They will not wear this government. They will not wear such arrogance and they will not wear even the scent of corruption. There is a certain scent surrounding the government. It is the smell of death—rotten and putrid.

I have mentioned the first recommendation of the dissenting report of the non-government members. Let me go to the last one, recommendation No. 32, which states—

The Non-government members of the committee recommend that Clause 3 of Schedule 1 be removed from the Bill, and that every reference in the Bill to 'Chairman' be replaced with 'Chairperson.'

This is a government that simply cannot help itself. This sort of petty, chauvinistic drivel says everything that there is to say about the boys club that is, and supports, this government and the LNP more broadly. This is a government that enshrines jobs for the boys not only as its preferred modus operandi but also for its gender-specific purpose. I ask members to just have a look at the ministry in the chamber. Women are represented at only the most modest levels within this government. Let me know when there is a female Deputy Premier, a female Treasurer, a female Attorney-General, a female Leader of the House, or, dare I say, a female LNP Premier. That would be lovely to see. On my side of politics we do not suffer such gender-specific cringes or bias. This legislation—admittedly on the margins in terms of its core insanity—says everything about the cultural and social temperament of this government. It will be seen as an insult by every thinking woman in this state. It reveals how this government operates and it is shameful. Shame on the Attorney-General, shame on the Premier—shame on everyone else in this House who thinks that there is merit in this chauvinistic nonsense!

Let me move on. So many members of the government backbench are just going to march into the cannons and they will simply not understand why it happened. I ask members to please indulge my tampering with the second verse of Lord Tennysons' poem *Charge of the Light Brigade*—

Forward, the LNP!"

Was there a man dismay'd?

Not tho' a backbencher knew

Someone had blunder'd:

Theirs not to make reply,

Theirs not to reason why,

Theirs but to do and die:

Into the valley of Death

Rode the 74

Naturally, the opposition will not be supporting any aspect of this legislation. This sort of legislation is further proof of why the Queensland public has turned so vehemently against this government and why many members opposite will not be here after the next election. It is disgraceful legislation that should never have seen the light of day. Shame on them all!

Sitting suspended from 6.31 pm to 7.30 pm.

Debate, on motion of Mrs Miller, adjourned.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Grasstree Coalmine, Fatality

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (7.30 pm): I regret to advise the House of a fatality at the Grasstree underground coalmine near Middlemount in Central Queensland yesterday afternoon. My thoughts, and I am sure the thoughts of all members, are with the family, the friends and the colleagues of the worker who has lost his life. This tragic news highlights the very real hazards faced in the workplace by the tens of thousands of employees in the resources sector in Queensland.

I can assure all Queenslanders that this government, and I as the responsible minister, are committed to ensuring the state's mines meet the highest safety standards. I can advise the House that the Queensland government mines inspectors are working with the company operating the mine, Anglo American, to investigate the cause of the fatality and a report will be provided to the coroner. Police and two mines inspectors were on site at Grasstree mine overnight to commence an investigation. A further two senior mines inspectors arrived this morning to continue that investigation.

Although this situation is a sad reminder of the need for continual improvement, the reality is that Queensland can be proud of the fact that it has one of the best mine safety records in the world. Queensland's mine safety framework continues to uphold world's best practice and is internationally recognised. Once again, my thoughts are with the worker's family, friends and colleagues at this very difficult time.

CRIME AND MISCONDUCT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1358, on motion of Mr Bleijie—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (7.32 pm): Following on from the minister's statement, as the shadow minister for mines and as the daughter and granddaughter of coalminers in Queensland, I too would like to pass on my best wishes to the family during this absolutely terrible time and to the members of the CFMEU mining division, the ETU and the AMWU throughout Queensland and to all of the coalmining communities who join together during this time. I certainly know that members on this side of the House would also wish for the check inspectors from the CFMEU mining division to be included in any investigation that is undertaken by the minister's department.

I now refer to the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. I rise to oppose this legislation. Make no mistake: this LNP government is absolutely determined to take Queensland back to the dark ages; to take it back to the days pre 'The Moonlight State', that ABC program that exposed the systemic corruption in Queensland under the Bjelke-Petersen days. This legislation represents a serious and significant attack on the important public institution that goes to the core of our modern democratic system and modern public administration.

This is just the latest in a long line of ideological attacks from this government against any person, organisation or public body that it perceives is not on its side. The Premier, with his glass jaw and his little-man syndrome, simply cannot accept any criticism at all. With this Premier you are either with him or against him; you are either for sale or you are not for sale. This government is clearly for sale. Rather than being a statesman for Queensland, we see the Premier viciously attack those he considers are not on his side. That is why we see the Premier attack his own workforce, attack the trade union movement, attack lawyers, attack the judiciary, attack journalists, attack community organisations, attack real firefighters, attack teachers and he is even attacking the most senior doctors in public hospitals, SMOs.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Bundamba, I remind you of the legislation before the House which you are supposed to be addressing in your second reading debate.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The Premier has had a chip on his shoulder about the CMC and this is nothing but a vindictive get-square from the Premier. This is another ideological pursuit by the LNP that has had a pathological hatred of the independent watchdog ever since Fitzgerald helped clean up their government that was rotten to the core. Once again the arrogant Attorney-General is all too happy to be the vanguard of the LNP's ideological extremism.

This legislation is particularly concerning in the context of this government's continued undermining of public institutions. Over the years members may have heard me argue against the forces of conservatism in this state. When it comes to the Newman LNP government I cannot even call them conservatives because true conservatives have respect for institutions. They would respect the legal system, they would respect the CMC, they would respect the judiciary, they would respect the independence of the Public Service and they would respect independent standing royal commissions like the CMC. The LNP in Queensland has no respect for independent advice from the Public Service and it has no respect for the independence of the courts, the independence of other bodies like the CMC and, prior to that, the CJC. All it does is criticise them.

The timing of this legislation is nothing short of ridiculous. The Attorney-General claims that there is no role for an independent body to look at issues such as political donations. At his first estimates hearing he made it clear that he saw no concerns at all with the issue of corruption and the role of political donations. He repeated the sentiments in this debate today, describing the CMC as having 'warped priorities'. Has the Attorney-General not read a newspaper in the last six months? Did he not read about the ICAC hearings in New South Wales that showed the perverse role that political donations can play when allowed to prosper without proper checks and balances? Did he not see that the Queensland Premier, Campbell Newman himself, was mentioned by a key figure in the inquiry and that it was alleged that a \$5,000 political donation was seen as the entry fee to set up a meeting with the then Lord Mayor of Brisbane, now Premier Campbell Newman? It is simply absurd that at the very time that the entire nation is watching what is happening in New South Wales through ICAC and analysing what can go wrong with the brutal exercise of power, influence peddling and political donations, at the very time that Queenslanders are rightly asking what is going on with the Premier's meetings and donations, this LNP government wants to cripple the independent corruption watchdog, the CMC.

Attorney-General Blejje claims that this legislation is all about the CMC releasing documents that should have been kept confidential. It is my view that this is simply untrue. On the issue of improper leaking, what hypocrisy! This is coming from the Attorney-General who had to be taken to task by a former Solicitor-General for leaking private conversations that he held with a senior member of the judiciary about possible judicial appointments. What cheek!

Did he learn his lesson? His response to the very warranted complaints about leaking conversations about appointments of judges was to then leak the recommendations that the opposition submitted, on the invitation of the Attorney-General, about future judicial appointments. The Attorney-General should be the last person in this House to suggest that others cannot be trusted with confidential information. Who in their right mind would have an honest and open conversation with the Attorney-General now and who in the legal community could possibly trust the Attorney-General any longer? The truth is that in the legal community the standing of the Attorney-General is now so low that it is my view that he will never get another job in the law in Queensland. When we look at the issue of leaked documents at the CMC, we know that this is a serious issue.

Mr HART: I rise to a point of order.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Bundamba, please take your seat. What is your point of order?

Mr HART: What does this have to do with the bill? The member is completely off track here.

Madam SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Burleigh. I ask the member for Bundamba to address the legislation before the House.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I note that the member for Burleigh is pretty concerned about his seat. We will not fix the problems in relation to the CMC through this debate tonight. What this government wants to do is take out all the bipartisan support for the CMC. You do not fix the problems by changing the name from chairperson to chairman. You do not maintain a clean, open and modern democracy by kneecapping the independent corruption watchdog. It is absolutely shocking that in this state it is harder to become a JP, for which you have to pass strict requirements, than it is to become a minister. In relation to the part of the bill that talks about chairperson or chairman, I ask: what century are we living in? There is really nothing to say other than to point out the foolishness of those people opposite who turn legislation into a farce.

In conclusion, I would just say that the time is always right to do what is right. The Attorney-General should immediately withdraw the bill from the parliament. I have always fought for what is right. I am on the record fighting for what is right, because I believe in honesty. I believe in due

process and not only in doing the right thing but also in being seen to do it. Over the years I have been threatened. I have been threatened with preselection. I have been threatened during the election campaign by an LNP candidate, Michael Kitzelmann, whom I referred to the CMC and he was then sacked. I will not budge in relation to fighting—

Mr KRAUSE: I rise to a point of order.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member for Bundamba, please take your seat.

Mrs MILLER:—and I will stand strong against corruption—

Madam SPEAKER: Order, member for Bundamba! What is your point of order, member for Beaudesert?

Mr KRAUSE: Madam Speaker, I seek your ruling on the relevance of the member's words.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Bundamba, I ask you to address the legislation before the House.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. My view is this: if you lie down with corrupt dogs, you get up with corrupt fleas. We will never ever support this legislation. If this legislation goes through—

Mr KRAUSE: I rise to a point of order.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Bundamba, please take your seat. Yes, member for Beaudesert?

Mr KRAUSE: The words just uttered by the member for Bundamba are most unparliamentary. I take personal offence to them and ask that they be withdrawn.

Madam SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Beaudesert. Member for Bundamba, the issue is not so much one of personal offence as it is of unparliamentary language in this instance. I ask that you please withdraw that.

Mrs MILLER: Madam Speaker, I withdraw. If this legislation goes through, there needs to be a national ICAC body set up, because you can never trust this Newman LNP government. This Newman legislation would never have come into the House except for the fact that this government is arrogant. If it had 45 people over there, it would not have had the guts to bring it in. Let us see what Chris Davis will do tonight. Let us see if he has the ticker—

(Time expired)

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (7.43 pm): I rise to speak to the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. At the outset, in the interests of openness and transparency, as is the vein and theme of this bill, I declare that in 2008 the acting chair of the Crime and Misconduct Commission, Dr Ken Levy, was one of my lecturers in criminal law at Bond University. I thank my colleagues on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for the great work that they have done in helping us put together what I think is a magnificent report. It is unusual to have teleconferences at 7.30 in the morning to discuss the recommendations and content of reports. Certainly, every government member of this committee put a lot of time and effort into making sure that the report that we prepared was one that we could all be incredibly proud of. In that same vein, I put on the record my appreciation to the committee secretariat for the work that they have done in helping us to prepare this report.

The Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill was introduced into the parliament on 19 March. The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee tabled its report No. 62 on 30 April. In the intervening time, the committee sought submissions from a range of stakeholders and other Queenslanders and we received 38 submissions. On 16 April, the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee held a public hearing where 11 organisations or individuals were able to present their points of view, as well as representatives from the Crime and Misconduct Commission, including the chair, and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, including the director-general, Mr John Sosso. Report No. 62 of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee contains nine recommendations and three points of clarification. I thank my government colleagues on the committee for their forbearance with regard to one particular issue.

The Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 is before the House because it is a response to the Callinan and Aroney review, as well as the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee's report No. 90, which was an inquiry into the publication and disclosure of Fitzgerald inquiry documents. Ultimately, the aim of the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is to improve the efficacy of the Crime and Misconduct Commission, to increase

public confidence in the CMC, as well as to see improved timeliness of investigations. Ultimately, at its heart, what this government is seeking to do is ensure that there is openness and transparency when it comes to the key crime and corruption watchdog in this state. There are many policy objectives in this particular bill, including to reform the upper governance structure of the CMC; to change the definition of official misconduct to raise the threshold; to rename the misconduct function in the CM Act to a corruption function; as I have said previously, to strengthen the transparency and accountability of the commission; to implement the recommendations of the public reports about the commission's investigation of alleged official misconduct at the University of Queensland; and to make other unrelated minor amendments to the CM Act.

There are a couple of things that I want to touch on in this contribution. Much has been made about the change in the appointment process of the chair of the soon-to-be Crime and Corruption Commission. The Fitzgerald report recommended that the government consult with the parliamentary committee responsible or, in the absence of a parliamentary committee, the leader of the opposition. No Australian jurisdiction requires bipartisan support and, until the introduction of this particular amendment bill, it was only the appointment of the chair of the Crime and Misconduct Commission that required bipartisan approval. If we look at what other parliamentary committees around the country do, we see that in line with the recommendations of the Fitzgerald inquiry Tasmania and WA merely seek to consult with the requisite parliamentary oversight committee. The Commonwealth merely consults with stakeholders; it does not consult with a parliamentary committee at all. The only jurisdictions where there is anything more than consultation are New South Wales and Victoria, where there is a right of veto. The parliamentary committee considered the best options to make sure that there was openness and transparency when it comes to the appointment of a chair. Having attended ICAC in Sydney with other members of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee, I was able to share with my government colleagues what I felt were the benefits of a right of veto for parliamentary committees when it comes to this appointment.

I would like to quickly point out that other senior appointments in Queensland, such as that of the Ombudsman or the Integrity Commissioner, are done in consultation rather than with bipartisan approval. I have significant concerns with the notion of bipartisan approval when we are talking about such an important role as chairman of the CMC. To my mind, we risk appointing someone who is not the right person for the job but who gets the approval of the committee. That is not why we should be choosing someone to head up what is an important authority in terms of democracy in this state.

The opposition leader has said that bipartisanship is working in Queensland. Consultation was working in Queensland. Clearly, if we have a look at what is happening in New South Wales we see that a veto power is working for ICAC. The most recent appointment of a commissioner to ICAC was made by former Premier Barry O'Farrell. I think it is clear that the veto power given to the New South Wales parliamentary committee was sufficient. The parliamentary committee was obviously confident in the appointment. They were confident that the right person had been appointed. As we have seen—and as has been highlighted by many members of the opposition—ICAC is certainly working in a very effective way.

I also want to comment on the removal of the requirement for one commissioner to be a woman. I have to say that as a woman I find it incredibly patronising that there was legislation in this state that said that women need a special role so that they can contribute to something like the Crime and Misconduct Commission. I am a strong believer that every single appointment in this state should be based on merit.

In my maiden speech I spoke about how proud I was that the Liberal National Party prides itself on meritorious appointment. I believe that such an important body as the QCCC should be egalitarian in nature. I think it is absolutely shameful that the president of the Bar Association of Queensland would seek to tell the parliamentary Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee that his organisation is a meritocracy, but ignores that when he says that we need a special position just for women. The president of the Bar Association of Queensland should hang his head in shame. I am sure that all female members of the Bar Association, as well as many male members of the Bar Association, would be absolutely disgusted to think that he believes that women need a special position.

Reference was made in the committee's public hearing to the need for folders of women. What I believe we should have is folders of meritorious people who are going to do the right job for the right reasons. I think that any organisation that seeks to publicly support affirmative action should hang its head in shame because ultimately it does not support women. It demeans women because it suggests that we need special treatment.

In that vein, I would like to comment on the member for Rockhampton's assertions that the government is a boys club. With all due respect, member for Rockhampton, if you have a look at the contributions women have made to conservative politics, I think you would realise that we believe not in a boys club but in a meritocracy, because ultimately that is what delivers better government and better governance in organisations. The LNP and its predecessors in Queensland have seen the first female member of parliament—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Members, direct your comments through the chair. I call the member for Broadwater.

Miss BARTON: As I was saying, the conservative political parties in Queensland have seen the first female member of parliament elected on the basis of merit. We have seen the first female leader of a parliamentary party chosen by her colleagues on the basis of merit.

The member for Rockhampton specifically referred to a female Treasurer. I will simply point out, for the benefit of the member for Rockhampton, that there has been one female Treasurer of Queensland and her name was Joan Sheldon, and she was the parliamentary leader of the Liberal Party.

Mr Davies interjected.

Miss BARTON: You will note if you look at my hand scribbled notes, member for Capalaba, that I am incredibly proud to be part of a government that has endorsed Queensland's first female Speaker of parliament. I pay tribute to you, Madam Speaker, for the great work you do in the chair.

I find it offensive that anyone wishes to come into this House and tell me that women need special support to get them up. I think it is a shame that the parliamentary Labor Party needs that. Perhaps when we consider the members of the parliamentary Labor Party it is not a shame that some of them need a little bit of extra support.

I will move on, in the time remaining, to the issue of statutory declarations. We have seen time and time again that vexatious and unmeritorious claims are made to the Crime and Misconduct Commission. As I have said, this is an incredibly important body for this state. We need to be able to ensure that legitimate claims are investigated so we can have the best outcomes for the people of Queensland.

We need to make sure that we stop the politicisation of the corruption watchdog. I think it is incredibly hypocritical of the Leader of the Opposition to come in here and say that this government is seeking to politicise the Crime and Misconduct Commission when we have seen time and time again that the Labor Party have sought to use this key corruption watchdog as their own political football. It is time that this stopped. That is why we have sought to ensure that statutory declarations are required for investigations and when a claim is made.

I think it is important to note that some investigations have been started on the basis of anonymous claims and that information can still be garnered through anonymous sources. We appreciate, as does the CMC, that in some circumstances people do need to make anonymous claims. For example, there might be the risk of retaliation. That is why the section of the act that provides that statutory declarations be required for a claim also allows an exemption where there are exceptional circumstances. It particularly states 'fear of retaliation'. It also mentions disability. If members look at the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's report they will see that we have suggested that it might be reasonable to consider expansion, for example, to include children and people with disabilities.

I am incredibly proud to be a member of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee. One of the things that I am particularly pleased to see in this bill is that we are looking to make sure that the work of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee, which is really the watchdog of the watchdog, is open and transparent. I believe that open meetings should be a rule not an exception. We need to make sure that people see that the work that is being done is good work. It is a little bit like justice—it needs to be seen to be done. I believe this is absolutely critical to ensuring that people have confidence in the crime and corruption watchdog of this state. Some people have expressed concerns about the efficacy of this particular section of the proposed legislation. As a member of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee, I believe that the exemptions provided for in proposed section 302A(2) are indeed sufficient.

One of the things that I can particularly remember from our visit to ICAC in Sydney is that one of the deputy commissioners of ICAC said that the important thing for them that has helped increase confidence in that corruption body is making sure things are done in public. We should not be hiding behind closed doors. We need to make sure that people can have confidence in the work that is being done. In his second reading speech the Attorney-General mentioned many transgressions that have affected the confidence of the people of Queensland in the work of the Crime and Misconduct Commission. Having sections and proposed sections like this in the legislation shows the people of Queensland that we are prepared to be open and honest with them about the work of this key corruption and misconduct fighting organisation.

The proposed QCCC will be integral to democracy. As the Attorney-General said, the Crime and Misconduct Commission was a shambles. There were serious flaws and something needed to be done. It is this government that has taken the principled steadfast stand to stand up and say, 'Something needs to be done and we will do it.' We need to stop people like members of the Labor Party using the CMC as a political football. It is pure hypocrisy, as I have said, for the opposition to come into this House and accuse us of politicising the CMC when we know full well that they are the kings of using such a watchdog as a political football.

It is important that we restore public confidence in this organisation. When we consider what has happened in the past, we need to make sure that people know that times have changed, that they can be confident about what happens in our state, that they can be confident that our democracy is sound and secure. We must make this a strong and independent watchdog, and that is exactly what this particular amendment bill does. It restores confidence in the Queensland Crime and Corruption Commission for the betterment of the Queensland democracy so that people in Queensland can indeed again have confidence in what this organisation will do, unlike the shambles that it became under the Bligh Labor government. I look forward to supporting this bill as it continues its passage through the House.

 **Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (8.00 pm): I rise to speak to the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. From the outset, I want to put on the record my support for the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition in opposing this bill. All reasonable people in Queensland, and beyond, are shocked by the changes outlined in this bill. This bill will effectively dismantle Queensland's anticorruption watchdog. Through this legislation, the Liberal National Party will unwind 25 years of improvements in integrity, accountability and transparency. Through this legislation, the Liberal National Party will discard the legacy of the landmark Fitzgerald inquiry. Through this legislation, the Liberal National Party will send Queensland back to the dark days when corruption went unpunished and indeed flourished. The breadth of changes in this bill is quite extraordinary. I will attempt to address as many as I can in the time available.

The opposition leader has already given a detailed explanation of the need for bipartisanship. The submissions to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee were scathing of this change and there was much focus on this as the primary focus for change that undermines the independence of the CMC in the media. Consequently, the committee has recommended inserting a requirement for a power of veto on the part of the committee, which appears to have been accepted by the government. But make no mistake: this is not a true power of veto similar to that which operates at the United Nations, where if an individual member says no the person is excluded. The LNP's version of a veto simply means a veto by a majority vote of the committee. This is illusory when the government has a majority on the committee, which it currently does. The opposition opposes the consultation requirement provided in the bill—all commissioners should be appointed with bipartisan support—and is also opposed to the power of veto proposed by the committee.

I would now like to address the changes to the governance structure that are proposed in this bill. There have been a number of reviews of the CMC in recent years, with various recommendations regarding its governance. With all of that information to call upon, the government has decided to go beyond any recommendations made previously and to proceed according to the provisions outlined in the bill. Under the bill, the commission shall consist of a full-time commissioner who is the chairman, a part-time commissioner who is the deputy chairman, a full-time commissioner who is the chief executive officer and two part-time commissioners who are ordinary commissioners. This means that the chief executive officer shall be a full-time commissioner. This is contrary to the recommendation of the Fitzgerald inquiry, which expressly stated that the CEO, or executive director, 'will not be a member of the CJC'. Neither the Callinan-Aroney report, nor the PCMC report No. 90, recommended that the CEO be a commissioner. In fact, recommendations, whilst not expressly ruling that out, certainly impliedly did so by recommending a 'structural separation of the role of chairperson and CEO'.

The government's approach is not supported by many stakeholders, including the Queensland Law Society and the Bar Association of Queensland. The QLS concluded—

The role of CEO of the Commission appears to be inconsistent with being a full time commissioner.

While supporting the restructure of the CMC, and in particular the structural separation of the role of chairperson and CEO, the opposition does not support the CEO being a commissioner, particularly a full-time commissioner.

Another area of concern in this bill is the government's decision to remove corruption as a prevention function of the CMC. The act currently provides that the CMC has a function to prevent major crime and misconduct. Misconduct has now been removed from this function but has not been replaced with corruption. Therefore, the prevention function is restricted to major crime. Prevention of corruption should remain as one of the functions of the CMC.

I now move on to statutory declarations. The Callinan-Aroney review recommended that complaints be required to be accompanied by a statutory declaration. This proposal was rejected by many of the submitters because it would eliminate anonymous complaints. Even the chair of the CMC did not support this proposal. He pointed out that the Tahitian prince complaint was anonymous. Complaints about the former member for Redcliffe, Scott Driscoll, were initially made anonymously. Labor will be opposing the government's changes.

I will now address the extension of the appointment of acting commissioners. Clause 80 of the bill extends the appointments of the acting chairperson and part-time commissioners and acting part-time commissioners respectively until commencement of the act. Clause 81 then extends these appointments from the commencement date until 31 October 2014 if no alternative appointments are made under the provisions of the act. This means that, as at 31 October 2014, the incumbent will have been acting in the position, without the bipartisan support of the PCMC, for a period of almost 18 months.

Subsection 24B(5) of the Acts Interpretation Act 1954 provides that, when a person is appointed to act during a vacancy in a position, that appointee cannot act in that position for more than 12 months. This bill statutorily extends the appointment of the current chairperson of the CMC beyond what is the accepted maximum period for an acting appointment. There have been quite a number of submissions which have questioned the appropriateness of the statutory extension of the appointment.

The research function of the CMC is pivotal to its role. Since the CMC commenced a research project into electoral donations in 2012, the Attorney-General has been opposed to this. At his first estimates hearing there was conflict with the chairperson, and he made a veiled threat to look at funding of the CMC if they did research into matters which 'weren't a priority for the government'. These legislative changes indicate that this is how he has achieved his threat. Many high-profile submissions address this issue. The executive should not be interfering with the functions of an anticorruption body.

The committee recommended that the Attorney-General consult with the PCMC before approving research proposals, and I note that the Attorney-General has circulated amendments to this effect. This does not address the important issue that the executive should have no control over the exercise of this power. It is no concession in reality when the government has a majority on the committee. The opposition does not believe this amendment goes far enough. However, if it is adopted, the Attorney-General should commit to publishing details of any research proposals that were put forward by the commission, and he should also commit to publishing reasons for his decisions.

In conclusion, every member of the Liberal National Party should hang their heads in shame if they vote for this bill. I note that Dr Paul Williams, a senior lecturer at Griffith University and keen observer of Queensland politics, made some observations about this legislation in the *Courier-Mail* this morning. He urged LNP MPs to think very carefully before exercising their vote on this legislation. Dr Williams understands the significance of the government's actions. He knows that this bill turns the clock back a generation to a time when corruption and graft were rife among public officials in Queensland. Tonight is a night for the Liberal National Party members of this chamber to show some courage. Everyone in this House should recognise the danger of winding the clock back to the bad old days of the National Party government. Everyone should reject this legislation.

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (8.10 pm): I rise to speak to the amendments to the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. To the best of my ability, I sat earlier and listened to the Attorney-General's contribution in introducing the debate on this piece of

legislation. I found it regrettable that the comments made at that time were disparaging, I would have to say, the way I heard it, in relation to Mr Warren Strange. The Attorney-General's words were that Warren Strange was appointed as a temporary chair and he fled the state. He did not flee the state. He did take up another position—a position of responsibility in another state—but I do not believe he did it in any way to evade his responsibilities.

The Attorney-General then detailed problems with the CMC in relation to the release of, or the shredding of, or the destruction of Fitzgerald documents and the tardiness with which the CMC declared that problem. It failed to disclose the problem in the handling of that documentation. I agree with the Attorney-General. It was the wrong thing to do. The PCMC in its deliberations attempted to the best of its ability to highlight and emphasise the difficulties in the process and the administration of the CMC. That is the job of that committee: to identify problems if they are not volunteered and to act on those problems.

While I know that we are constrained in what we can say in relation to the second hearing of the PCMC, I can say with the utmost of honest intent that the PCMC at that time acted promptly as soon as the problem was detected. That is the role of the PCMC, and it is that role that makes it critically important that that entity, the PCMC, is seen to be and is independent.

The Attorney-General also talked at some length about the Kathryn Ellis matter and the amount of time that it took for the CMC to deal with that matter, and I do not disagree with his comments. I am sure that it took every ounce of restraint on behalf of the Attorney-General to follow the process given the confidentiality that surrounds a complaint made to the CMC and I believe he was in an invidious position. Whilst it took 12 months, the matter was eventually reported on.

There are other issues that we have heard in this chamber that are problematic with the CMC, and the PCMC in its report talked about restructure—the need to separate the position of chair from what we have recommended as a CEO, because the chair by legislation had to be a person with legal background. But those individuals often do not have the administrative skills that are necessary for an organisation that is not only significant in its structure but significant in its power.

I also want to place on the record that I believe the abuse of the CMC by former Premier Bligh, directed at the then candidate for Ashgrove, Campbell Newman, was wrong. I remember at the time doing media, saying the problem is not with the CMC—because the discussion was about all complaints to the CMC being confidential, not being able to do this and not being able to do that. The problem at the time was not the CMC. It responded and did its responsibility. The problem was with the people making the complaints. The reason I am touching on all these things is that, in addressing these concerns, in addressing these frustrations—and I know that the Attorney-General is frustrated and I know that the Premier is frustrated with the CMC—you do not dismantle something that has worked in the past in principle. The CMC has worked in principle.

I found it very confronting when I read Mr Fitzgerald's comments over time in relation to the CMC. I had the balance of power when Rob Borbidge was the Premier and there were changes made to the CJC-CMC. I never put two and two together. I never saw it as a conservative move on the independence of the CMC—a step into the dismantling of the CMC. I never saw it like that. I did not have time to scratch myself, let alone look at motives behind changes that I felt a government had the right to make. But when I stood back and read what Fitzgerald said after the changes that were proposed at this time I could see why somebody in Fitzgerald's position could see a pattern of behaviour, and it is a concerning one.

There will always be problems in structures where people are involved. There will never be an entity where people are involved that will be perfect. It is important to get the structure of the CMC right because it wields such intrusive and significant powers. I have to commend the Attorney-General for the amendments that he has brought forward. I commend the Attorney-General for taking that step because I believe the Attorney is a young man with a lot of strong views, and I believe that step to allow the PCMC at least the right of veto for commissioners is a step in the right direction. I support in the legislation the separation of the chair and the CEO, but what I do not see in the legislation, particularly in the amendments, is the ability of the PCMC to veto the chair. I stand to be corrected. If by the right to veto commissioners it means the chair as well, I would really appreciate that clarification being made. It is certainly not the way that I read it.

I also hold concerns in relation to the obligation on the PCMC to hold all of its meetings in public. I believe that will prove to be disadvantageous to the government of the day as well as to the opposition, because I believe things will be discussed in public that for the integrity and credibility of the CMC would be possibly best dealt with in confidence. That was the situation faced in the past.

I am concerned by the strength and weight given to the Callinan-Aroney report without any balancing comments in relation to the CMC's responsibility and concerns about the Callinan report. Also, I acknowledge that some comments were made in relation to the PCMC's points of view on these matters.

I am very concerned that the Crime and Misconduct Commission is being dismantled to the extent that it is. The Attorney-General stood in this place a few days ago and talked about a matter of concern in the public arena, but he assured the community that they could be confident because the CMC had looked at it. I cannot remember what it is; it is only a matter of days ago. I sat here and thought in the past people could have confidence because they knew that clearly the chair of the CMC was not a political appointment. The commissioners were not a political appointment, because once the opposition, the government and the crossbenches have agreed on a person, that person does not then have to worry there will be snipes from one side or the other because of their perceived or believed lack of independence.

If this bill goes through without bipartisan support of the commissioners and the chair, I fear that the criticism that the CMC lacks independence will be well wielded, and sadly there will be no defence by the person who is appointed unless that appointment is bipartisan. I believe this organisation, which has had enormous power, needs to be seen to be independent and needs to be independent. The PCMC needs to be able to oversight the CMC without fear or favour. Governments, no matter what colour they are, need to know that they will be looked at objectively.

(Time expired)

 **Mr CHOAT** (Ipswich West—LNP) (8.20 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. As a member of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, I have been able to consider the elements of this bill in detail. Crime and corruption prevention and investigation are important aspects of modern public accountability which give the people the confidence that public officials and others act with integrity and honesty in all areas of dealings and operations. It would be wonderful if there was no need for such a role. However, its presence serves as a reassurance and, sadly, no matter what the office or political persuasion, there is history of a certain few doing the wrong thing and letting their organisations and the public down. These transgressions must be taken seriously, and where wrong is done those responsible must be brought to account for their actions.

At the same time, the people must have confidence that their peak investigative authority should be able to go about its business independently and should not be subject to manipulation or be used for political purposes, as sadly we saw particularly and repeatedly by former Premier Bligh and her cohort. At the same time, we saw organised crime flourishing in this state to unprecedented levels almost unchecked, and it is this government and indeed this Attorney-General that has brought that ravenous reign to an end.

The main objectives of the implementation of this bill are that Queensland's top crime and corruption fighter will be revitalised and be strong and independent under a range of reforms representing both change and improvement. The Crime and Misconduct Commission, or the CMC as it is known currently, will be renamed the Crime and Corruption Commission with a clear objective to focus on organised crime and corruption. One could be forgiven, after listening to some of the contributions here tonight, for thinking we are just walking completely away from those principles and those aspects. That is just a lot of nonsense.

After years of seeing the CMC being misused as a political weapon or plaything, the new Crime and Corruption Commission will be able to do what it was always meant to do—fearlessly, relentlessly and effectively deal with serious crime and corruption in this state. The government made an election commitment to Queenslanders that we would revitalise front-line services, including this type of function, and they now have a stronger, independent watchdog that will be more efficient, more open and more accountable.

In October 2012 the Queensland government announced a review of the CMC and the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001 by the Honourable Justice Ian Callinan AC and Professor Nicholas Aroney. The delivery of the Callinan-Aroney review coincided with the release of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee's review. This review was commissioned after thousands of confidential and sensitive documents from the Fitzgerald inquiry were made available to the public while others were accidentally shredded. Let us just stop and think about that point for a minute. Imagine if you were a person who had given evidence in confidence as part of that inquiry and you read about your evidence in the media—effectively being outed by an act of incompetence and mismanagement—or

you have a concern that your information may have been accessed. It would be dreadful and truly worrying. That can never be allowed to happen again. This bill follows these reviews which both highlighted the need for major reforms to the CMC's organisational and administrative structure, the way complaints are made and dealt with, the numerous functions and the internal processes, practices and indeed culture of the organisation.

Under the government's reforms, the following strategies will be implemented. A new role of chief executive officer will be created and will be responsible for the CCC's administration, allowing the chair to concentrate on catching criminals and corrupt officials. To prevent baseless and malicious complaints, a statutory declaration will be required when a complaint is made, and we have heard a number of comments along those lines tonight. However, the CCC can waive that requirement under exceptional circumstances—for example, where fear of retaliation exists or a complainant's ability is an issue. The complaints process will be overhauled to allow the CCC to focus on its core activities. The parliamentary commissioner will be empowered to investigate claims of misconduct within the CCC itself. The Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee will be required to hold hearings that are open to the public—so real transparency—with appropriate exceptions to protect classified or sensitive information or ongoing investigations.

The reforms are in addition to the \$50 million already provided to the CMC annually. We will see greater powers backed up by \$7 million in extra funding that the government provided last year to tackle organised crime. The CCC will be better resourced and will have extra layers of accountability and will be well placed to do its job for Queensland. It will be beyond the reach of those who would seek to use it for their own agendas.

We have heard some emotive and outrageous statements from the opposition here in this place as though they judge the intent of everyone based on their own standards of proven behaviour. They are the very people who legislated for lying in parliament and were the subject of the Shepherdson inquiry which claimed scalps—both of these most serious examples of wrongdoing have been done since the very inquiry they claim to hold as so important. The opposition is indeed very good at cherry-picking, as I see they conveniently look at history and brush over the fact that it was indeed the National Party which saw to it that we have what is today the CMC. This government will make it stronger and better able to achieve its goals.

I will make mention of some of the aspects where we talk about gender and the like, and I have to reflect on the comments made by the member for Broadwater. A person's gender should have nothing to do with their ability to do a job. Regardless of sex, we are all different and it is merit that is most important. Some of the arguments I have heard in public, in hearings and around this place are absolutely ridiculous. In fact it is quite possible that the committee under this model could be made up entirely of women, and I do not think that would necessarily be a bad thing. It is about merit—the best person for the job. In terms of all this talk that there needs to be bipartisan support, I can tell the House that in today's reality if someone was appointed by a future government and it was obviously a blatant political appointment, the fires of hell would rain down on them, particularly from some of the fine journalists that we have represented in today's media.

I have a bit of trivia. Does anyone know what you call a male midwife? I will tell you. It is a midwife, because the term 'midwife' has no representation of the sex of the person that performs the task. The words actually mean 'with woman'. I am sick and tired of people having these fixations on words that actually mean nothing. I refer to the word 'chairman'. When I was brought up, I was taught that the chairman in a meeting should be referred to as either 'Mr Chairman' or 'Madam Chairman', and I am sick and tired of hearing all of this nonsense around the place of 'That is offensive' or 'This is offensive.' It seems to me that the only people who get offended are those who do not have an issue in the first place. I think we need a reality check. These reforms are so very important. They will ensure that the new CCC is indeed robust and independent and will keep pace with community expectations.

 **Ms D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (8.29 pm): I rise to speak to this Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. As has been stated, the opposition will be opposing this bill. I want to talk about standards—standards of public administration, standards of accountability and standards of decency. Queensland had the great misfortune to be governed for many years by a National Party government—

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members.

Ms D'ATH: It has not taken long to start—

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members. I call the member for Redcliffe.

Ms D'ATH: I find it interesting that they say it is nonsense for me to simply talk about standards. That is all I have said so far and they are reacting to that. It is quite interesting that they have a problem simply because an opposition member talks about standards.

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members.

Ms D'ATH: Queensland had the great misfortune to be governed for many years by the National Party government, which had no standards. Members of that government not only allowed, but actively participated in, corruption and malfeasance. The ABC highlighted this endemic corruption in a *Four Corners* report called 'The Moonlight State'—

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: There are too many interjections in the chamber and they are not being taken by the speaker. I call the member for Redcliffe.

Ms D'ATH:—which led to the Fitzgerald inquiry and the creation of the Criminal Justice Commission in 1989. The CJC and its successor, the Crime and Misconduct Commission, were designed to set proper standards. It was designed to investigate breaches of those standards and, if necessary, refer cases of corruption to the Director of Public Prosecutions. We saw that the Borbidge government tried to shut down the CMC and now the Newman government is trying to control it.

I seek to take the House to some of the comments made by Tony Fitzgerald in a submission to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee in relation to this bill. He states—

The Liberal National Party's present huge parliamentary majority makes effective, independent oversight of public administration more, not less, essential.

He goes on to state—

Following a Commission of Inquiry which exposed some of the criminals in the National Party and the Police Force, reforms were introduced during the late 1980s and 1990s. One important reform recommended by the Inquiry was the establishment of the Criminal Justice Commission (now the Crime and Misconduct Commission).

Government members interjected.

Ms D'ATH: It is amazing; I am simply reflecting history and they still feel the need to interject.

Tony Fitzgerald went on to state—

The Commission was established to continue the work of the Inquiry and, in doing so, prevent crooked politicians and police again running the State. Although it has not always functioned smoothly, the Commission is a constant reminder to all public officials that misconduct risks exposure and punishment and it has, until now, acted as a reasonably effective brake on the misuse of power and curtailed criminal activities.

I wish to now turn to some of the comments that the Attorney-General has made today in this debate. The Attorney-General has used terms such as maladministration, incompetence and integrity. However, in referring to those terms, the Attorney-General's and the government's solution seems to be that we should remove the independence of the Crime and Misconduct Commission and allow the government of the day to have full power over this commission. Not only would the government be able to interfere, at the very least there will be a perception of government interference if this bill is to pass. I fail to see how this is going to create the integrity that the Attorney-General seeks.

The second point that the Attorney-General makes is in relation to the confidentiality of witnesses and concerns about their private information being divulged, which is a very serious matter. Again, their solution to this seems to be prohibiting the ability to make anonymous complaints and requiring complainants to actually put in a statutory declaration in relation to their complaints. So far we have heard no evidence at all put forward by the Attorney-General or government members as to how this bill and its terms in any way address the points that this government seeks to make. It does not create greater independence, it does not create greater integrity and it certainly does not strengthen the role of the CMC and put it beyond reproach in relation to political interference.

I wish to specifically go to a couple of points in my remaining time, firstly, the appointment of the commission members. Initially, the bill talks about that power being solely with the government. We have since heard that amendments will be introduced containing a veto power that will rest with the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee. The problem with this, however, is that it is simply a veto; it is not a bipartisan decision. It does not say to the public that they can have

confidence in this appointment because there is no political interference by the government of the day. It is actually saying, 'We are going to pay lip-service to this parliamentary committee in relation to the role it will play regarding these appointments.'

We know that the government has a very large majority in this parliament. This government can either choose to use that majority by governing with distinction, with integrity, with the best interests of the people of Queensland at heart, or it can take the low road and revel in its large majority and push ahead with an ideological position. Describing the Premier's and the Attorney-General's conduct, Tony Fitzgerald stated—

Both seem to inhabit a political universe which is divided into "us" and "them", in which those who do not agree with their views or do what they demand are for that reason enemies and legitimate targets for abuse and government retribution. In their brief time in office, they have embarked on unprincipled attacks on courts and the judiciary, which, by virtue of their independence and authority, are obstacles to political excess, and enacted radical, profoundly mistaken laws which were not mentioned prior to the last election, including laws aimed at subordinating the criminal justice system to political interference and a flurry of extreme "law-and-order" legislation.

So the veto power that they talk about is really, as I say, paying lip-service to the parliamentary committee. We know what this government does. It is all about wielding their power and showing the parliamentary committees that if they do not like what they do, they will just dismiss them and put people in place who will do as they are told.

Mr Pucci: Did they change the laws to protect their mates?

Ms D'ATH: In the time I have left—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order, members. The member is not taking interjections.

Ms D'ATH: I would take the interjection, but I have a very important point to make and that goes to the nature of anonymous complaints. Certain community leaders directly affected by the abuses of power displayed by Mr Scott Driscoll have expressed their serious concerns to me around these issues. In their words, the proposed changes would make it harder for a community to bring any individual like Scott Driscoll to justice. The ability to anonymously approach the CMC with evidence of misconduct or illegal activities is a right that should not be taken away from the community. Individuals like Scott Driscoll plan their actions carefully. They gather confederates around them who often have significant influence and then create an atmosphere whereby people are bullied into silence. Anonymity should be a right under a fair legal system.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members.

Ms D'ATH: What I find extremely disappointing is the interjections on those comments because they are a direct quote from people in my community who contacted me with serious concerns about this bill—

Mr Seeney: What? From the ETU?

Ms D'ATH: I take that interjection 'from the ETU' because I want the people of Redcliffe, as community members who were directly affected by Scott Driscoll, to know that the member's response was—'They're just union people and we don't care what they have to think.' The member opposite should care about the people of Redcliffe. He should care about what Scott Driscoll did to these people.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members.

Ms D'ATH: Stand up for the people of Redcliffe and make sure you oppose this bill.

(Time expired)

 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (8.40 pm): I rise today to contribute to the debate in favour of the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. This drivel from the Labor side is unbelievable. They do not have a legitimate argument, so all they can do is name call, throw mud and scaremonger. That is the only plan they have. They have no legitimate argument, so that is all they can resort to.

As our government remains steadfast in its resolve to provide Queenslanders with a more open and transparent government, it is essential that we return public confidence in our Public Service sector. Queenslanders expect a high standard of professionalism and diligence when matters are

being heard before the commission. This has not always been the case in the past. We must have in place the most efficient and judicious framework within which our Crime and Misconduct Commission can operate.

Over the past two years among the constituents from the Logan community with whom I have met, a handful has had dealings with the former Crime and Misconduct Commission. They have been left with a sour taste in their mouths. This bad experience was prolonged as a result of bureaucratic mismanagement and was rife with a distasteful culture that seemed to offer no certainty of an outcome of any kind.

It is imperative that we restore our community's faith in the Crime and Misconduct Commission and whilst we cannot undo the failings of the past, it is in our power to ensure that in the future such matters are dealt with in a manner which reflects such an eminent body. This amendment will implement long awaited reforms which will ultimately see Queensland's corruption watchdog come into line with other jurisdictions. The only other state in Australia that has bipartisan agreement is Western Australia. Every other jurisdiction in Australia has a veto power or similar. They do not have bipartisan agreements for appointments. This will be achieved through the implementation of a series of initiatives that were developed as a result of the Callinan and Aroney review and the inquiries into the practices of the Crime and Misconduct Commission.

Many of these changes will affect the day-to-day operations of the CMC and will have a minimal impact on the lives of Queenslanders. The most obvious change, however, will be the redesignation of the commission from the Crime and Misconduct Commission to the Crime and Corruption Committee, or CCC. The bill will achieve timeliness in the investigation of complaints managed by the CCC; reform operational and cooperative governance structures within the CCC; seek to amend the current culture within the CCC; review the current CCC internal complaints management systems for misconduct matters; streamline internal processes and practices within the CCC; and enhance the management and personal conduct and work performance of Queensland Public Service employees.

Among many of the recommendations we will also see the strengthening of the transparency and accountability of the commission by expanding the role of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner. The bill will also change the definition of 'official misconduct' in the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001 by other amendments, raise the threshold for what matters are within the CCC's jurisdiction and rename the defined conduct as 'corrupt conduct'. This move will simplify the jurisdiction of the commission.

Under the bill the CCC will consist of a governor in council and appointed commissioners who are comprised of: a full-time legally qualified chairman; a legally qualified part-time deputy chairman; two part-time ordinary commissioners; and a full-time chief executive officer. The bill removes the requirement for the PCCC's bipartisan support of commissioner appointments but requires the PCCC to be consulted prior to the appointment of commissioners, as Tony Fitzgerald recommended in the Fitzgerald inquiry. And, like the New South Wales Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption—ICAC—the Queensland Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee will have the power to veto the person nominated for appointment. It must be noted that even though the New South Wales committee does not need bipartisan approval, to my understanding the committee has never made the appointments political and has never vetoed an appointment for political gain or for political reasons.

For the past 20 years we have had judges and magistrates who have been appointed. The Police Commissioner is appointed by the government; the IR Commissioner is appointed by the government; the Ombudsman is appointed by the government. Is the Labor Party trying to say all that all of these people who have been appointed by the government are biased? Are they saying that all of the judges and magistrates appointed during the 20 years of Labor Party government are biased? I certainly hope not.

One thing that is different with the veto power and the appointment of the commissioner is if there are people who do not agree with the committee's decision, then they will have the opportunity to provide a dissenting report or give reasons why. They do not have that anywhere else, so we are making the process more open and transparent.

The commission will provide strategic direction and leadership to the chairman. The CEO is responsible for, and is to report to the commission on: the proper administration of the commission; the employment, management and discipline of CCC staff; the management of the commission's documents, including Fitzgerald Commission of Inquiry documents; the preparation and compliance

of the CCC's budget, including responsibility under the Financial Accountability Act 2009; and setting benchmarks for assessing and investigating complaints and corruption and ensuring that benchmarks are met by CCC staff.

The CEO is to report to the commission on these responsibilities and is bound by the direction of the commission. The CEO may also issue directions to the CCC staff as to how they decide whether a complaint involves a more serious case of corrupt conduct or a case of systematic corrupt conduct, but is under the direction and control of the chairman when issuing such a direction. The CMC currently has jurisdiction with respect to official misconduct and deals with this by investigating the conduct itself, referring it back to agencies under devolution principles—with CCC monitoring as appropriate—or deciding to take no action in respect of the complaint of official misconduct.

The bill also require the CCC to publish, on a publicly accessible website, information about its systems and procedures for dealing with complaints about corruption, including information about the standard benchmarks for completing its investigations, and procedures for ensuring its benchmarks are met. The bill removes the CCC's responsibility for the prevention of corruption in units of public administration.

While the Public Service Commission will be able to provide some guidance, assistance and education to those departments and agencies within its jurisdiction, other agencies such as universities, GOCs, local governments and the Queensland Police Service will be required to manage their own corruption, education and prevention activities. The bill removes the CCC's responsibility to monitor how a unit of public administration, not including the QPS, deals with corrupt conduct complaints that are devolved back to the unit of public administration to deal with. While the CCC will not be able to audit or review how the public official deals with the complaint, the CCC retains the ability to request that a public official report to it in the way and manner that the CCC directs.

To prevent baseless or malicious complaints, a statutory declaration will be required when a complaint is made. However, the CCC can waive that requirement under exceptional circumstances; for example, fear of retaliation or a complainant's literacy level or English competency. A person who has a personal or physical disadvantage which makes it difficult or impossible for that person to make a complaint by statutory declaration will not need to make a declaration. A child will also not be required to make such a declaration.

I believe it is important to note as well that during a recent visit to New South Wales with colleagues on the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee we met with members of the New South Wales Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption: the deputy commissioner, the Police Integrity Commissioner; and the inspector of ICAC and the PIC. During these meetings I believe we were told that ICAC and PIC combined only have approximately 220 staff between them, and that is in a state with almost double the population of Queensland. The current Crime and Misconduct Commission currently has approximately 300 staff supporting it.

Another interesting statistic that came out of this visit was that only, according to my notes, 0.02 per cent—a miniscule percentage—of investigations resulted from anonymous complaints. Out of 5,000 complaints, approximately nine or 10 investigations came from anonymous complaints; in other words, an overwhelming majority—

(Time expired)

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—PUP) (8.49 pm): Rarely does anyone ever get to summarise the relatively complex issues so succinctly as Tony Fitzgerald has in most recent days with regard to the Newman government's proposed changes to the CMC. He has used the term 'inexperienced, arrogant fools' who are unaware of their own ignorance to describe those instigating the changes. He is referring to the Premier, Campbell Newman, the Attorney-General, Jarrod Bleijie, the Deputy Premier and the cabinet. By inference he is also referring to the backbench rump of the LNP, who choose to play the roles of the Sergeant Schultzes of this world with, 'I know nothing, I see nothing and I hear nothing.' Mr Fitzgerald also stated that it will adversely affect Queenslanders and end in tears for the government. He is entitled to be prophetic, for it was his report that led to the major change in managing official misconduct and corruption in Queensland for the last 25 years. He closely reviewed where we had been and the evidence demonstrates how deeply entrenched corruption had become. Interestingly, he also indicated that he saw what the numbers on the committee would deliver and how politicised the Department of Justice and Attorney-General had become. Even the member for Stafford, my fellow medical colleague, Dr Chris Davis, voiced his own reservation about changes to the CMC and his concerns about how it is perceived in the community. He is correct. The community is angry and fed up with this outrageous behaviour.

The Attorney-General seems to be currently incapable of basic comprehension of what was said in both the original Fitzgerald report—as, it seems, are so many members—and the statement of what the then Premier and National Party life member Mike Ahern said at the time. Therefore, I will put it to them in the Liberal terms used by the then leader of the day—I have brought the original speech with me—Angus Innes. The Leader of the Liberal Party stated in this chamber on 18 October 1989—

The Fitzgerald report clearly and specifically places faith in all-party decision-making as opposed to the adoption of a partisan approach.

That argument is answered by your former colleagues. That is what he stated. There is no point in going on with this ridiculous argument.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Gaven, I ask you to direct your comments through the chair please.

Dr DOUGLAS: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I will take your direction. Just under 25 years has passed. What members may not know is that the Liberals wanted a sunset clause. Angus Innes also said—

We ... believe that the powers are so exceptional that a sunset clause is highly relevant.

He went on. I will inform members that the Premier of the time, Russell Cooper, then stood up and in one short paragraph stated—

... I must remind him—

that is, referring to the Leader of the Liberal Party, Angus Innes—

that Fitzgerald's intention was for the establishment of an enduring commission, but subject to ... review of its performance by the parliamentary committee.

He then went on to say—

The Fitzgerald reforms are reforms for the Queensland Government and for the Queensland people—whatever party might form the Government at any time in the future.

It was the Liberal Party that long held ambitions that it would morph the CJC into the CMC and that it would eventually neuter it. However, it did support the bipartisanship of the commission at that time, but now it just cannot handle it.

Defiantly, the Attorney-General has rejected any and all criticism and states that the new QCCC will 'remain a strong independent watchdog'. The CMC is being significantly affected. It is not independent, for its chair and the PCMC chair—I am a former chair—are chosen by the Premier alone and only the watchdog and the government's appointee are now capable of a veto, but it is an appointment of the government of the day. This organisation is so handicapped from inception that it will never make it to the starting line, let alone the finishing line. The Attorney-General's comments of last week are laughable, but they pale into almost insignificance now to those of the reviewing committee chair, the member for Ipswich. Like many others—and I am talking about everyone in the country and not just in this state—I heard him when he stated—

... bipartisanship was a different era, it was a time when there was corruption, when there was an almost meeting of minds of both opposition and government and they decided to adopt that stance. Times have moved on. We are talking about new ground now—trying to adopt past history for today's present circumstance is not really appropriate in my view.

This was stated by a former president of the Queensland Law Society. My telephone and email in-tray were so overcrowded by his fellow legal colleagues demanding everything from a return of money paid while he was the president to those who said that it was an outrage. The chair's comments are so absurd that they have a Monty Pythonesque quality to them. The member for Ipswich said that on the day that the self-proclaimed, lifelong crime fighter and member of the upper house, Michael Gallacher—the now former New South Wales police minister—resigned amidst corruption allegations even before ICAC had got into the substance of the claims against him. The new New South Wales Premier, Mike Baird, had demanded his resignation as a minister that day—the same day. One week earlier New South Wales Premier Barry O'Farrell had resigned after falsely declaring that he did not receive a \$3,000 bottle of Grange Hermitage wine.

What was the member for Ipswich thinking when he said that times have changed and there was a need to adopt a new model? I will have a go at what he was thinking, because the Premier the same day said—

They have done a lot of work in the misconduct and corruption area in the private sector but we haven't seen the emphasis in the criminal gang or the criminal organisation area.

It goes without saying that the Premier is clueless in that the CMC, the former CJC and now to be the QCCC, was actually set up to investigate corruption, amongst other things, which involves politicians. The CMC is also involved in official misconduct and corruption, but official misconduct was in the bureaucracy, not in the private sector, and corruption fighting—often political—was everywhere, as was organised crime. Obviously, former ministers O'Farrell and Gallacher are clearly not members of criminal gangs, and nor is Jon Grayson, the Director-General of Premier and Cabinet, but ICAC is very involved in their activities, amongst many others. The member for Ipswich was obviously merely peddling the Premier's lines and sheepishly following direction. While he was being paid to think, he was acting like an automaton. The CMC has always chased gangs and organised crime, currently with an emphasis on bikies, who commit less than six per cent of all major crime and organised crime and are being given almost a green card in this state. We are now going to saddle ourselves with a handicapped QCCC, not the CMC, and little ability to alter things until an election.

With the current speed of the evolution of organised crime, honourable members here today supporting this legislation will be guaranteeing that we will be years behind where we should be in terms of managing organised crime, let alone preventing it! I doubt the interstate crime commissions will have any regard for matters occurring locally and the majority of the public who had just begun to trust the CMC again will regard the new QCCC as a government controlled secret police unit. Coercive powers are only effective when one chases real criminals—not political criminals—who have connections to the senior staff of the primary investigation body. The rest of the changes to the CMC have been detailed, and I will not go into those.

In conclusion, it was a real toss-up for the quote of the whole saga leading up to this. But I thought the member for Ipswich won by a short head when he said—

Committees are great for a lot of things, but sometimes you need action and need definitive action on behalf of a person and a Committee.

He was of course all at once referring to his own committee deliberations on approving the legislation referred to it. We can also only assume that the new head of the non-bipartisan appointed QCCC and, by default, the chair of the oversight committee, the present PCMC, whose chair is now appointed by the Premier of the day, would be those people. In politics, numbers guarantee certainty of outcome. Those in numerical superiority decide the outcome if all of the heads below are their appointees. There is no upper house in Queensland. Therefore, to claim the system in New South Wales or any other state is identical to Queensland's is a nonsense, and everybody knows it. Those upper houses of parliament guarantee the complete independence of those appointed by resolving their own power of veto of appointment. This is lacking in Queensland and the member for Ipswich, like the Premier and like everybody else, is well aware of this, as are all Queenslanders. Nobody is fooled by the ridiculous claims of true independence. The QCCC will either be used as a tick and flick or a mechanism of the barefaced ruthless pursuit of opponents. It has no future; it will not finish. The government should not be doing it and we will be reversing this.

Tabled paper: Extract from *Hansard*, dated 5 October 1989, regarding the Criminal Justice Bill and the Mineral Resources Bill [\[5016\]](#).

(Time expired)

 **Mr DAVIES** (Capalaba—LNP) (9.00 pm): I rise to voice my support for the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. It goes without saying that any change to a body such as the CMC needs to be done carefully and methodically. I commend the Attorney-General and his team for their hard work in bringing this bill before the House.

There have been numerous reports into the operations of the CMC and the one constant in them has been the need for change for the better. That is exactly what this bill seeks to achieve. There is very little argument that the CMC needs to be reformed—from the flagrant politicisation of its functions by those opposite to the very public maladministration of the recent release of highly confidential Fitzgerald-era documents. It was interesting to hear the member for Rockhampton compare the release of those documents to the recent incidents at the hospital. The release of that documentation was very dangerous. There was a real potential for people who were whistleblowers or informants during the Fitzgerald era to be in real danger. I think that for the member for Rockhampton to say that no-one was hurt by it and that it is not a big issue was an absolute travesty.

Mr Byrne: Was it true? Who was hurt?

Mr DAVIES: We do not know who was hurt. This bill is about the revitalisation of Queensland's peak crime-fighting and corruption body. Ultimately, it is about unshackling the CMC from investigating often trivial misdemeanours and allowing these very professional crime fighters to fight

very serious crime. To do that the bill seeks to reform the upper governance structure of the CMC and change the definition of 'official misconduct' in the Crime and Misconduct Act to raise the threshold for what matters are captured within the definition and rename the defined conduct as 'corrupt conduct'. It will also rename the 'misconduct' function in the Crime and Misconduct Act to the 'corruption' function, which will result in the following new titles: Crime and Corruption Act 2001, Crime and Corruption Commission, Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee and Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner. Also, it will improve the complaints management system of the commission to refocus it on more serious cases of corruption and reduce the number of complaints that the commission has to deal with and investigate. The bill will remove the commission's responsibilities for the prevention of corruption in units of public administration and ensure that the commission's research function is more focused and relevant to its functions. It will strengthen the transparency and accountability of the commission by expanding the role of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner—the parliamentary commissioner—in his oversight of the commission and requiring meetings between the commission and the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee—the parliamentary committee—to be held in public as much as possible.

In the short time that is allocated to me I will try to highlight two aspects of the bill that I believe are vital. There are many others, but they have been dealt with adequately by other speakers. Those opposite have made a lot of outlandish statements with regard to the changes to the appointment of the commissioner—that somehow this will compromise the independence of the Queensland Crime and Corruption Commission going forward or, as some have even said, destroy it.

As other members have mentioned, recently when the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee visited ICAC in Sydney it was extremely enlightening to discover that the commissioner of ICAC was not a bipartisan appointment. The commissioner was appointed by the executive but with a veto power of that appointment by the majority of the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption—their equivalent of the PCMC. Considering the recent downfall of Barry O'Farrell and also the police minister in that state, I think that people would be very brave to say that ICAC has somehow been influenced by the executive of government. We have seen a very independent ICAC commissioner and committee who have taken on the government of the day—a government that, in fact, appointed that very same commissioner. Those very same people who were appointed have brought about the unfortunate downfall of the Premier of that state.

The other aspect of this bill that I would like to highlight is the change that allows for the CCC to take disciplinary action against officers of the commission. I find it exceedingly ludicrous that an eminent crime-fighting body such as the CMC has been restricted in the discipline that it can provide to its staff over blatant errors or even misconduct. This bill will empower the commission to sanction and discipline its officers as needed.

In closing, in light of the many inquiries and the many recommendations in relation to the CMC, I think this bill is more than needed. Ultimately, this bill is about revitalising and empowering the state's crime-fighting capabilities to get the Mr Bigs of the underworld, to root out and bring to light serious corruption wherever it is found and to continue the vital work of protecting our children from those maggots who would seek to abuse them and make their innocence a commodity. I commend the bill to the House and I commend the great work of the Attorney-General.

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (9.05 pm): I rise to participate in the debate on the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I believe that the fight against corruption in Queensland is about to be dealt a lethal blow by this bill, which proposes unjustifiable and radical changes to the Crime and Misconduct Commission—changes that I believe will destroy its independence and make it nothing more than a tool of the government. I will not be supporting the bill.

As a member of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee which looked into the bill, I refer members to the dissenting report of the non-government committee members. During our committee's hearing into this bill, especially the public hearing, the director-general produced no evidence to support the case for the removal of the current bipartisan requirement for the appointment of the commissioners of the Crime and Misconduct Commission. Specifically, he responded to questions that I asked about where was the evidence that the current bipartisan requirement is not working. His response is on the record. Effectively, he said that it is a policy decision of the government.

So I was very interested to listen to the Attorney-General's address this afternoon where he set out the reasons for the removal of this bipartisan requirement for the appointment of the commissioners to the Crime and Misconduct Commission. In his address the Attorney-General

repeatedly said that one of the key reasons for the bill was the alleged influence of a Labor Party operative within the CMC. I tried to count how many times he used that phrase—this alleged Labor Party operative within the CMC—and the influence that this Labor Party operative had within the CMC. I do not know; it was said numerous times—10, 20; I am not sure. *Hansard* will show that when we study it tomorrow.

This matter was investigated and reported on by the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee in its report No. 89. That report does not support the Attorney-General's claims of a Labor Party operative influencing the Crime and Misconduct Commission's actions and decisions. I urge members to read the report. We have heard the passionate address from the Attorney-General about the influence that this Labor Party operative had on the CMC and its actions and decisions. I urge members to read report No. 89. They have the time. They can come and borrow mine if they do not have a copy of the report. I say again that that report does not support the government's assertion that a Labor Party operative was able to influence the Crime and Misconduct Commission's actions and decisions. So I say let the facts speak for themselves.

Another key reason the Attorney-General gave for the removal of this bipartisan requirement and for the significant changes was the Callinan-Aroney report. I am already on the record in relation to my views about the credibility of the Callinan-Aroney report and I do not intend to repeat those views tonight. I say that the case has not been made out to support the removal of the current requirement for the bipartisan agreement for the appointment of crime and misconduct commissioners. To say that the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee's veto powers will be so wonderful, can I say that I think it is simply a sham. It will be a sham because the government controls the numbers on the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commission; the government controls the decisions that they make.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr WELLINGTON: Forget about New South Wales, we are talking about Queensland. Last year when the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee had to undertake an investigation into matters involving the CMC's destruction of documents guess what happened? That committee was able to reach bipartisan unanimous agreement on the legal team that were going to be used by that committee. So do not tell me that members of this committee cannot reach agreement. To date there is no evidence before this House that there cannot be bipartisan agreement in this parliament.

On the topic of submissions from the public, I have been in contact with the secretary of the Law & Justice Institute (Qld) Inc who has sent me a copy of an email today, which was also sent to the Premier, together with a petition signed by almost 10,000 citizens urging the parliament to preserve the independence of the CMC. I table the petition and associated comments that I have received which reflect an overwhelming public opposition to the amendments proposed to the Crime and Misconduct Act.

Tabled paper: Non-conforming petition requesting the House to preserve the independence of the Crime and Misconduct Commission [5017].

I believe this bill will propel Queensland back 25 years to the Joh Bjelke-Petersen era, a time when crime flourished under the stewardship of a corrupt police force and a corrupt government. Earlier we heard a government member saying, 'What is wrong with our Police Commissioner?' The records show a former Queensland Police Commissioner went to jail. The records show former members of parliament went to jail. I believe that this bill will destroy the Crime and Misconduct Commission as a corruption fighting body and that it sends a message to the likes of the Obeids and their mates saying, 'Welcome to pre-Fitzgerald Queensland. Meet the Premier for \$5,000. Tip in \$1,000 for a raffle ticket or perhaps you might want to buy a couple of books of raffle tickets. It's only \$1,000 a raffle ticket.' There is absolutely no justification that I can see for supporting a bill that will destroy the integrity and independence of the state's corruption watchdog.

Earlier the member for Gladstone spoke about the CMC not only having to be independent—it must be seen to be independent for people to have the confidence to make a complaint. It takes courage for people to make a complaint and be a whistleblower. Quite frankly, I believe if this goes through as is proposed by the Attorney-General people who may have information may simply decide not to make that complaint because of the unhealthy connection between the leadership of the government, the leadership of the CMC, the leadership of the Police Service and the leadership of important people of influence.

This bill has been widely discussed and debated by many lawyers, jurists and eminent Australians including Tony Fitzgerald who described it as a creation of inexperienced, arrogant fools. I have heard that said a few times during this debate. Today in the *Sunshine Coast Daily* it was described as ill-considered and dangerous by Andrew Trotter in his paper, 'The great leap backward: Criminal Law Reform with the Hon. Jarrod Bleijie'. Paul Williams, another political expert, has urged government members to think carefully before blindly endorsing a range of provisions that have the potential to undermine the very fabric of a corruption-busting body. Only the courageous acts of anonymous whistleblowers who alerted the ABC *Four Corners* program exposed the rabid corruption which shrouded the government and police. Who is to say that cannot happen again if we have an unhealthy alliance between the leadership of the CMC, the leadership of the government and other people in positions of influence in Queensland?

Police are well aware that if people do not do in a criminal on the condition that they remain anonymous there would be very few people reporting criminals. As Paul Williams pointed out today in his piece, we all know that Gordon Nuttall and the fake Tahitian prince were snared only as a result of anonymous complaints. There are many more people, politicians, corrupt police, union officials and white collar criminals who would never ever be reported unless the complainants were able to remain anonymous and they had confidence that the people they were complaining to were not connected or puppets of the government of the day. In future, people who have information regarding corrupt politicians or police officers will think very carefully before reporting it.

Another frightening aspect of this bill is that it does not appear to me that fighting corruption will be a priority. We have heard the amendments that the Attorney-General intends to move. We have heard the changes of words, but I believe we need to have a focus on fighting corruption in Queensland. I believe the Attorney-General's bill will not be effective in encouraging members of the public or public servants to come forward with their concerns and with their willingness to make complaints. We already have a police force fighting crime; we do not have a major force fighting corruption. All we have is the CMC.

We have heard the comparison with New South Wales. As the member for Gaven said, New South Wales has an upper house. All we have is one house of parliament. We have a range of committees which, quite frankly, I believe are a sham. More importantly, the only other tool we have is the CMC and I believe if this bill goes through it will stifle its ability to take a lead in fighting and preventing corruption in Queensland. It is not just fighting corruption and responding to complaints, it is being preventative, sending out strong messages and working closely with the Public Service. The Premier compared the CMC to the New South Wales ICAC which does not require bipartisan support for the appointment of its chair. All I can say is that that is no comparison. Our government is totally different to New South Wales. I certainly hope that when the next election comes around, and if I can be returned as a member of parliament, I will be able to play some role in making sure that we return to a bipartisan situation where members from government and opposition can reach agreement on what I believe is the leadership team of the CMC.

 **Dr DAVIS** (Stafford—LNP) (9.15 pm): Having served on many governance review committees formed after the misconduct that led to their formation, I have an interest and indeed enthusiasm for the prevention and early resolution of corruption. I note that at least some of the rationale for changes to the CMC is that times have moved on from the pre-Fitzgerald corruption. The human genome has not changed. When it comes to human beings the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. One only needs to look to New South Wales to see how easily corruption can take hold and the tremendous damage it is doing to both major parties and, more importantly, democracy.

We can be grateful that Queensland has in recent times largely avoided such widespread undermining of our democracy thanks to a system that has generally allowed us to identify and deal with corruption early and effectively. As the old maxim goes, the price of success is eternal vigilance, and any opportunity to improve our performance in this area is most welcome. For those who believe that corruption arrives clearly packaged, of course it does not. One only needs to look at the current New South Wales ICAC investigations to see that it is often masterfully disguised and requires painstaking assembly of small and seemingly disconnected threads to piece together the web of corruption. Corruption can terminally damage diligent politicians. An example is the former state member for Newcastle, Jodi McKay. Asked why she had not gone along with coal baron Tinkler's offer to fund her campaign she said—

I was an MP elected by my community. I had a responsibility to my community. I had a responsibility to behave transparently and appropriately and ethically. And I was not going to let anyone interfere in that.

She was betrayed by none other than her fellow Labor politicians who favoured the illegal donations she had rejected, secretly facilitating the dissemination of materials that undermined her re-election so ensuring that her decency could not obstruct the intended corruption. She vowed never to return to politics.

Matters such as this have led to a crisis of confidence in Australian politicians, with a recent OECD study showing that the percentage of Australians who trust the government has dropped from 53 per cent to 46 per cent between 2007 and 2013. We owe it to the people we serve to change that. In this context we see the coalition's Leader of the House, Christopher Pyne, suggesting all corporate and union donations be banned.

I have personal experience of the CMC at a time that I was obliged to blow the whistle on a senior health professional who had misrepresented key facts to gain employment. This was in the Gordon Nuttall era and I suspect political factors led to hospital management hiding the facts and instead taking disciplinary action against me for raising concerns that were subsequently vindicated, but only thanks to fortuitously stumbling across evidence that confirmed my suspicions. Earlier in this reading, the Attorney-General confirmed that whistleblowers making valid public interest disclosures will be protected.

I am in the House not only to share my personal views and experience, but also, and more importantly, to represent the views of the people of my electorate of Stafford. Consistent with this government's commitment to listen and consult, particularly after the Redcliffe by-election, last night ReachTEL polled 667 respondents of the Stafford electorate on key elements of the proposed change. One of those was whether the Crime and Misconduct Commission had been an effective part of the checks and balances on government power. Only 64 per cent strongly agreed or agreed. Clearly, as the Attorney-General and others have identified, there is plenty of room for improvement in a body that is as vital as the CMC, especially given its key role in the absence of an upper house.

The other question was how people thought the head of the CMC should be chosen. As best as one can put it in a poll, 73 per cent responded that it should be by agreement of the entire parliament. Of course, it is intuitive that a collective decision will be seen as apolitical, but this evening the point has been well made that it may not in fact attract the best person for the job. We are also talking of the appointment of a leading legal professional or professionals of judge status who in this role have an ethical obligation to practice in accordance with the public interest and will now be publicly accountable through the PCMC. As we have heard, there is indeed evidence that the process intended to replace bipartisan appointments works well elsewhere and the challenge is to demonstrate its effectiveness in Queensland so that it, in fact, exceeds the 73 per cent approval of the current appointment process. Similarly, the government will need to demonstrate that the changes we are discussing and voting on tonight are in the public interest. We have a current benchmark that 61 per cent perceive that they are not, reflecting the inevitable caution of people in changing such a vital body. Equally, this provides a great opportunity for the government to turn that around.

The issue of integrity and trust is essential in a progressive democracy. The Attorney-General has clearly demonstrated his willingness to listen and translate that into really meaningful amendments and explanations that reflect this, and I thank and commend him for doing so. Like everything we do, the proof will be in the deliverables and, ultimately, in the court of public opinion. This will require taking vital observations, as was done in Stafford last night, and taking appropriate action. Accordingly, I commend this bill to the House, together with its amendments.

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (9.22 pm), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate on the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. It has been quite a journey to reach the point we are at today. In October 2012, the government appointed an independent advisory panel consisting of the Hon. Ian Callinan AC and Professor Nicholas Aroney to review the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001 and related matters. Callinan and Aroney received more than 60 written submissions and sought information from certain key interested persons, including the CMC, to inform their view. During the period that Callinan and Aroney were conducting their review, it was revealed that certain confidential Fitzgerald inquiry documentation had been publicly released following incorrect classification by the CMC or destroyed.

On 8 March 2013, I moved a motion in this House pursuant to section 292(d) of the Crime and Misconduct Act that the PCMC inquire into and report by 5 April on the incorrect classification and release or destruction of the documents and related matters. In March 2013, the PCMC held public hearings and on 5 April the PCMC tabled in the Legislative Assembly its Report No. 90, *Inquiry into*

the Crime and Misconduct Commission's release and destruction of Fitzgerald Commission of Inquiry documents. On 3 July 2013, the government tabled in the Legislative Assembly its response to both of those reviews. Earlier this year, the bill was introduced and subsequently subjected to consideration by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, which included public hearings by the committee on the bill.

The government firmly believes that the bill will lead to improvements in the public confidence in the CMC, the timeliness of the investigation of complaints, operation and corporate governance structures within the CMC, the current culture within the CMC, CMC internal complaints management systems for misconduct matters, internal processes and practices in the CMC, and the management of personal conduct and work performance of Queensland Public Service employees. Now I will address some of the matters raised by honourable members during the course of this debate.

There was little from the Leader of the Opposition except a pointless history lesson from which she removed any reference to the corruption that categorised the Labor governments that controlled Queensland from the 1920s and the 1950s. Like a drunk uses a lamppost, the leader used her arguments for support rather than illumination. She has swallowed hook, line and sinker Mr Fitzgerald's warped view that, after 25 years, the evil Mr John Sosso has emerged from the National Native Title Tribunal to wreak havoc on those who, in Mr Fitzgerald's opinion, did something to thwart Mr Sosso's perverted schemes from the late 1980s. If that was not such a terribly sad reflection on those who make such outlandish accusations, it would be hilarious. It makes Philby, Burgess and Maclean appear rank amateurs. They hid their allegiance to the Soviet Union for less than 20 years before fleeing to Moscow upon discovery as spies. Mr Sosso has outdone them in his devious behaviour. If what the leader asserts about Mr John Sosso is true, people will be writing books about him in the future. Alternatively, the Labor leader's colleagues could take her aside and insist she end these crazy allegations. I suspect Cameron Dick would not so easily fall into Mr Fitzgerald's trap. This is a joke and so are those who make such an extraordinary allegation, unsupported by a single scrap of evidence.

Regrettably, such a view characterises much of what Labor has to say on the CMC reforms. If the leadership disasters that have characterised the CMC over recent years represent the best of bipartisanship, it is no wonder that the process is being changed. Bipartisanship constitutes leadership by the lowest common denominator, that is, the only people likely to be selected are those against whom no-one has an objection, irrespective of the soundness of those objectives. If it has stood the test of time, as the leader asserts, why was the leadership of Mr Martin such an unmitigated disaster? Is this the best bipartisanship can deliver? If Labor members do not think the events of last year were a disaster, they need to take a good hard look at themselves. No sensible person thinks the CMC covered itself with glory in 2013. I am tempted to ask Labor what it has to fear from an investigator and chairman whose appointment would owe nothing to his or her capacity to cuddle up to the ALP in an unseemly display designed to garner favour and gain appointment. The leader of the Labor Party lives in a fantasy land. She is trapped in the past where the lucky few have a black and white television, and drinkers leave the pub at six o'clock and return home to turn on the bakelite radio to listen to Mr Gair debating Mr Nicklin. Most Queenslanders have moved on.

What does Labor promise? It promises nothing about improving the performance of the CMC in fighting corruption and major crime—nothing about improving that performance. It promises nothing but a return to the same sort of mystical partisanship, as if that alone will ensure the success of the fight against crime in all its manifestations.

In his contribution the member for Rockhampton said that nobody lost a testicle or a kidney following the CMC's misadventures, but there is no doubt the member and his leader have lost their composure and their grasp on reality. The member has faithfully read aloud the words crafted by Labor's 22 staff members. It is clear he neither understands nor believes half of what he said. I waited in breathless expectation for him to clarify what his leader said, but I waited in vain. After listening, I was neither wiser nor better informed. If the member is going to read everything put before him, he should at least pretend to know what he is talking about. Like his leader, he recycled Mr Fitzgerald's fantasy about Mr Sosso and added to the conspiracy with his invitation that people 'join the dots'.

The member's forensic skills are outstanding! I suspect the member for Rockhampton does not believe that Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin landed on the moon in 1969, such is his belief in conspiracy theories. The member is little more than a hired mouthpiece with no capacity for

independent thought. He is a disgrace. In his two years in this House he has added virtually nothing to the deliberations of the House. The only comfort we can draw from his contribution is that he is no longer a member of Australia's armed forces, potentially threatening the wellbeing and lives of our citizens with his ham-fisted and bumbling efforts.

I turn to the member for Bundamba. There was nothing new from the member for Bundamba but a renewed outburst of abuse. When contemplating the contribution of the honourable member for Bundamba I am drawn inevitably towards that old saying: 'An empty vessel makes the most noise.' The only thing I can say in her defence is that she spoke with more passion than her leader or the honourable member for Rockhampton.

The member for Woodridge was not happy with the power of veto. Unfortunately, the member for Woodridge would only be happy if Labor had complete control of all public institutions and their membership—having a CEO as a member of the commission. The ALP wants to go back to the old system that proved to be a complete failure in 2013. Even former chairman Mr Ross Martin at page 8 of his submission recommended the CEO be a member of the commission. The member for Woodridge, honourable colleagues, added little to the debate and what she did contribute owed little to her own intellectual endeavour.

While I may not have always agreed with the member for Gladstone's views on all matters relating to the CMC, I value the contribution she made tonight. It was considered and based on personal experience. The member for Gladstone wanted clarification of whether the PCMC could veto the chairman. Yes, the chairman is also a commissioner and the PCMC can veto all the commissioners in the commission, which I understand is about five people.

The member for Redcliffe was also obsessed by her own version of history. Unfortunately for her, quoting Mr Fitzgerald will catch not one more criminal nor halt one example of corruption. It is time to move into the 21st century—something even Bill Shorten is trying to do with the ALP, but something that escapes the Queensland ALP.

Honourable members, this is about making sure we have a strong, independent corruption watchdog. This is about making sure that the events of the last two years never happen again in Queensland and that people can have confidence when they refer a matter to the CMC that it will be investigated in a non-political way and not by Labor Party operatives. That is why it is so important to mention these contributions.

Given all the issues with the CMC in the last two years, the honourable opposition leader, in her 50-minute contribution, did not even say that the CMC shredded Fitzgerald documents, did not even say that they put the lives of whistleblowers at risk. Some 50 minutes of debate—

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the opposition leader who said that we have had that debate. So we had a little debate about the unauthorised release of documentation and the shredding of Fitzgerald documents and the opposition leader says, 'We had that debate, let's move on.' We cannot move on with the same structures for the CMC. This is why this bill is so important. I commend the bill to the House.

Division: Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.

AYES, 66:

LNP, 66—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gullely, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 14:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—

Mr BLEIJIE (9.42 pm): I move the following amendment and table the explanatory notes to my amendments.

1 Clause 6 (Amendment of s 4 (Act's purposes))

Page 13, lines 6 to 13—

omit, insert—

Section 4(1)(b)—

omit, insert—

(b) to reduce the incidence of corruption in the public sector.

Tabled paper: Crime and Misconduct and other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, explanatory notes to Hon. Jarrod Bleijie's amendments [\[5018\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This clause has two purposes: one is to remove the purpose of continuously improving the integrity of the public sector from the purpose of the act and the other is to reduce the purpose of reducing the incidence of corruption to a secondary purpose of the act. The Attorney has addressed the second of these issues in his amendment, and I am pleased to see that. But the first issue I have raised remains unaddressed. The opposition believes that continuously improving the integrity of the public sector shall remain as a focus for the commission.

Division: Question put—That clause 6, as amended, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 66:

LNP, 66—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 14:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 9, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 10 to 13—

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (9.49 pm): This is essentially about the removal of corruption from the prevention function of the CMC. Clause 10 amends section 23, which provides that the commission has a function of helping to prevent major crime and misconduct. Changes have been made elsewhere to the act to replace 'misconduct' with 'corruption'. However, the amendment deletes 'and misconduct' but fails to replace it with 'and corruption'. This means that the commission will no longer have a preventative function for corruption. It is important that education processes and other measures are continued to prevent corruption, rather than just investigate instances when they occur. Clause 11 amends section 24 to also remove misconduct from the way the commission performs its preventative function. Similarly, clause 13 amends section 34 to remove the prevention of corruption from the principles for performing misconduct functions.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I think that many of us who have listened to the debate over the months that this has been going on have seen that there has to be some adjustment to the matters that the CMC were to look at. To significantly reduce its concentration on corruption, however, I think will reap dividends of the wrong sort in the not too distant future. Their educative function perhaps, from my perspective, needed to be focused inwardly for a little while in terms of proper management of their systems to make sure that in teaching others how to act appropriately and to administer their affairs appropriately there may have been some time spent getting their structures in place—and by that I

am not inferring corruption on the part of the CMC. I am saying that if you hold yourself up to be an example you have to make sure that everything you do withstands the utmost scrutiny. However, I believe that there will always be an important role for the prevention of corruption by this body, and it is of concern if that is significantly subjugated.

Division: Question put—That clauses 10 to 13, as read, stand part of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): For all future divisions the bells will ring for the duration of one minute.

Leave granted.

AYES, 66:

LNP, 66—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 14:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clauses 10 to 13, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 14 and 15, as read, agreed to.

Clause 16—



Mr BLEIJIE (9.55 pm): I move the following amendments—

2 Clause 16 (Amendment of s 36 (Complaining about misconduct))

Page 20, line 21—

omit, insert—

(2) Section 36(1)—
omit, insert—

(1) A person may make a complaint about corruption to the commission for the purpose of the commission dealing with the complaint under section 35.

(3) Section 36—

3 Clause 16 (Amendment of s 36 (Complaining about misconduct))

Page 21, after line 3—

insert—

- has a personal or physical disadvantage that makes it difficult or impossible for the person to make the complaint by statutory declaration
- is a child.

4 Clause 16 (Amendment of s 36 (Complaining about misconduct))

Page 21, lines 4 to 7—

omit, insert—

(4) The commission may only deal with a complaint made under subsection (1) that complies with subsection (3).

(5) A person may also give information or matter involving corruption to the commission.

Examples of information or matter involving corruption that may be given to the commission—

- information given to the commission through a commission activity, including, for example—
 - evidence given by a witness at a commission hearing
 - information obtained through telephone interception or a covert operation
 - evidence gathered through a corruption investigation
- a routine departmental audit report
- an intelligence report from a law enforcement agency
- a Crime Stoppers report
- information about a significant police event such as a death in police custody or police shooting
- information or matter referred to the commission by a coroner, a court, a commission of inquiry or another investigative body or public inquiry

- (6) However, subsection (3) does not apply to—
- (a) information or matter involving corruption given to the commission under subsection (5); or
 - (b) a complaint about corruption made as a disclosure, or a referral of a disclosure, to the commission under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010*; or
 - (c) a complaint about, or information or matter involving, corruption given to the commission as a referral, notification or recommendation under another law.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We believe that the amendments, especially Nos 2 and 3, do not go far enough. With amendment 3, we are concerned there might be other reasonable factors which should be considered by the commission in accepting a complaint without a statutory declaration so we oppose these amendments.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: This was a matter of great debate and consideration, as I said before, for some time. The current situation has been abused. I said that in my speech in the second reading stage. People used the CMC for political reasons—the former Premier against the current Premier. I am the first to acknowledge that that occurred. That does not make the process wrong. It makes the people who abuse that process in need of examining themselves, but the current situation where people can with a high degree of freedom make a complaint to the CMC has great value. It empowers anybody to make a complaint.

It is agreed that vexatious complaints are made. I believe there would be a way of dealing with those without using these incredibly restrictive processes. I believe that, when you look back historically at some of the complaints that have been made to the CMC which have resulted in significant corruption or misconduct being uncovered, those complainants will think twice about making a complaint on the basis of the exposure that they will now be under with the obligations to make stat decs and the like. Many people report crime on an anonymous basis. Many of those people do not look for anonymity for a mischievous or a vexatious reason. They look for anonymity for protection, to ensure that wrong is righted but that in the process they are not unnecessarily harmed. This is particularly so in an employment situation where people are at disproportionate levels of power or disproportionate places of influence.

This stat dec process will significantly disadvantage not only the vulnerable people because of intellectual and physical disabilities but also those places of vulnerability that are established because of their position at work or their position in society. On that basis, I cannot support the amendments.

Mr BLEIJIE: My advice to the member for Gladstone is that if members who are making complaints are looking for anonymity they need not look to the CMC. The CMC has a history of leaking information about complainants. The CMC has a history of shredding documents and it has a history of disclosing unauthorised information. The best way to make sure complaints are appropriately dealt with is that the CMC receives the complaints with statutory declarations. We have not gone as far as what the Hon. Ian Callinan had suggested. We have put exemptions in there, and I think we have got the balance right.

Division: Question put—That government amendments Nos 2 to 4 be agreed to.

AYES, 67:

LNP, 67—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 14:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Once again, I think what the member for Gladstone had to say in relation to this issue is very important. We do not want to be stifling people from making anonymous complaints to the CMC. In fact, I understand that the department of justice did provide some assistance to the committee in relation to whether or not a statutory declaration was a requirement in other jurisdictions across Australia. It informed the committee—

No interstate jurisdiction with a similar integrity body as the CMC imposes a statutory declaration requirement for complaints or has any limit on the form or manner in which a complaint can be made to their respective integrity body; apart from Victoria, which requires a complaint to be written unless IBAC determines there are exceptional circumstances; and Tasmania, which requires a written complaint but allows anonymity.

Going on from what the member for Gladstone said, there is no real reason for this to be brought in. I will also back this up with the fact that the CMC submission to the committee does not even support this proposal. Dr Levy was concerned about the capacity to receive anonymous complaints. He advised that in 2012-13 seven per cent of complaints received were from anonymous sources.

Division: Question put—That clause 16, as amended, be agreed to.

AYES, 67:

LNP, 67—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gullely, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 13:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 2—Hopper, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 16, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 17 to 20, as read, agreed to.

Clause 21—



Mr BLEIJIE (10.09 pm): I move the following amendment—

5 Clause 21 (Replacement of s 52 (Research functions))

Page 25, after line 28—

insert—

- (5) The Minister must first consult with the parliamentary committee before approving a research plan or amendment of an approved research plan.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The opposition will be opposing this amendment. This amendment provides that before approving a research plan the Attorney-General must consult with the parliamentary committee. I do not think it is appropriate for a member of the executive to be directing the parliamentary committee on the research plan.

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

AYES, 67:

LNP, 67—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gullely, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 13:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 2—Hopper, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said previously, I do not believe it is appropriate for the Attorney-General to be essentially directing the committee about the research functions that the commission should undertake. In fact, I cannot see any evidence that this is the situation in any other jurisdiction in Australia. So I would ask the Attorney-General to clarify for the House whether there is any other jurisdiction in Australia in which the Attorney-General can direct the commission about what research it is to undertake. This compromises the independence of the CMC. It is an attack on the CMC due to the very fact that the executive can sit around the cabinet table and come up with a list of proposals that it would like to direct the committee to then direct the commission to investigate. I think this is a gross abuse of power. I do not think it is acceptable. I do not think Queenslanders would be very happy to know that this Attorney-General is directing them to conduct research into whatever he wants researched; he will set the agenda. That is not the way it should be. The commission should be allowed to undertake its own research independent of interference from the executive arm of government.

Mr BLEIJIE: In relation to the research functions, the CMC will develop a plan. We are amending it to actually go and consult with the parliamentary committee. I point out the Leader of the Opposition's hypocrisy on the matter. Only two hours ago she said in her speech, 'I don't care what happens in New South Wales,' and now she is complaining that because it does not happen in New South Wales why should it happen in Queensland?' I would have answered the question seriously had the opposition leader not displayed this absolute hypocrisy.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: On the face of it, amendment No. 5 states that the minister must first consult with the parliamentary committee. I have to say that I had reason to pause and consider that. In conjunction with the substantive bill under which the CMC is required to gain the minister's approval for research projects, I understand the genesis of this provision in the sense that the minister is of the view that the CMC, over a short period in the past, was hiving off doing research into stuff and lost sight of its core responsibilities. I believe that that is the genesis of the minister's concerns. What concerns me about this and, therefore, amendment No. 5 to clause 21 is that it raises in the mind of reasonable Queenslanders the spectre that perhaps the CMC is being constrained in what it is allowed to research, what might prompt research into a given topic and that, if the prompting of that research is politically based, maybe the minister would be of a mind to restrict or reject the CMC's request for a research paper or a research proposal. That is the area of concern in my mind. Therefore, whether there is consultation with the parliamentary committee or not, the fundamentals are flawed and the fundamentals give rise to concern about the independence of the CMC.

Mr BLEIJIE: The opposition leader is misrepresenting the bill. Callinan and Aroney recommended that the research functions of the CMC only be carried out when referred by the minister. That is not what the bill actually says. We have relaxed that requirement a little. The CMC will develop a three-year research plan. As long as the research plan supports the commission's functions—and they are fairly large and robust functions—and is required to be undertaken by the commission under the act, for three years they basically tell us what they want to research. As long as it is within the functions under the legislation and is not in some other jurisdiction or within some other functions that are not required by their legislation, it is likely to be approved. Then, in approving it, we will consult with the committee. It is a fairly robust process which I think will focus the essential elements of the objects of the CMC. Of course, the three-year plan will be published, open and accountable, which is more than what happens at the moment considering the secrecy behind the scenes.

Division: Question put—That clause 21, as amended, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 67:

LNP, 67—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 14:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 21, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 22 to 24, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—

Mr BLEIJIE (10.20 pm): I move the following amendment—

6 After clause 24

Page 27, after line 16—

insert—

24A Amendment of s 146ZQ (Report about authorities for assumed identities etc.)

- (1) Section 146ZQ(1), 'parliamentary commissioner'—
omit, insert—
chairperson of the parliamentary committee
- (2) Section 146ZQ(3)—
omit, insert—
- (3) The chairperson of the parliamentary committee must table a copy of the report in the Legislative Assembly within 14 sitting days after the chairperson receives the report.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 25 to 33, as read, agreed to.

Clause 34—

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (10.21 pm): This clause is about the membership of the commission. This clause removes section 223 and replaces it with a new section which sets out the membership of the commission. This includes a full-time commissioner who is the chief executive officer.

The CEO should not be a voting member of the commission; they should be an operational member of staff. Having the CEO on the commission is like having the manager on the board of directors. As the Queensland Law Society said—

From a corporate governance perspective it is not best practice to have a CEO who is charged with operational management and is responsible to the Commission, as a member of the body that oversees their conduct.

The Bar Association of Queensland said—

The inclusion of that position in the Commission as a voting member at the expense of a community position is not supported.

So that is very clear evidence that there is no support for this particular clause. The opposition opposes the CEO being a member of the commission, particularly when the CEO is appointed without bipartisan support.

Mr BLEIJIE: Ross Martin, former chair of the Crime and Misconduct Commission, agreed with that recommendation.

Division: Question put—That clause 34, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 67:

LNP, 67—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Blejje, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Woodforth, Young.

NOES, 14:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 34, as read, agreed to

Clauses 35 to 37, as read, agreed to.

Clause 38—



Mr BLEIJIE (10.24 pm): I move the following amendments—

7 Clause 38 (Replacement of ss 228-230)
Page 33, line 15, before 'Before nominating'—
insert—

(1)

8 Clause 38 (Replacement of ss 228-230)
Page 33, after line 19—
insert—

(2) The parliamentary committee may veto the person's nomination by giving the Minister notice within 14 days (the **consultation period**) after receiving notice of the Minister's proposal to nominate the person.

(3) The Minister may nominate a person for appointment as a commissioner only if the person's nomination is not vetoed by the parliamentary committee during the consultation period.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The committee has recommended inserting a requirement for a power of veto on the part of the committee, and the Attorney-General has moved this amendment to give effect to this recommendation. Now we are getting to the heart and the substance of the matter. The terminology can tend to be misleading.

This is not an individual power of veto that belongs to every member in line with the most common use of that term as used by the UN, where the power of veto means that where an individual member says 'no' the person is excluded. This amendment means merely a veto by majority vote of the committee.

This has no practical effect when the government has the majority on the committee, so basically the government will decide. The opposition strongly opposes this amendment. Nothing is acceptable other than the bipartisan support that has been required since 1987 when Russell Cooper, Angus Innes and Wayne Goss together approved the model for the CJC. At that time not only was there bipartisan support for the chairperson, but there was bipartisan support for the entire legislation. Any substantial changes to the legislation should only be made with bipartisan support of the parliament. That is the only way that public confidence in the institution can be retained and can be maintained.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Mr Chairman, when I made my contribution to the second reading, I had read the amendments and I honestly believed—mistakenly—that the right of veto was tantamount to bipartisanship. It has been drawn to my attention—not by the minister, but by the opposition—that my understanding was incorrect. I have checked with the Attorney-General, and it is a majority decision of the PCMC. That effectively is the support of the government, because that committee has a majority of government members.

My experience over the last little while—and I have made this comment publicly—is that if any committee with a government majority countermands the wishes of the government, they can expect to be sacked. I do not have a lot of confidence that committees will have as much courage as they should have and as much sense of independence. I believe that that bipartisanship is lost by this amendment and that it is only that bipartisan support of the appointee that gives both the commissioners and the chair the sense of acceptability and acceptance across the parliament so that they can carry out their roles without fear of pot shots from the political arm of government, which would impede their ability to do their job. On that basis, I cannot support the amendment.

Division: Question put—That the Attorney-General's amendments Nos 7 and 8 be agreed to.

AYES, 67:

LNP, 67—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 14:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Clause 38 essentially removes sections 228 to 230 of the act and replaces them with the LNP government's proposed appointment process for the commission. Section 228 provided for the consultation process for appointments of commissioners and required bipartisan support of the parliamentary committee. This is the heart of the matter. Essentially what we are seeing in this state is a winding back of the independence of our anticorruption watchdog in Queensland. As I said previously, this is the trashing of the Fitzgerald legacy. This is essentially ripping up everything positive that has happened in this state and taking us back to the dark days.

Earlier I heard the Premier talking about scary music. Yes, it is really scary, because now the LNP government will control the CMC in this state. No longer will the CMC be independent. Tonight the LNP has politicised the CMC. That is exactly what this government has done. Make no mistake. For over 25 years there has been the bipartisan nature of the CMC. Tonight the LNP trashes a quarter of a century of Queensland history—a quarter of a century that we should be proud of as Queenslanders. We have come a long way since those Fitzgerald days from the moonlight state, but now, as it nears midnight, the independence of the CMC will be no more.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I hear LNP members interjecting and laughing and thinking that this is funny. Let it be on their conscience. Let it be on their conscience, because Queenslanders know exactly what this government is doing. They know exactly the intent of this government. The government controls the committee. The government will be able to appoint whoever it wants for extended tenures. Queenslanders deserve better. Queenslanders deserve a strong, independent, healthy anticorruption watchdog. We have seen what has happened in ICAC and we do not know if that is going to move any closer to Queensland but already some people have been named, and that is all I am going to say on this matter as an investigation is currently underway. Tonight is the end of bipartisan support in Queensland. Tonight is the end of the independent anticorruption watchdog and every LNP member should hang their head in shame. It is a complete and utter disgrace.

(Time expired)

Division: Question put—That clause 38, as amended, be agreed to.

AYES, 67:

LNP, 67—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gullely, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 14:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 38, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 39 to 57, as read, agreed to.

Clause 58—

 **Ms PALASZCZUK (10.37 pm):** Clause 58 replaces section 269 of the act which provides for statutory delegation of the powers of the commission to the chairperson and the CEO. The opposition supports the appointment of a chief executive officer to carry out the operational functions that are more appropriately for this particular position but is strongly opposed to the statutory delegation of the powers of the commission to the chairperson and the CEO. This is particularly so when we consider the method of appointment to these positions and a lack of any substantive scrutiny. Another issue we are concerned about is the fact that the chief executive officer and the chairperson may subdelegate powers they receive under subsections 269(1) and 269(2) to an appropriately qualified commission officer. The opposition does not support such a change to the powers of the commission, particularly when the chairperson is no longer subject to act subject to the commission.

Division: Question put—That clause 58, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 67:

LNP, 67—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 14:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 58, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 59 to 68, as read, agreed to.

Clause 69—

 **Ms PALASZCZUK (10.41 pm):** This clause relates to meetings of the parliamentary committee generally to be held in public. Clause 69 inserts a new section 302A to require that all meetings of the parliamentary committee be held in public. This provision will apply to all meetings of the parliamentary committee.

The PCMC in its report No. 90 conceded that it would move forward with the presumption that all joint meetings with the CMC and the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commissioner will be open to the public unless the committee accepts that there are justifiable reasons provided by the CMC or the parliamentary commissioner for part of those proceedings to be closed to the public.

The opposition supports the principle that meetings of the parliamentary committee be held in public, but believes that that principle should be restricted to the joint meetings with the CMC and the parliamentary commissioner as flagged by the PCMC in its report No. 90.

Mr BLEIJIE: I am compelled to stand up, because the opposition leader is now claiming secrecy behind the PCMC. What could be more open and transparent than having a provision in this bill that says that every meeting has to be open unless there is an exceptional circumstance? Now, the opposition leader comes in here trying to hide something, saying, 'Oh, yes, we accept that some of them should be in the public but there still should be secret meetings.' That has been the failing of the CMC. That has been the failing of the PCMC. How more open and transparent can you get than saying that every meeting should be open? That is the way it should remain.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I would seek clarification from the Attorney-General. The clause states that the meetings have to be public meetings, but they can have a private meeting if the committee considers that it is necessary to avoid the disclosure of—

Confidential information or information the disclosure of which would be contrary to the public interest.

On the face of it, that clause gives latitude to the PCMC to hold its meetings in confidence if the matters about which they are discussing are of a sensitive nature. What constraints does the Attorney-General see contained within subclause (a)?

Mr BLEIJIE: The public interest, when used in a statute, imports a discretionary value judgement and that, of course, will be made by reference to undefined factual matters. Such discretionary judgement, which will be on the part of the committee, will extend to taking account of the likely reaction of the community to the action proposed. If the member wants a case, she can refer to *South Australia v O'Shea*. There may be cases in which a decision maker, especially a minister, may properly have regard to a wide range of considerations, in which some may be seen as bearing upon the political fortunes of the government—and that is the decision of *Hot Holdings Pty Ltd*.

The point is that the intention of the bill is that every meeting should be public and that includes a meeting that does not involve the CMC. For every PCMC meeting, the intention of the legislation is that they will be public. One of the amendments that I will move clarifies that it is the intention of the bill that every meeting is in public.

It is a value judgement of the PCMC with the exception that, if the committee feels that there is information that ought not be public, for whatever reason, then it is an ordinary person test—a reasonable person test—in terms of the value judgement in the ordinary meaning of what is in the public interest. That is contained in the bill. I fully expect the chairman of the PCMC to be able to deal with those matters appropriately as they come up, just as we saw occur last week when the CMC chair dealt with a matter.

Division: Question put—That clause 69, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 68:

LNP, 67—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

INDEPENDENTS, 1—Cunningham.

NOES, 13:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 1—Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 69, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 70 to 73, as read, agreed to.

Clause 74—

Mr BLEIJIE (10.48 pm): I move the following amendments—

9 Clause 74 (Insertion of new ss 314A and 314B)

Page 62, lines 35 to 37 and page 63, lines 1 and 2—

omit, insert—

- (5) The parliamentary commissioner may give a copy of a referral under subsection (2) or a recommendation under subsection (3), or an extract from the referral or recommendation, to the Speaker for tabling in the Legislative Assembly if, and only if—

10 Clause 74 (Insertion of new ss 314A and 314B)

Page 63, line 15—

omit, insert—

- (6) The Speaker must table in the Legislative Assembly a copy of, or extract from, a referral or recommendation within 7 days after the Speaker receives the copy or extract under subsection (5).
- (7) In this section—

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 74, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 75 to 79, as read, agreed to.

Clause 80—

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (10.48 pm): This clause goes to the heart of the matters that are before us tonight and that is the extension of the term of the chairperson. Clause 80 of this bill extends the appointments of the acting chairperson and part-time commissioners and acting part-time commissioners retrospectively until the commencement of the act.

The appointment of the acting chairperson was made without the bipartisan support of the parliamentary committee. That is a clear fact. The appointment of the acting chairperson was made without any advertisement. That is a fact.

Tonight, we are seeing the potential for this government, once this bill goes through the House, to appoint the acting chairperson for a period of five years. That is my understanding. I have grave concerns about the process that the government has failed to adopt in relation to the

non-advertisement of the position, the extension of the appointment of that position and now, once this bill goes through the House, the prospect that the appointment could be made for a further five years.

It is unbelievable that we are in a situation where the acting chair has been in this position for a period of, I think, nearly up to 18 months without advertisement and now without bipartisan support. That should ring alarm bells everywhere. This is perhaps the most important position in Queensland. One of the most important appointments that a government can make is the chairperson of the independent corruption watchdog. We have seen an acting chairperson in that position for a period of up to 18 months and no advertisement. I am quite sure that Queenslanders can understand the facts before them. I have clearly set the facts out on the table. The opposition has been raising these issues continuously, asking at length when the position is going to be advertised. We still do not know.

Mr BLEIJIE: The position will be advertised if the parliament passes the bill this evening. You cannot advertise a position that does not yet exist in Queensland. Surprise, surprise! There are new positions, there is new terminology and a new commission. If the parliament passes the bill tonight then I suspect the advertisements will go out and—guess what?—the best person for the job will get the job. The opposition leader misleads this House by saying—

Ms Palaszczuk: No, I don't.

Mr BLEIJIE: You do not know what I am about to allege. Let me allege it first, then you can make the interjection. The opposition leader misinforms the House because she said in her statement just before that the acting chairperson will be able to be appointed for a five-year period. The transitional provision to which the opposition now refers appoints the acting chairperson for a period until October this year and that is clearly because there is no new position yet until the parliament passes the bill. One does not want to pre-empt what parliament says or does or agrees to so let us not get ahead of ourselves. Let us get the legislation passed this evening and then we can advertise for the best person for the job.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: The preliminary statements to the Crime and Misconduct and Other Legislation Amendment Bill say—

- (1) section 80 is taken to have commenced on the day the Bill for this Act was introduced into the Legislative Assembly.
- (2) This Act, other than section 80, commences on a day to be fixed by proclamation.

Section 80 talks about the commencement dates. I would like to believe that what the Attorney-General said is going to occur—that is, that an appointment will be made in a timely manner and that it will be an appropriate person. The current acting chair was appointed outside the established process. He was appointed without bipartisan support. It was, I have to acknowledge, in line with the Acts Interpretation Act that allowed for that acting position to be filled without bipartisan support, but it was certainly contrary to the spirit of the Crime and Misconduct Act.

The Acts Interpretation Act also says that an acting position equals 12 months. It is my understanding, and the Leader of the Opposition has contradicted this so I stand to be corrected, that 12 months is up in May this year. Either way the probability is that the current acting chair will contravene that Acts Interpretation Act interpretation of acting.

The Attorney-General, both prior to this debate and during this debate, made a couple of comments about the appointments that had been made. It was in the context of bipartisan appointments. The Attorney-General made reference to previous bipartisan appointments where there had been problems with that appointee as chair of the CMC and he had gone on in his second reading speech to highlight some deficiencies in previous chairs. Bearing in mind that there are matters before the select committee, the current chair is not beyond reproach either and therefore bipartisanship at least provides some protection to an appointed chair in terms of their acceptability to the parliament.

Mr BLEIJIE: I respect the member for Gladstone but reject entirely what she has just said. What I have here is the current Crime and Misconduct Act, which she should ought know because she was chairman of the PCMC. Section 237 of the current Crime and Misconduct Act says that the acting chairperson is appointed by Governor in Council suitably qualified under the provisions. In subsection (2) it says sections 227 and 228 do not apply. Sections 227 and 228 deal with advertising and nominations for appointment and, secondly, consultation before nominating a person. The current legislation allows an acting appointment to take place. There was no scheme devised in terms of

putting Mr Levy in there at the moment because the act allowed it. It says that in the current act if there is an acting position. Under the Acts Interpretation Act you cannot have an acting arrangement for over a 12-month period. We appointed Dr Levy for six months and then we appointed him for a further six months. We wanted to make sure that the consistency of leadership remains in the CMC whilst we advertise the new position.

We do not know who is going to apply. All I can assure members of is that the person who will get the job will be the person qualified. The qualifications and suitability of the person will be such that they will be able to be appointed to the Supreme Court. That is the qualification: a lawyer of five years standing and then they can be appointed to the Supreme Court or as chairman of the CMC.

Division: Question put—That clause 80, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 67:

LNP, 67—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gullely, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 14:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 80, as read, agreed to.

Clause 81—

Ms PALASZCZUK (10.59 pm): This clause follows on from what I was saying earlier. What the member for Gladstone said before was completely and utterly correct. We have a situation where under the current legislation an acting chair can be appointed for a period of up to 12 months. After a period of 12 months, the position should be advertised and the appointment should receive bipartisan support. Tonight, essentially the government is saying, 'Let's give them another six months'. Therefore, the current chair will be able to continue in that position, not for a period of 12 months which is allowed under the existing law, but for a period of 18 months under the LNP's new laws. Queenslanders can work out what they think about that. They are pretty smart. They understand that there are existing laws and now the LNP government is extending that to suit itself. The Attorney-General says that they are about to advertise. The Attorney-General could have advertised much earlier, but he failed to do so.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, he could have advertised. We are still waiting. Questions have been put to the committee. Everybody will see what this clause is actually about: it is about extending the current chair's appointment from 12 months to 18 months. What the member for Gladstone put on the record in this House tonight was absolutely true and correct. I heard the sniggering across the room and saw cabinet ministers laughing and carrying on. This woman should be treated with respect. This woman has served in the parliament for many years. She does not deserve to be heckled by the male members in this chamber. It is a disgrace. They should all grow up and treat people with the dignity—

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let us go back to the election when the Premier said he would govern with humility, grace and dignity. I do not see any of that in this House. I am yet to see any of it. A couple of members are respectful, but most of them are not. To pick on the member for Gladstone—

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Come on, keep it up! They cannot help themselves.

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Do not worry; I can take it.

Mr Langbroek: Don't play the sexist card.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, I am not playing the sexist card. The member should talk, after what he said to me in this House. That is what you get when you do not have many women in the cabinet. You do not get a fair understanding. They are not representative of Queenslanders. They are just a bunch of bullyboys.

(Time expired)

Dr DOUGLAS: I endorse the comments that were made by the member for Gladstone and the Leader of the Opposition. I am a former chair of the PCMC. Their exact comments are entirely appropriate. The Attorney-General could easily have advertised before the 12 months was up. It was an abuse of process. It is wrong. It should not be enshrined in any law that comes forward. He completely got it wrong and what has just been said is entirely appropriate. Every person in this parliament should endorse what was just said. None of these smirking silly statements should go ahead.

Division: Question put—That clause 81, as read, be agreed to.

AYES, 66:

LNP, 66—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

NOES, 14:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 2—Cunningham, Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 81, as read, agreed to.

Clause 82—

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (11.06 pm): Here we go: the change from chairperson to chairman. I am sorry, but what century are we living in? Honestly! Submissions were made to the committee on the change from chairperson to chairman. The LNP is back in the Dark Ages. Yet again it is taking us backwards. They have not come forward. Obviously in the cabinet the men outnumber the women. There are only two women in the cabinet and they could not get this one through. They were outnumbered. They had all the blokes sitting around the cabinet table saying, 'We're going to change chairperson to chairman.' What would a Queensland year 12 student think of this? They would think that it is a complete and utter joke that is taking us back decades; taking us back centuries. What does that say to young women growing up in Queensland? It says, 'No, you will not be a chairperson; you will be a chairman'. For goodness sake, grow up!

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Tonight we have debated this bill and overwhelmingly those who are voting against it have failed to make any headway in changing the legislation. Chairman and chairperson: we will spend a lot of time debating this. I was chairman of the Calliope council and I lost count of the number of times that people took me aside and reminded me that manus means hand, that it is the hand that guides and so on.

I say to all the girls and women in Queensland that I do not care if you are called chairperson and I do not care if you are called chairman. If you have the skills, get up and lead. This legislation has a lot of problems. Whether the position is called chairman or chairperson is the least of the problems of this legislation. The problem is to do with the politicisation of the CMC; that is the issue. I say to the women of Queensland, do not worry about the terminology; worry about your ability to fill a position and fight to fill that position. Do not worry about the blokes' attitudes, because you are there to do your best and some of the best people in this state are women.

Division: Question put—That clause 82, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 68:

LNP, 67—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

INDEPENDENTS, 1—Cunningham.

NOES, 13:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 1—Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 82, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 83 to 86, as read, agreed to.

Clause 87—

Mr BLEIJIE (11.11 pm): I move the following amendment—

11 Clause 87 (Insertion of new ch 3, pt 6)

Page 99, lines 19 to 27—

omit, insert—

confidential information—

- (a) means personal information; but
- (b) does not include information in the public domain unless further disclosure of the information is prohibited by law.

personal information means information or an opinion about an individual—

- (a) if the individual's identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion; and
- (b) whether or not the information or opinion—
 - (i) is true; or
 - (ii) forms part of a database; or
 - (iii) is recorded in a material form.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 87, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 88—

Mr BLEIJIE (11.12 pm): I move the following amendment—

12 Clause 88 (Insertion of new s 219A)

Page 101, lines 19 and 20, '(other than a public service employee of the department)'—

omit.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 88, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 89 to 93, as read, agreed to.

Clause 94—

Division: Question put—That clause 94, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 67:

LNP, 66—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gullely, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Johnson, Kaye, Kempton, King, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Powell, Pucci, Rickuss, Ruthenberg, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Young.

INDEPENDENTS, 1—Cunningham.

NOES, 13:

ALP, 7—Byrne, D'Ath, Miller, Mulherin, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Scott.

KAP, 3—Hopper, Katter, Knuth.

PUP, 2—Douglas, Judge.

INDEPENDENTS, 1—Wellington.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 94, as read, agreed to.

Schedule 1, as read, agreed to.

Schedule 2—

Mr BLEIJIE (11.16 pm): I move the following amendments—

13 Schedule 2 (Minor and consequential amendments of other legislation)

Page 131, line 6, 'and Rescue Service'—

omit, insert—

and Emergency Services

14 Schedule 2 (Minor and consequential amendments of other legislation)

Page 156, lines 2 to 7—

omit, insert—

1 Section 102(1)(b)(iii)—

omit, insert—

(iii) the chairman, or the senior executive officer (crime), of the Crime and Corruption Commission;

2 Section 102(4)—

Amendments agreed to.

Schedule 2, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.16 pm): I move—

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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.17 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

PROPERTY OCCUPATIONS BILL

Reconsideration



Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (11.17 pm), by leave: I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in Standing and Sessional Orders:

- (1) The Property Occupations Bill 2013 which was read a third time on the last sitting day, be reconsidered by the House in consideration in detail for the particular purposes of reconsidering clauses 168 to 235 and the Attorney-General's amendments 11 to 23; and
- (2) Following the reconsideration of the clauses and amendments, the questions for the third reading and long title, as amended, shall be re-put and if agreed to deemed passed by the House.

The Property Occupations Bill that we dealt with in this House last evening needs to be reconsidered by the House in consideration in detail as there is an error that needs to be corrected. It is clear from the broadcast and the *Record of Proceedings* that amendments were put to wrong clauses and two amendments circulated by the Attorney-General were not put to the House for consideration. To ensure the correct passage of the bill, reconsideration of the particular clauses and amendments is necessary.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 168 to 235—

Mr BLEIJIE (11.19 pm): I seek leave to move the following amendments en bloc.

Leave granted.

Mr BLEIJIE: I move the following amendments—

11 Clause 204 (Orders District Court may make)

Page 160, line 10, '(b)'—

omit, insert—

(c)

12 Clause 207 (Misleading conduct)

Page 163, line 24, 'Proceedings'—

omit, insert—

QCAT proceedings

13 Clause 208 (Unconscionable conduct)

Page 164, line 2, 'Proceedings'—

omit, insert—

QCAT proceedings

14 Clause 209 (False representations and other misleading conduct relating to residential property)

Page 166, line 15, 'Proceedings'—

omit, insert—

QCAT proceedings

15 Clause 214 (Auctioneer not to disclose reserve or other price)

Page 170, line 32, 'or may be'—

omit, insert—

may be or is being

16 Clause 214 (Auctioneer not to disclose reserve or other price)

Page 171, after line 8—

insert—

- (2A) However, if during the auction, the reserve price is reached or exceeded, the auctioneer does not contravene subsection (2) only by disclosing, to persons present at the auction, that the reserve price has been met.

Example of a disclosure that the reserve price has been met—

the auctioneer announcing during the auction that the property is on the market

- (2B) Also, an auctioneer does not contravene subsection (2)(c) only because a price or price range for the property is disclosed by the auctioneer to an electronic listings provider to establish search criteria for listing the property for sale on the provider's website or other electronic medium.

- (2C) However, subsection (2B) applies only if the auctioneer is satisfied on reasonable grounds that—
- (a) the electronic listings provider will list the property for sale on the website without disclosing the price or price range; and
 - (b) the listing will include any statement prescribed under a regulation.

17 Clause 216 (Real estate agent not to disclose reserve or other price)

Page 172, line 2, 'or may be'—
omit, insert—

may be or is being

18 Clause 216 (Real estate agent not to disclose reserve or other price)

Page 172, line 4, after 'be'—
insert—

, may be or is being

19 Clause 216 (Real estate agent not to disclose reserve or other price)

Page 172, line 8, 'property agent'—
omit, insert—

real estate agent

20 Clause 216 (Real estate agent not to disclose reserve or other price)

Page 172, line 18, 'property agent'—
omit, insert—

real estate agent

21 Clause 216 (Real estate agent not to disclose reserve or other price)

Page 172, after line 22—
insert—

(3A) A real estate agent does not contravene subsection (2)(c) or (3)(b) only because a price or price range for the property is disclosed by the real estate agent to an electronic listings provider to establish search criteria for listing the property for sale on the provider's website or other electronic medium.

- (3B) However, subsection (3A) applies only if the real estate agent is satisfied on reasonable grounds that—
- (a) the electronic listings provider will list the property for sale on the website without disclosing the price or price range; and
 - (b) the listing will include any statement prescribed under a regulation.

22 Clause 227 (Power of court)

Page 180, line 15, '219(4)'—
omit, insert—

219(1)

23 Clause 228 (Power of court for particular offences)

Page 180, line 19, '219(4)'—
omit, insert—

219(1)

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 168 to 235, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.20 pm): I move—

That the Property Occupations Bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the Property Occupations Bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Hon. JP BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.20 pm): I move—

That the long title of the Property Occupations Bill, as amended, be agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the Property Occupations Bill, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (11.21 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Springfield, Clancy's Corner

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (11.21 pm): It is with great disappointment that I rise on behalf of residents of Springfield who have grave concerns over their largest investment—their home. Residents of Clancy's Corner, a Lend Lease development in Springfield, are feeling duped having bought their properties and started their dream lifestyle under the marketing slogan 'Room to move', and I table the brochures in which this development was marketed as being large lots.

Tabled paper: Brochures on Clancy's Crossing Springfield Lakes [\[5019\]](#).

Sixteen families living there feel duped and confused by the Lend Lease values on their own website, which states that they have integrity and that they are true to their word, and I table that document as well.

Tabled paper: Website extract of Lend Lease values [\[5020\]](#).

A new plan has been dropped upon them without consultation from the Ipswich City Council which clearly shows—and I table plans from the council planning website—that blocks promised to be 750 square metres are now down to 299 square metres as they cut up blocks for sale for town houses.

Tabled paper: Maps titled 'Clancy's Crossing Springfield Lakes Qld' [\[5022\]](#).

And guess what? It has already been advertised for sale, and I table this document from MG Land where it is already being advertised for sale and it does not have development approval.

Tabled paper: Website extract MG Homes Introduction [\[5021\]](#).

Residents have sought assistance from council and the developer to ensure that the original size blocks would be developed, but they are yet to receive anything but buck-passing and platitudes. Residents have serious concerns about the effect that this sardine development will have on their amenity and lifestyle and possibly on housing valuations. They are concerned about the effect that the extra pressure on roads and traffic will have on young families. They are concerned about the lack of social infrastructure, such as libraries and a place of worship, to cope with the extra residents. They are concerned about the type and quality of the development proposed. Council should be well aware of the significant parking issues for residents in the narrow-gutted roads outside their properties and the problems this has caused in being fined \$82.50 for simply parking outside their homes.

The residents are seeking Lend Lease to withdraw this development application immediately and return to the table and meet with its original written promises to the purchasers of the land. If Lend Lease snubs its nose at the residents then the Ipswich City Council, all councillors and council officers should reject the development application until the issues are sorted out and the estate should be developed as per the original documentation, which I have tabled tonight, and the sales agreement—and fight it out in court if necessary. They demand no more excuses, no more buck-passing, no more avoidance of their valid and real concerns. They demand that their dream homes and their community value is not diminished by this proposed development and I agree with them wholeheartedly. How can you sell off town houses on a plan if they are not already approved? Something is wrong.

(Time expired)

Southport Towards Twenty 18

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (11.24 pm): I rise to address questions raised by the member for Mackay on 3 April 2014 regarding the publication *Southport Towards Twenty 18*. I am proud to be associated with this outstanding publication and am pleased to update the House about its intent and how it has been received as a promotional tool for Southport and the Gold Coast.

Last year I raised the possibility of producing a small DL brochure with David Lister from Gold Coast advertising agency HeadlineAd. I wanted to summarise the many opportunities and advantages that Southport and the Gold Coast have to offer in terms of education, health services

and business. Headline was so enthusiastic about the idea it asked if its company could take over the concept and further develop it—but its vision was a more complete and comprehensive A4 document. The fundamental objectives were to develop a marketing document that could be used to promote Southport in the lead-up to the 2018 Commonwealth Games, inspire business investment and stir up community awareness of the many opportunities and projects planned or underway.

I am delighted that the member for Mackay is so interested in my electorate, and so he should be, as it is a very exciting place to live and work. In respect of the member for Mackay's questions, had he simply turned to page 4 of the book he would have read—

This (book) is a production of Headline Ad supported by local business and the Member for Southport (Rob Molhoek). Headline Ad would like to thank all sponsors and contributors to this book.

The member for Mackay also asked about the registration of the domain www.towardstwenty18.com.au, originally registered on my behalf through an account linked to a former business and family trust. Control of the domain, the creation of the site and its administration were surrendered to HeadlineAd last year.

On 8 August 2013, I wrote to the Clerk to inquire about any reporting or disclosure obligations I may have had in respect of my support and endorsement for the publication. I explained in detail the book's purpose, origination, development and production. I also advised the Clerk, as I am happy to re-state today, that not one cent from its production has gone to me or the LNP. HeadlineAd undertook the project on a semi-commercial basis, and I have been pleased to work with it in the interests of creating local employment, the promotion of Southport, the Gold Coast and the Commonwealth Games. I table a copy of my letter to the Clerk as of 8 August 2013 and his subsequent response of 13 September.

Tabled paper: Correspondence with the Clerk of the Parliament and the member for Southport, Mr Rob Molhoek MP, relating to disclosure obligations [\[5023\]](#).

Broadwater Electorate, Anzac Day

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (11.27 pm): I rise to update the House as to the events of Anzac Day 2014 in the Broadwater electorate. I had the honour of attending both the dawn and 10 am service held by the Runaway Bay RSL subbranch. Again, it was incredibly moving. Not only were the services moving, but it was fantastic to see so many young people coming out amongst the thousands who attended on the day.

I would like to pay particular tribute to Patrick Fairon, who is the President of the Runaway Bay RSL subbranch; Geoff Maltby, who was the emcee on the day; and Colonel Peter Leeson (retired), who provided the address at the 10 am service. I would also like to acknowledge the great work that the Air Force cadets 221 Squadron did as the catafalque party—I am sure the member for Townsville will correct me if I got that wrong. I would like to acknowledge the work that they also do in the lead-up to Anzac Day, supporting the RSL subbranch with their badge sales.

I would also like to pay particular tribute to Shane Anderson, who helps organise getting everyone ready for the dawn service, and all of those members of the RSL subbranch who helped set everything up. I would also like to acknowledge the Salvation Army band for the work that they do in supporting the local RSL subbranch. I also acknowledge the support that the Runaway Bay Seagulls rugby league club and also the Runaway Bay shopping centre provide to the RSL, subsidising and supporting their gunfire breakfasts.

I also had the opportunity and the privilege to attend the Paradise Point Bowls Club service. I also acknowledge the work that was done by Reverend Sid Rogers in leading what was a very moving service; the men's president Jim Herron; the ladies' president Marita Pointon; chair of the board Noel Gray; board member Mick McGrath; and the Coombabah State School choir, who provided a number of lovely songs that made the service very, very special. Anzac Day is an opportunity for local communities to show their support for members of our community who have served in peace time and in war and who have been prepared to make the ultimate of sacrifices.

I would also like to acknowledge the schools in my electorate, all of whom held services on the Thursday ahead of Anzac Day. They were all incredibly moving. As the local member, it is a privilege to support local organisations like the RSL, the bowls club and local schools as we come together to remember what is one of the most solemn days in the Australian calendar and as we really think about what makes the Australian character.

Sale of Public Assets

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—PUP) (11.30 pm): Despite what this LNP government would have us believe, quite clearly there is resounding opposition to asset sales that was most evident when I held a community forum last week to gauge my constituents' opinions. But the largest number of people who are opposed to it is tonight in Victoria, where tonight the ads run on strong choices were run on Victorian TV widely stating the Newman Queensland debt of \$80 billion and demanding \$4 billion in Victoria.

Miss Barton interjected.

Dr DOUGLAS: The ads were running in Victoria. Having said that, there were comments like 'It is crazy, you don't sell your assets'; 'It's no way to build your economy'; and 'You don't sell income-producing assets.' Interestingly, the member for Broadwater talked about the Suns. The ads were broadcast not in Queensland but in Victoria.

Miss Barton: On Fox.

Dr DOUGLAS: On Victorian TV. I would like to highlight a few comments from my constituents' emails. One constituent said, 'I'm very much against stealing state assets, particularly when they involve supply of an essential service, when they are returning a good profit, and more particularly where that profit exceeds the current interest rate, which means that any debt can be paid down. The sale of the state's electricity system is a prime example of not to sell assets. There is simply a greater burden placed on taxpayers to support the private industry profit margin.' Another constituent said, 'If Premier Newman is serious, then part of the debt resolution process would start by reducing politicians' salaries significantly.'

Those present were critical of the LNP government's outlandish expenditure of \$6 million to sell their sales pitch. Constant advertising confronts them every time they switch on their internet and even on their mobile phones. One resident tried to put his idea forward on the website and managed to reduce the debt from \$80 billion to \$65 billion but was refused further comment as he had not got it down to \$55 billion, as they wanted. What a farce this campaign, under the guise of public consultation, has become.

One young tradesman said that he had worked very hard to purchase his home and he compared the sale of our assets to selling off his home to pay for a short-term solution to pay off debt. Not one person spoke in favour of asset sales and most described the state's debt as a myth when one takes into account our net debt, and I agree. We originally applied to go to the minister's one but we were told we had to be five days early after you advertise. One needs to look at the final position in detail. Net debt is the key, not gross debt.

(Time expired)

Ipswich West Electorate, Events

 **Mr CHOAT** (Ipswich West—LNP) (11.33 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise in this chamber to showcase numerous community based events that have taken place in Ipswich West over the last two weeks. I cannot praise the people in my electorate enough for the effort they put into planning, promoting and hosting these events for the community.

Last week I attended a Lowood Slimmers evening, where I had to weigh in, but not Biggest Loser style. That comes next time. The Slimmers are a very proactive and supportive group in Lowood, hosting regular meetings to assist people who want to get into shape. It was the first meeting I have attended since the late great Mr Bob Campbell left us. To many it may sound odd, but my weigh-in and attendance was inspired by 'Big Bob' and may he rest in God's care.

On Saturday night, my wife, Nicky, and I had the pleasure of attending the Ipswich and West Moreton Cricket Association's annual presentation night. It was a great night and a pleasure to meet numerous cricketers from the nine affiliated clubs throughout the region. I congratulate all award recipients for their sterling efforts throughout the season. The night would be without success if not for the combined efforts of the management committee, consisting of Peter Leschke, Paul Wilson, the lovely Bronis Carkeet—a favourite of mine—and Ross Madsen, ably assisted by numerous club members like Ray Leschke, who undertake the day-to-day duties of operating clubs and matches.

On Sunday, 27 April I attended the official relaunch of the Rosewood Railway, which used to service the historic Cabanda and Kunkala stations and the district. Nicky and I took along Benjamin and little Eloise and thoroughly enjoyed the morning, travelling on both a steam locomotive and a rail

motor. I wish to congratulate Dr Greg Cash, the president and chairman of the Board of the Australian Railway Historical Society, Queensland Division for his and his team's ongoing commitment to the preservation of historical Queensland Rail routes and infrastructure. They made us feel so welcome. As I have made clear in this House on many occasions, rail is a deep passion of mine and I will continue to assist any group dedicated to the preservation of our rail history, particularly those in Ipswich West, where it all started.

In semirural electorates such as Ipswich West, May marks the beginning of the official show season. At the weekend this was kicked off by the great Marburg show. Unfortunately, numbers were down this year due to the rain on Friday which meant our equestrian events were cancelled, but that did not dampen spirits. I congratulate Mr Bob Krause and the committee on another fantastic show year. They had record numbers of exhibits in the cattle section. The great poultry and cage birds were very good. I am so proud to support those exhibits every year with some prizes. People really deserve it. They bring a lot of good things to the community.

Mr Berry interjected.

Mr CHOAT: Unfortunately, I did not enter anything myself, but I have given an undertaking that I will perhaps put some turkeys in next year's Marburg show.

Mr Berry: What about those turkeys?

Mr CHOAT: Yes, the turkeys are good. I look forward to the Rosewood, Lowood and Ipswich shows where I will join my colleague.

Mount Ommaney Electorate, Anzac Day

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (11.36 pm): Like the member for Broadwater, I, too, want to reflect on the Anzac Day services on 25 April which were held across the electorate of Mount Ommaney. It marked the 99-year anniversary since the brave and courageous Australian and New Zealand soldiers landed on the shores of Gallipoli. I attended three services that day and another two school services that week. While each service was unique in their own way, one thing was obvious: more and more people wished to pay their respects to those who have served their country and to those who made the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives, and show our gratitude and appreciation to those who continue to serve our country today.

Corinda State School involved the students by the classes, from prep to year 7, making wreaths and then student representatives laid those wreaths. The school choir and band also played their part in making this service very special, with the deputy principal, Mr Ifenger, charged with *The Last Post*. Corinda State High School chose the school leaders to host their service, with a truly moving performance by Vaolee Kolio and Aileen Nassolo singing *Amazing Grace* during the laying of the wreaths.

Our dawn service held at the Indooroopilly-Sherwood subbranch at Corinda saw a record number of crowds joining the march, and the pride felt for our returned servicemen was evident. I was joined by the Hon. Scott Emerson. The Centenary RSL subbranch saw the largest attendance at the Centenary War Memorial. President Alan Worthington always includes local schools and youth, inviting the Centenary State High School band, which certainly did justice to that service.

Then we had our Oxley march at Bannerman Park. While it is a much more intimate service, it is still one steeped in tradition with the singing of *God Save the Queen* at the conclusion of the service. A lot of work goes into the lead-up of Anzac Day behind the scenes. To each and every one of the organisers and volunteers, I want to say thank you. Thank you for your dedication and efforts in ensuring that Anzac Day continues to be upheld and recognised for the important day that it is in Australia's history. Thank you to all the schools and schoolchildren in my electorate who participated—the Oxley Girl Guides, the Scouts, the Jindalee-Jamboree Heights schools, Middle Park schools and all the primary schools who participated in the march. One thing that was very special was having the school leaders—just year 7—speak in front of a crowd of 3½ thousand. That showed courage and bravery as well. Anzac Day is alive and well in Mount Ommaney.

North Queensland Games

 **Mr HATHAWAY** (Townsville—LNP) (11.39 pm): I rise tonight to report on one of the north's major sporting events, the North Queensland Games, which were held in Townsville early last month. The games are now a longstanding North Queensland tradition and multisport event with more than 40 sports represented throughout the games period. This biennial sporting event is rotated in the

region between Townsville, Cairns and Mackay. This year the 16th NQ Games made their way back to their original home of Townsville where it all began from small beginnings 30 years ago. Those very first games were opened by one of Australia's swimming legends—none other than Dawn Fraser.

Thousands of participants and spectators converged on Townsville for a weekend of sports, celebrations and entertainment. We were all privileged for the chance to see some of Queensland's finest athletes engage in competition in a range of sports including athletics, cycling, netball, swimming, rugby league and fencing to name a few. The Queensland government recognises that events and tourism are intrinsically linked, and Tourism and Events Queensland was proud to support this event, as the games were a part of our commitment to reach \$30 billion in overnight visitor expenditure by 2020. The 16th games were the gateway event for our city's and our region's tourism and events season. There is more to come, folks—with the Triathlon Festival, Cultural Fest, the Adventure Games, the V8s and the Chamber Festival to name a few. I almost forgot the Queensland derby this Friday—come on the Cowboys.

I would also like to make special mention of this year's games ambassador and our hometown hero, winter Olympian Alex Ferlazzo. Alex is an inspiration not just to athletes but to all of us. He is known for his ability in the single luge event and he is also known for his unorthodox training methods. Obviously, as members would all be aware, Townsville is in the tropics and there is not a snowflake in sight, yet Alex takes on the slopes of the road winding down Townsville's Mount Stuart. Alex's hard work paid off, as he went on to represent our country at the Sochi Winter Olympics earlier this year where he finished 33rd in the men's single luge. This young gentleman was a perfect ambassador. His sheer determination, dedication, spirit and probably that little bit of craziness is an inspiration to us all.

I would also like to thank the North Queensland Sports Foundation, the major sponsors RACQ Insurance, Minister Stuckey for her support and in particular all the active and committed North Queensland Sports Foundation board members, with some local luminaries such as life members Ross Contarino, Peter Elliott, Dan Jackson and many others. They are ably chaired, corralled and coerced by the unflappable Margaret Cochrane. There are many other local supporters like Lyn McLaughlin and the unstoppable Midge Jackson to name a few. I also thank the NQ Sports Foundation staff themselves and the very, very many event volunteers, like Frenchy, the crew from YWAM and of course all of the individual sports administrators for the very successful running of the 16th games. Without you, your commitment and your effort in the two-year lead-up period and during the set-up and conduct of the games, such an outstanding success would not have been possible.

Walton Construction



Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (11.42 pm): The *Sunshine Coast Daily* journalist Bill Hoffman and I have been covering the plight of subcontractors caught up in the collapse of failed construction company Walton Construction. I have previously called on this government to bring in legislation to provide more checks and balances for these subcontractors. Mr Hoffman's investigation into Walton Construction has uncovered a puzzling link between Walton Construction and the LNP. I table his article in the *Sunshine Coast Daily* from 8 February.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, dated 8 February 2014, titled 'LNP trust received \$430,000 from Walton as it collapsed' [[5024](#)].

In that article he wrote—

A Property Trust linked to the LNP received \$430,000 in rent from Walton Construction last financial year at a time it was about to collapse owing Sunshine Coast sub-contractors \$2.9 million.

The payment is listed in Associated Entity documents filed with the Australian Electoral Commission for Altum P/L acting as trustee for Altum Property Trust. Its business address is 66 Bowen St, Spring Hill, the LNP's headquarters.

He went on to say—

In 2009-10 the AEC was informed \$105,994 had been received from Walton. In 2010-11 the amount was \$353,315, in 2011-12 it was \$516,966, and in 2012-13, \$431,082.

The 2010-11 payment was initially declared as \$211,988.94 but was amended on May 27, 2013, to the amount above.

Mr Hoffman's investigations have led to a number of anomalies in the AEC Associated entity returns by Altum Pty Ltd acting as trustee for the Altum Property Trust. I table for the assistance of members the associated entity disclosure return for 2012-13, together with a request for amendment to the associated entity disclosure return which was dated 14 March 2014. I also table a request for

amendment to the associated entity disclosure return for the financial year 2010-11. I also table a request for amendment to the associated entity disclosure return for the financial year 2012-13 for the LNP Nominees Pty Ltd as trustee for the 6 St Paul's Unit Trust.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Associated Entity Disclosure Return, financial Year 2012-13, Australian Electoral Commission, Altum P/L ATF Altum Property Trust' [\[5025\]](#).

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Request for Amendment Associated Entity Disclosure Return, Financial Year 2012-13, Australian Electoral Commission, Altum Pty Ltd Trustee for Altum Property Unit Trust' [\[5026\]](#).

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Request for Amendment Associated Entity Disclosure Return, Financial Year 2010-2011, Australian Electoral Commission, Altum P/L ATF Altum Property Trust' [\[5027\]](#).

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Request for Amendment Associated Entity Disclosure Return, Financial Year 2012-13, Australian Electoral Commission, LNP Nominees Pty Ltd as Trustee for the 6 St Paul's Unit Trust' [\[5028\]](#).

These returns show a number of significant adjustments which I believe warrant justifying to the people of Queensland. I call on the Premier as the parliamentary leader of the LNP to explain why total receipts, total payments and total debt have changed so significantly in such a small period of time. The Australian Electoral Commission needs to investigate these crazy accounts and crazy figures.

Juvenile Justice

 **Mr COX** (Thuringowa—LNP) (11.45 pm): First, I would like to thank the member for Gregory. It looks like I have stolen his position tonight and I thank him for that. Last year on 5 March I spoke in this parliament in the matters of public interest debate about juvenile crime. I stated in my opening paragraph—

The shape of juvenile crime is different on the Gold Coast to that in Kingaroy, Mackay, Townsville or Mount Isa. Nonetheless, it is an issue that affects us all. Locally, it is an issue that has grabbed headlines and raised voices in protest. When the Premier visited Townsville on Monday and Tuesday last week, victims' rights advocates loudly decried the juvenile justice system as inadequate.

I went on to say—

On returning home from the previous sitting week ... I heard of the recent spate of stolen cars being driven at ridiculous speeds such as 235 kilometres an hour in a 60 zone, in one case with a 14-year-old at the wheel.

...

I went to the media, announcing my support for this government and the Attorney-General to review the juvenile justice system from top to bottom. My media statement has prompted much feedback not only from the community but also from people who work within the judicial system. Following the recent roundtable discussions, I will continue to lobby and discuss with the Attorney-General where and how we look at the matter of juvenile crime and the role of the court system. I will also continue to work closely with local police and Minister Jack Dempsey to ensure the police get all the resources they require, whether that is more police officers or a dedicated taskforce, if need be, to address the current spike in crime.

I also said towards the end of that speech—

I believe the family unit is the true core of humanity, irrespective of one's religious, cultural, social or geographical background.

...

Instead of the attitude of sweep it under the carpet, lock them up and throw away the key, in not all of these children's cases but in most we have failed as a community and as a government in ensuring the safety and care of these children. Let us not forget that they are children.

Victims of crime had long become the forgotten in the city of Townsville under Labor and we needed to listen to their voice. At this point I wish to thank the people of Townsville for being a voice and for speaking up and for also playing their part in securing the boot camp for the region. The police have done a great job and I publicly thank them for the work they have done in the last 12 months.

It was only last week that some new figures on property crime were released. In the last 10 months, we have seen a 20 per cent reduction in the number of house break-ins alone and a 40 per cent reduction in property crime overall, including car thefts. The figures went from about 120 in January, back to about 80 in February and down to about 60 in March, and I have not got the figure for April as yet. That is 545 fewer homes in the last 10 months, which is about 50 fewer homes a month. Coming down hard on offenders and finding ways to better our early intervention efforts are what this government has done differently, but with more police we could be ahead of the game for once in Townsville. It is your right to feel safe on your street and in your house.

Motor Neurone Disease

 **Mr RUTHENBERG** (Kallangur—LNP) (11.48 pm): It is Motor Neurone Disease Week this week, and yesterday morning members received a lapel pin to wear in recognition of this. The lapel pin is the blue cornflower and was adopted by MND Australia as the national symbol of hope for MND because of its fragile appearance but hardy nature. Like the cornflower, people living with MND show remarkable strength, especially as they cope with the devastating disease.

The MND Association of Queensland was established by Charles Graham, who was diagnosed with MND in 1981 and passed away in 1983. This organisation has continued to support those living with MND, raising public awareness through education and information sessions, lending equipment and providing care services. My involvement as the patron of MND's north Brisbane and Caboolture support group has given me an opportunity to gain a greater understanding about this insidious terminal illness that robs the individual of a quality of life we all take for granted.

For those of you who may be hearing about this disease for the first time, I can tell you that motor neurone disease is an incurable terminal illness with an average life expectancy after diagnosis of just 27 months. The short life expectancy means that at any point in time there are approximately 250 people living with MND in Queensland and around 1,900 within Australia. For most people, the early symptoms of MND—slurring of words, difficulty holding objects or stumbling—rapidly escalate to an unstoppable wave of paralysis that robs them of their ability to eat, move, swallow and, finally, breathe. There is, generally speaking, a very low level of knowledge about MND in the medical and allied health communities and the effect it has on the lives of those afflicted by it.

At present, there is no known cause or cure for MND so the need for support and funding to enable ongoing research into this disease is vitally important. The MND Association of Queensland relies primarily on generous financial support from the community while continuing to be a light of hope for those diagnosed with MND, their families and their carers. It also provides support to other healthcare and social services to assist in home care of those with MND. I commend it for its hard work, dedication and commitment to meeting these needs over the last 30 years and into the future. I encourage members to help it accomplish this very important work.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.51 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Byrne, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, D'Ath, Davies, C Davis, T Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Katter, Kaye, Kempton, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mulherin, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Scott, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young