

***AUSTRALIAN STUDY OF
PARLIAMENT GROUP
(Queensland Chapter)***

**WOMEN IN THE QUEENSLAND
PARLIAMENT
Historical and Contemporary Perspectives**

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Parliament House
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Reported by Parliamentary Reporting Staff

Paul REYNOLDS: I welcome you all to the first meeting for 1994 of the Australasian Study of Parliament Group, Queensland Chapter. As I think most of you are aware, we were formed in May of last year. Therefore, we have had almost a year in existence. The committee that was elected last May decided as a matter of policy that we would have three meetings a year—one in the early part of the year, the annual general meeting, which we are constitutionally bound to have in May, and one toward the end of the year. This would represent our public face and we would work together as a research group to put out publications and undertake and sponsor research. It is my great pleasure to welcome you here and to welcome our guest speakers, whom I will introduce in a moment. I welcome particularly our patron, the Honourable Mr Speaker Fouras, who is with us tonight. I thank him for his attendance and for his kind support in allowing us to use these facilities.

We have received some apologies, which I will read, because they are from people who are very supportive of us and who would be here if it were not for other commitments. Mr Ray Braithwaite, MHR; the Honourable Tom Burns, MLA; the Honourable Pat Comben, MLA; Mr Peter Dodd, MHR; Mr Robert Doyle, Clerk of the Parliament; the Honourable Wayne Goss, MLA, the Premier; Mr Mike Horan, MLA; Senator Gerry Jones; Mr Vince Lester, MLA; Mr Kevin Lingard, MLA; Mr Don Livingstone, MLA; the Honourable Terry Mackenroth, MLA; Senator MacGibbon; Ms Jan McMillan; Senator Margaret Reynolds; Mr Les Scott, MHR; Ms Cheryl Simmons; Miss Fiona Simpson, MLA; the Honourable Geoff Smith, MLA; Mr Lawrence Springborg, MLA, Opposition Whip; Mrs Kathy Sullivan, MHR; Mr Terry Sullivan, MLA; the Honourable Tony McGrady, MLA; and Mrs Di McCauley, MLA, who was originally invited to speak to us. Particularly given the bad weather, thanks very much to everybody else for coming.

There are a minimum number of announcements, but I do want to make a few, just so that they are before you. The annual general meeting of the association of the group will be held here on 9 May, which I believe is a Monday. Those of you who are members will be advised. You will also receive the Secretary's report, the Treasurer's report and the President's report with your notice of meeting. Subscriptions will be due as from that meeting. That meeting will be convened as a business meeting to receive reports, to elect the office bearers and the committee for 1994-95, and we will combine that with another function similar to this.

I am very pleased to announce that there will be an exhibition mounted later this year, probably at the end of May, running through June celebrating women's suffrage in Queensland. This will hopefully be mounted in the Legislative Council Chamber. One of the great things about abolishing the Legislative Council in 1922 was that it freed up a chamber for all sorts of other more worthy activities, such as the mounting of an exhibition for 100 years of women's suffrage. Any of you who were privileged enough to see the Federal Parliament's display last year at the new Parliament House will remember it as a graphic and important event. We hope that we will be able to mount an exhibition of an equivalent standard. I am sure that we will.

An equally important announcement is that the Parliamentary Library, under the authorship of John McCulloch, is releasing a publication titled *Women and the Queensland Parliament*. That research publication will, in a sense, be back-to-back with this particular meeting. John will be building on some published work, but the vast majority of his research will be original. I believe that publication is a must for anybody who is interested in this very important subject. I thank John for his ability and readiness to work in this area. It is a topic that has been very much on his mind over the last few years, and it is always good to see research of this sort coming to fruition.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to acquaint you with the format of this evening. This is the first time that the Australasian Study of Parliament Group has run a meeting with a panel of speakers. I intend to introduce each of the speakers to you as it is their turn to speak. They will speak for 10 to 15 minutes to a prepared script. This will be taped, courtesy of Hansard, and we thank the Hansard staff for coming to the party for us on this occasion. Transcripts will be made available.

Following the four speeches, there will be ample time for questions and discussion from the floor. We have hired a microphone so that we can make like the *Donahue* program and walk around waving it at people so that they can participate in the debate. The importance of having the roving microphone is that it will facilitate the taping of the meeting and therefore facilitate accurate transcription. It is all in the interests of high-tech on the one hand and a complete historical record on the other. At the end of the proceedings, feel free to ask questions and make comments. On behalf of Dr Clark and Ms Kyburz, I ask you not to forget them when directing your questions and comments. All too frequently in panel discussions, the last two speakers are the ones who get all the flak, all the brickbats and all the bouquets, as though the first two have not spoken.

"Becoming a Parliamentarian: Endorsement Issues for Women"

Dr Lesley Clark, MLA, Member for Barron River

Paul REYNOLDS: Dr Lesley Clark is the member for Barron River. She won her seat in 1989. She came into Parliament at the time when the Parliament profoundly changed its gender, socioeconomic and party political composition. She was born in Harwich in the United Kingdom. She holds a BA with first-class honours degree and a Ph.D. Prior to entering Parliament, she was a lecturer at James Cook University in North Queensland in the Faculty of Education. Dr Clark has a very lively interest in conservation matters. She also served as a shire councillor. It is almost mandatory in Queensland for anybody outside Brisbane who comes into Parliament to have served on a shire or provincial town council. That was once the preserve of the National Party. To a large extent, it still is, but it is interesting that other people are using that route into Parliament, despite the fact that they have other qualifications to commend them. One should not neglect local government; indeed, local government is one area in which women have made a profound contribution—one, alas, which is largely uncharted and unacknowledged.

Dr Clark is our first speaker. She is addressing herself to the very important topic—and one which is very germane to this whole question—of women getting into Parliament. We can hardly have women in Parliament if we are not apprised of how they can get there. She will be speaking from her perspective as a backbencher, as a member of the Australian Labor Party and—I cannot let this pass—also as the Chair of the Parliamentary Committee for Electoral and Administrative Review.

Lesley CLARK: Thank you, Paul. Mr Speaker, parliamentary colleagues, ladies and gentlemen—this year we are celebrating the centenary of women's right to vote and sit in Parliament in South Australia. We can feel justifiably proud that Australia led the world in giving women this right. But less well known and a cause, I would say, for shame rather than for celebration is the fact that it was not until 1959—some 65 years later—that Joyce Steele and Jessie Cooper took their place as the first women in the Parliament of the State that gave them that right.

Australian women have generally been slow to enter the Parliament compared with women in some other countries. The first woman, Edith Cowan, was elected in 1921 to the Western Australian Parliament, while the Federal Parliament was a male-only institution until 1943, when Edith Lyons and Dorothy Tangney were elected. In Queensland, we did a little better, with Irene Longman elected in 1929, but there were no women in the Queensland Parliament for over 30 years between 1932 and 1966. Vi Jordan, who was in the Parliament between 1966 and 1974, is probably still regarded as a Queensland pioneer. It was the election of Rosemary Kyburz, who is with us tonight, and Vicky Kippin in 1974 that really represents the beginning of the so-called second wave of feminists who are to be found in increasing numbers in Australian Parliaments—not that all of them would feel comfortable with being called "feminists", but there they are.

Progress for women during the 1970s and 1980s, although faster than the previous decades, was still painfully slow. Across Australia, there are currently only 118 women in Parliament, the majority of whom are from the ALP. This number represents only 14 per cent of MPs Australia-wide. In the Queensland Parliament, women now constitute 14.6 per cent of members. There are 13 of us. I have estimated that, at the current rate of increase in female participation, it will take at least another 60 years to achieve equal representation in Queensland.

Why have women found it so difficult to get into Parliament in Australia? Broadly speaking, I believe the explanations lie in two areas—social and institutional. I will address my remarks to both of those areas. Until the 1970s, we could say that both factors were equally important and significant. However, I believe that community attitudes regarding women's involvement in the work force and in politics are changing. I believe that now it is the institutional factors—particularly the rules, structures and operations of the Parliament and the major political parties—that are the most significant barriers to increasing female representation today.

Although social factors may be relatively less significant today, they are not inconsiderable. In fact, for many women they are almost insurmountable barriers. All women have stories to tell about the additional difficulties that they face moving into the non-traditional role of politician. I am sure that we will hear plenty of those stories this evening. Women have consistently had to defend themselves against the belief that a woman's place is in the home raising children and not in the Parliament. Not surprisingly, early pioneers such as Vida Goldstein, who ran for Parliament five times between 1903 and 1917—spectacularly unsuccessfully—regularly ran the gauntlet of men who considered that the family unit was threatened by women wanting to move into politics. Much more recently, when Ros Kelly

returned to Parliament complete with air cushion only a week after the birth of her first child in 1983, controversy raged in the media. She was attacked in the Parliament by Liberal member Brian Goodluck for her "premature" return.

There is no question that traditional male and female roles in the family have deterred some women who have not had a partner prepared to become, if you like, the full-time political "wife" who provides domestic and political support. I regard myself as fortunate that my husband Ross is able and willing to wash, to iron, to cook, to shop and act as tutor, chauffeur and counsellor for our two teenagers. When I tell people how multi-skilled Ross has become, they are usually amazed. Of course, it is quite unremarkable that women do such things because, indeed, it is expected.

As a woman, when you have all those other demands on your time, it is very difficult to have the single-minded focus that males are able to bring to the job. We cannot underestimate the additional burden that rests on women's shoulders for those sorts of reasons. In fact, the demands on women's time are such as to sometimes require a complete restructuring of the husband/wife or partner relationship. I do not believe it is true that many men simply cannot make the transition to the new role that is demanded of them. Instead, they feel threatened by, or sometimes jealous of, their wife's high public profile and success.

The resistance to the renegotiating of the role of husband can be a cause of conflict and threaten relationships. Some women are just not prepared to risk their marriage as a result of the additional tensions that a political career can create. Women, as I am sure we are very aware, still strike resistance from certain groups in the community, such as businessmen, farmers, miners, or in particular areas such as rural country towns, where conservative attitudes to the role of women are still much more prevalent.

I turn now to the institutional factors. The operations of Parliament and the behaviour of male members also act as a disincentive to women considering a political career. The unpredictable late-night sittings can play havoc with child-care arrangements. For people such as myself, as a country member, weeks away from home can at times generate guilt and anguish when there are family occasions such as birthdays, graduations and special school events that come and go when mum isn't at home.

The adversarial, abusive, head-kicking style of male politicians in the bearpit of Parliament—need I say more—is a stark contrast to the more collaborative, consensual style of women in their decision making and communication. Women watching the pounding that Ros Kelly has been receiving over the past few weeks could be forgiven for deciding that a political career just isn't worth it. Carmen Lawrence has actually been seen by some people as a poor parliamentary performer because she would not respond in kind to hecklers and interjectors. I am pleased to say that a search of *Hansard* will not reveal any abusive interjections from the member for Barron River. However, I do not believe that things will change substantially until more women who reject that style of confrontational head-kicking are elected to Parliament.

It will be interesting when we have a situation in which we can contrast the styles of Bronwyn Bishop and Carmen Lawrence when they are both on the floor of the House in Canberra. All I want to say about Bronwyn Bishop is that she demonstrates the danger of generalising about women in politics.

I regard the role of political parties as crucial if more women are to get into Parliament and achieve the goal of the Half by 2000 campaign begun by Labor women in Queensland in 1991. I would like to spend a little time on that aspect. I will be primarily talking about the ALP, but I am sure that the other speakers to follow me might share some insights into their own political parties.

Women candidates were rarely fielded by any of the major political parties before the late 1970s. The main reason given then was that women would just not vote for other women. We know from the work of pollsters such as Rod Cameron that that is not the case. He has demonstrated quite clearly that women are in fact 2 per cent or 3 per cent more likely to vote for a female candidate than are men. Clearly, women are looking for female candidates to vote for. However, lack of access to the established male patronage networks and the complexity of the operation of ALP party structures has been, and I think still is, disadvantaging women.

As we know, the operation of factions plays a vital part in the preselection process in the ALP. Women have frequently been the losers in factional deals, which have been struck by the male powerbrokers of the party and heavily influenced by male-dominated unions. Although the ALP does have significantly more women members of Parliament than the conservative parties, the number in the Federal Parliament has not increased since 1983, when the ALP began to field women in reasonable numbers in winnable seats as part of the 1981 affirmative action campaign. I believe that part of the problem has been that major parties are not selecting

women candidates in sufficient numbers in safe or winnable seats or in winnable positions on the Senate ticket in relation to the Federal Parliament. In Queensland, at certain times Margaret Reynolds has felt a little shaky in terms of her position on the Senate ticket. All of us who entered the Parliament for the ALP in 1989 ran in marginal seats held by National or Liberal Party members; some of us were running against Ministers.

Some of us did have tough preselection battles. My own preselection in 1989 was uneventful only because I was persuaded to run and was supported by David Barbagallo, who then was the north Queensland organiser for the Labor Party and, as we know, later became the Premier's principal policy adviser. With patronage like that, I was quite fortunate, one might say. Perhaps more importantly, I believe I was successful because no men were interested in claiming Barron River. At that point, nobody wanted to take on Martin Tenni, so they left the field to me.

Paul REYNOLDS: That explains it.

Lesley CLARK: That is right.

Of the women now in the Parliament, a swing of some 6 per cent against the Government would in fact see four out of the nine ALP women lose their seats, including me. Across the Parliament, only about four women could truly be said to have safe seats. Men in the party argue that not enough suitable women are putting themselves forward for preselection. Given the fact that the odds are stacked so heavily against women getting into the Parliament and the fact that a political career most definitely demands more personal sacrifices from women, who could blame us for being reluctant starters? Although we do need a campaign to increase membership of women in the party—which stands at only 35 per cent in Queensland—I do not believe that women will gain preselection in any large numbers, particularly in the safer seats, unless they are supported and encouraged by the faction leaders to contribute in the various party forums. In this way, women will gain the experience and the standing within the party required for successful preselection.

Talented and capable women—of which there is an abundance—have to be identified, promoted and groomed for success by party leaders in just the same way as currently occurs with men. I think that is true for the non-Labor parties, as well. However, I do not believe that we will see that male patronage being extended to women unless the ALP National Executive imposes a requirement on State branches that they must actively promote women as they have men. I believe that this does not happen primarily because there are so many ambitious men already within the boys' network ready to put themselves forward and elbow women out of the way.

The creation of alternative women's networks is often seen as the solution. Although such networks may support and encourage women, I do not believe that they can successfully promote women if in fact they are outside the networks where the real power is. Women's organisations in all parties have grappled with that issue for decades; alternatively starting in order to support women and then disbanding because they have been frustrated and marginalised by that process. They have wanted to get back, as it were, to the main game, only to find that the barriers are still there. Yes, I believe that women need their own networks to support them, but they also need to access the male networks where the real power lies. Men will not share their power with women until they have to; until they are required to by some external force, be it legislation or party rules.

A change in rules to get more women into Parliament is currently under consideration in the party, and all factions are looking at this issue with a view to developing a position that will be brought to the national conference later this year. It really is a crunch year as far as party rules go and affirmative action for women in respect to party preselections.

Women are certainly getting restive. There is no doubt that we are becoming increasingly frustrated by the lack of representation and the lack of progress, especially in light of the statistics that I cited earlier from the Federal Parliament. Last year in Perth, a conference attended by 40 women parliamentarians considered the topic of affirmative action. Carmen Lawrence and Joan Kirner are now spearheading the Half by 2000 campaign begun in Queensland. Resolutions were passed at that conference calling for a rule change to be approved at the national conference aimed at achieving the goals of the Half by 2000 campaign.

Systems based on targets, quotas, reserved seats, replacement of women with women and ballot weighting are all being considered. At present, it would appear that the option that has the most support among the male-dominated factions is the setting of targets by each State branch. In some quarters, consideration is also being given to ballot weighting. On the topic of targets, at this stage it is not clear what targets are being considered: whether we are talking about 30 per cent, 40 per cent or 50 per cent; whether we are talking about the year 2000 or the year 2050. It is also not clear whether there will be the sanction of Federal intervention to conduct preselections in the event that the targets are not met. If we do not have such sanctions, the

whole exercise is doomed to failure and will fail to deliver on our demands. Those of us who support a rule change also recognise that any change must be supported by a comprehensive recruitment campaign. There is a need to develop strategies to build the skills and knowledge that women need to succeed in politics. The 1981 campaign was very successful. We learned a lot of lessons from it, and I believe that we need to go back and build a campaign of that order once again.

The bottom line is that we are not prepared to wait another 60 years or another 100 years for equal participation in the political processes that govern our States and our nation. I believe that I speak for women of all political parties when I say that we want some action, and we want it now. Thank you.

"Reflections on the Past"

Ms Rosemary Kyburz, former Member for Salisbury

Paul REYNOLDS: Ms Rosemary Kyburz is, in a sense, a link with the present to a more distant past, to which Dr Clark referred. Ms Kyburz was elected in 1974 for the State seat of Salisbury. With Vicky Kippin, I suppose one could say that she was the third equal woman elected to the Queensland Parliament. Perhaps it is regrettable in retrospect that the election of Rosemary Kyburz and Vicky Kippin coincided with defeat for Vi Jordan. Last year, when I wrote a paper on recruitment patterns for the Queensland State Parliament from 1929 to 1992, I was interested to find that, two years before she was elected—that is, in 1964—Vi Jordan had in fact written a chapter in a book titled the *March of Women in Australia*. Her chapter was titled "Our Women Legislators—Where Are They?" I thought that was quite a prescient title at that time. It was a harbinger of the future, but perhaps also a false dawn.

Ms Kyburz held her seat of Salisbury until 1983, when she was defeated by, if not an unknown, a semi-known called Wayne Goss. I think she might forgive two anecdotes and one story—all brief. The story concerns the marvellous work she did in organising the defeat of a truly vicious, repressive piece of legislation that the Bjelke-Petersen Government was going to bring down on the issue of abortion. I think Rosemary Kyburz will always go down in the annals of the Queensland Parliament for the work she did on that particular issue. It was a marvellous piece of work for a woman who was recently elected, was a backbencher and held in general public contempt by the ministry.

Now to the two anecdotes which I think illustrate what she was up against in her time in Parliament. She had several stoushes with Russell Hinze—no friend of women in Parliament. It is fair to say that Rosemary Kyburz may well have lost those particular battles—although I think that would be a toss-up—but she won the war.

The other story was told to me by Don Lane. Within the Liberal Party caucus, or party meeting, as it is so elegantly called, Ms Kyburz wished to speak on an issue concerning women and women's matters. She was rounded on by the then Liberal Whip, Bob Moore, the member for Windsor, who, amongst other things, said, "There aren't women in Parliament, there are only members", and, "A woman's place is at the clothes line, pregnant, with a mouth full of pegs." I raise this issue, when thinking of what was then and what is now, to demonstrate how at least some degree of progress has been made, albeit incremental. But enough of me. Rosemary.

Rosemary KYBURZ: Jim, ladies and gentlemen and, of course, Paul—I was really surprised when Mary wrote to me and asked me to speak to you, primarily because I don't come out of the closet very often. I now have a reincarnated career as a teacher. I try not to let my students know about my past, because they are invariably interested—as one would expect that they would be—and it has taken a long time to heal the old wounds. When you have a lot to put behind you, I guess you have to pick up your baggage and say, "Well, to buggery with the lot of you, I'm doing something else." I am really enjoying my privacy now, I must say. Occasionally, people ask me, "Will you ever stand for Parliament again?", and I think to myself, "Stupid bloody fool. What did they ask that question for?" But I smile and say, "No, I don't think I ever will." I am able to come here tonight unfettered by any party and unfettered by what anyone else might think about what I say. That is a really wonderful feeling.

Paul mentioned the recruiting patterns for the Queensland State Parliament. I should tell you, Paul, that the only reason that the Liberal Party agreed to my standing was that it had no other fool to do it. But that is another story. There is absolutely no doubt about that. I am not sure that the Liberal Party has improved in the slightest in all those years, and that was a long time ago.

I was asked by Mary—and this is a sign of age—to look at two points: firstly, to look at the past—and I almost felt that I should use a walking stick coming up here—and to look at the future. So I have done that. I don't have typed notes. Paul, I was very interested to hear you say that we are speaking to a prepared script. Jump in the jolly lake! I never speak to a prepared script. You'll get what I've got, and I'll change it as I'm going along.

First of all, looking at the past. One point that women have to understand is that your worst enemies are in your own party. Every other person is there to knife you, if they can. There is no such thing as a friend in politics. There might be pseudo friends. There might be friends in drag. There might be friends who wear bunny rabbit ears, and sweet little men who wear tails on their backs; but they are all your enemy. Start off with that idea and you'll get far. It doesn't matter which party you're in, they're all the same.

Women were treated as novelties by the press when I was a member. Foolishly, I have to admit to you, it took a long time for me to realise that. I was very naive. I was only a small town schoolteacher. What the hell did I know about the big world of politics? I made a lot of mistakes. I would never now reveal my personal attitudes on many issues, which I so openly used to give. If you ever go through my boxes of hate mail, you will see how many enemies I really had—let alone the ones in my own electorate!

In getting together articles for the exhibition in May, I came across some most interesting stuff, some of which you will see in the exhibit. Some of it is too libellous to give you, Mary, but I have given you the pieces that I feel can be made public. We then rode the wave of feminism, and we rode it for and against feminist issues. I was extremely delighted to do that. I can't say that other women in Parliament shared that view, and I certainly don't speak for anyone else, except to say that things like Bob Moore's comments were real. People would look across the table at you and say to your face, "Where are your boobs?" It's hard to answer that when you're fairly flat. I mean, what do you say? I know the answer to what you say, but I'm not going to say it here.

As to the next point in looking at the past—I needed a whiteboard tonight so that I could have drawn a lot of this up for you. My memories are very much coloured by the abortion debate, but Parliament did give me a lot of opportunities, and I certainly express these to younger women now. First of all, you get your horizons broadened considerably. You find out how policy is really made; and that is really frightening. I mean, if you were of the illusion that policy was made on the part of need—that people came in with these fervent little ideas and they were going to push these wonderful topics and change the world—forget it! The first three years of your term in Parliament is: knock 'em down, knock 'em down, knock 'em down. After that, if you've got any fat left—and I've got a big rump—you sort of pick yourself up and think, "Well, I'm not going to let these people knock out the enthusiasm which I have", and you keep going along your track. But I can see why so many people lose their stuffing, because it certainly is a bearpit.

I also took a long time to realise that a lot of men just plain hate women. There is no doubt about that. I think that men need resocialising in the three elements of society. They need to go back to school, and they probably need new parents, new siblings and a whole new beginning. But at the age of 55 and 60—forget it! We need to change the old adage that you can't teach an old dog new tricks, because it's a lie. Every old dog can learn new tricks; it's just a matter of wanting to learn them.

The other thing that I learnt in politics was that, by and large, the National Party got away with things because there was a very small group in this State which controlled nearly every institution. I am trying not to be political, and if this is misconstrued, tough cheddar! I say to you now that the CJC is absolutely vital. I would march down George Street to save the CJC because I think it is really incredibly important. Unless you were there then, you would not understand the sorts of things which went on. I mean, sports rorts is nothing. Talk about pork-barrelling! I often used to get out of the lift and think I would walk into flying pigs. There were so many things given away without any rational decision making; so let's make sure that we keep the CJC. At least there is that backup now.

To the future. I hope I haven't been too extraordinarily excruciatingly painful for you. It is extremely important that we are aware of the fact that there is now a push against women working, full stop. I have noticed articles in the press in the south—even in ye beloved *Courier-Mail*—the lies about child-care. The whole fact remains that, as a mother of relatively young children, I can tell you the whole child-care issue is based on guilt. We are pushed into feeling guilty by families. We are pushed into feeling guilty by society. But I don't feel guilty. My children seem perfectly normal to me. They are awfully noisy and very male. They whack around with cricket bats, soccer balls and so forth, and they have been a product of child-care. It is the quality that counts. There are many families in which children are being brought up extremely badly. They are the ones who should be in child-care centres.

In order to get women into Parliament, I think we have to broaden the interests with which so many women are socialised. For example, quit the soft options, the welfare garbage, the environmental issues and the health issues. Get onto the hard yakka stuff: the economic policies, the international policies and the defence policies. Join a party—and I don't care which party it is—and, if you don't like it, change and join another; and if you don't like that, form your own. There is no doubt that this is an excellent time to form a new party. There is a great big vacuum out there. If you haven't noticed it, it is there. It is alive and kicking; and they are nearly all educated people. A lot of them are my friends. What am I saying!

There is no doubt also that the structures within parties themselves should be examined. Never join an auxiliary for anything—even if it's the tennis club. No doubt you will be asked to

make the scones, make the tea, clean the toilets—all that guff. Never do that. If it is an auxiliary, say, "No." I say it at school: "No, if I can't come to the real, hardcore meetings where we decide what we are spending on the lights on the tennis court, I don't think I'll come at all." Slowly, but surely, I'm hearing that at other P & C meetings, and other women back me up.

Women have to stop being their own worst enemies and start supporting each other. Stop looking at what the other dame is wearing on her feet, how she is losing hair and has three more wrinkles under her eyes. Start looking at what is in her brain, because that's what counts. That is what men look at. Start thinking like men. That is really important. It really doesn't matter how people look. I firmly, absolutely and utterly believe that. That is why Carmen Lawrence is somewhat of a hero for me, because, to me, she is brain, and that's what we want. I hope she gets there.

The next point is to explain widely to everyone with whom you come in contact that all issues are political. For example, I come back to the child-care issue, because I feel that this push is on. Who fathered the children? I mean, it is a people issue. Stop calling it a women's issue, and don't allow it to be railroaded and pushed into the women's area.

As to the issues of the elderly—some men in Parliament should be realising that, not too far down the track, they will be wearing their lumbar supports and using walking sticks; that prostate trouble is just around the corner! There are few issues which are women's only. We have allowed that wool to be pulled over our eyes for too long. We have to start saying to people, "I'm interested in the economy, are you?" They'll look at you and think, "Oh." Start reading widely, then people will start listening to you. That's the only way to go. Most decisions now are based on economic rationalism. But if you can't beat 'em, join 'em. Start thinking in economic terms and in economic costs. It is a sad thing that in 20 years' time it will all be different; but go with the flow and change things that way.

So what are the issues of grave importance? I firmly believe that, for the future, our children are extremely important. Therefore, issues such as education and gender issues in school are extremely important. I really want all of my children to be able to do everything. But it is very difficult. They say, "Mum, I don't need to wear deodorant; the girls will laugh at me." Things like that are being said, even in a household like mine where, for God's sake, they hear often enough, "You have to be able to do everything that girls can do." It's very hard.

When you look at work issues, though, most rules are made by men at all levels of society and in all institutions. It is a terrible thing, and it won't change until we change it. But, as most men are misogynists in any case, you have to look at it from the point of view of coming in sideways. If you have to use your intelligence to work that out, then do it. Get around it. We have to change management practices and make management flatter and less hierarchical. Have you noticed how, in a hierarchical structure, they are nearly all men? There are a few token women here and there in the public service but, by and large, they are just mouthpieces. That is sad, too.

The next point that I would make for the future is to absolutely poo poo political correctness—boring stuff; utterly, utterly boring! What a sinking depth of mediocrity we are falling into, to think about political correctness. Think for yourself! If you want to use a word and it's politically incorrect, well, use it. I don't worry about things like that. I see now that even the *Courier-Mail* is changing its tack on various things. I do think that words are important; after all, seven years of Latin had to teach me something! But, equally, I think that we live in a new society. We live in a society where we want our teenagers to question. We believe that they should have an education which is broad, so that they look at the overall span of life, not just down one track. So we have to get females into the roles of editors in all the newsrooms. It is going to be hard work. But while we still have male chiefs of staff who decide what is and what isn't important, it is going to be very hard.

Dangers for the future. These notes were scribbled, because at first I thought, "This is so important", and then I thought, "Well, it's not really, but I'll say it anyway." I am really worried about the push to get women out of the work force. I think from the Federal end, we are going to see a policy direction which is not going to be good, that is, via the tax system. I was somewhat worried that the Liberal Party might get in at the last election, because I think they would have been quite regressive in that area. They have to change, too. They really have to change, because there are a lot of women who want to vote Liberal but wouldn't in a pink fit.

The next point is the danger for the future of strangling freedom of speech by legislation. I don't know if you've noticed it, but there is a whole string of legislation coming out of Canberra. I think some little people sit in back rooms and dream up this stuff and say, "You can't do this and you can't do that." It is like the tentacles of an octopus coming out and looking at what we can and can't say. I liken that to the thought police, and the thought police are dangerous. We have

to be able to speak out about everything. We must never lose sight of that. There are so many countries in which you just can't speak out—countries in which I couldn't stand before you and say, "Where there are primitive practices which masquerade as religions, we have to stamp those out, too." We have to start saying, "Things like female genital mutilation in Australia are not on. If you are a fundamentalist Muslim and you come here and choose to practise that barbaric thing, go back to where you came from and take your practices with you. Don't pull the wool over my eyes by calling that religion. It is patently not." There is nowhere in the Koran that stipulates that women must be in bondage to men; must be slaves; must be sewn; must be punished every month; and must undergo horrendous operations to give birth. If that is happening in Australia—and I have it on good authority that it is—I say publicly to those people, "Go the hell back to where you came from. We don't want you." But say that out on the street, and the thought police will pounce!

My last point is that we must beware of complacency amongst young women. They must understand that there is no such thing as a knight in shining armour on a white horse who is going to come along and say, "You are my most wonderful sweet creature. Come to me and I will save you for the rest of your life. I will economically look after you. I will give you pocket money and spending money and grocery money." He—if there is a he—is most likely to be unemployed and driving a bashed up old VW. I really don't believe we need "he's" any more, anyway. There is no knight. There is no person who is going to come and swoop them up and look after them forever. Haven't you ever heard of the word "divorce"? Things seem to be going so fine for a few years, and then you think, "Bugger this, it's boring!"

So the strength in young women is in themselves. The strength in every woman is in herself. It is very nice to have a partner. There is absolutely no doubt about that, and I'm sure partners would agree. Yes, it's very nice to have a partner, but don't be subservient. Maintain your economic independence. Even if you have to scrub floors to get your own money, do it. I could not stand to have to go to a man and ask, "May I have some spending money, please?" That's the pits! What I always say to young women is, "Maintain your independence, however you have to do that." So let's be aware of complacency.

In the US they are saying that feminism is dead. I wonder why that could be. I've thought long and hard about that. Could it be that we're letting things slip a little? Could it be that we really haven't come very far in the last 100 years? Could it be that a lot of the things that we've seen changing have just been masquerades, and we're looking too far ahead to see that things are really going to change? Or could it be that it has all just been an illusion? I urge you to get out there and proselytise for change.

Paul REYNOLDS: Now I know why I did not like *Pretty Woman*.

Rosemary KYBURZ: Disgusting.

Paul REYNOLDS: Yes, it was.

"Representing the Electorate"

Mrs Judy Gamin, MLA, Member for Burleigh

Paul REYNOLDS: Mrs Gamin also had an association with the former Minister mentioned in the introduction to Ms Kyburz, Russell Hinze. She won his seat. And neither did he help her to win it. Mrs Gamin first entered Parliament in 1988 via the South Coast by-election, a seat which she held for a year. She re-entered Parliament in 1992 as the member for Burleigh, a seat which resulted from the redrawing of the Gold Coast electoral boundaries. Mrs Gamin is a longstanding member of the National Party, having served in many senior National Party organisational positions. She is also a member of the Parliamentary Travelsafe Committee. She is a business person in her own right and she has been much involved in community affairs on the south coast—at the cutting edge, behind tinsel town—with organisations such as the Salvation Army and Lifeline. She is also the patron of a number of community and welfare organisations. Mrs Gamin will be talking about representing the electorate, having represented two in her short parliamentary career.

Judy GAMIN: Thank you, Dr Reynolds. Mr Speaker, my parliamentary colleagues, ladies and gentlemen—politics is the whole art and science of government, and it is a totally man-made institution—male-dominated, designed by and for men, mostly for their own amusement. So it is gratifying to see women making inroads into this male-dominated society, even if there are not enough of us. I have been asked to speak on representing the electorate from a woman's perspective. From any perspective, it is the most vital, fascinating and varied aspect of the whole job. The electorate is the real world—where it all starts from and where it all happens.

Parliament is the highest forum in the land. The legislative process is obviously important but, as parliamentarians, we should never lose sight of our responsibility to all of our constituents; that is, not only those who supported us at the ballot box but also those who we feel sure did not support us—people of differing opinions, all shades of political opinion, all socioeconomic levels and all age groups. Women members are very good at the day-to-day electorate work. We are particularly conscientious. We look on our jobs as a service industry. So we find ourselves in the many roles of guide and mentor, counsellor and adviser, arbitrator and ombudsman, confessor and comforter, negotiator and mediator, welfare worker and patient listener. Sometimes we fill all of these roles in one day—it is called "multiskilling".

Women are more patient than men, more caring, and easier to talk to. We are persuasive and we are persistent, we follow things through, and we do not give up easily when we are fighting for our constituents. Persistence is a very valuable attribute. Personally, I am very well aware that some departmental officers or public servants sigh when they hear my voice on the telephone. Bad luck! I represent one of the eight Gold Coast electorates. The lines marked on maps represent roads or other physical features, but it is extraordinary how each particular electorate has its own flavour. Each one is quite different from the other. I have never been able to work out whether it is the member who puts his or her own stamp on the electorate, or whether it is the electorate itself that formulates the member's type of representation.

We all visit much the same sorts of groups—functions and meetings, community organisations, P & Cs, pensioners and senior citizens, progress associations, sporting clubs, kindergartens, Neighbourhood Watch, safety audits, debutante balls, speech nights, flag presentations, Red Cross and the CWA. You name it, we attend it. We need to know what is happening in the electorate, and we need to be with people to find out their wants and needs. I try to get around my shops and small businesses a couple of times a year. That is a very good way to absorb the atmosphere and what is happening in the area. We are often asked, "Isn't it boring?" All of those meetings and functions are never boring, because we enjoy the stimulation of people. Interaction with the community and that sort of stimulation is the job satisfaction that women need.

We have learned never to go anywhere without our trusty notepad and pen. We see people in our offices, of course, but people also stop us when we are on the street, shopping in the local supermarket, walking around at school fetes, or even going to the hairdresser. I am a small town person myself—I like to say "hello" to people in the street and to stop for a chat. My secretary says that she has never known anyone to take so long to go to the bank. But all of us like to be recognised, and we like to be greeted by strangers with a friendly smile.

We all know the problems of Housing Commission, land tax, bus services, bus passes, new highway zones, ambulance subscriptions, street crime, domestic violence, legal aid, leaking silicone breast implants, adoption privacy, family support, consumer affairs, red-light cameras, noisy young people in a suburban rented house, health and hospital and dental services—again, you name it, we have dealt with it. In any busy year, we would all cope with a wide variety of

matters reaching into all ministerial portfolios. And you don't hear complaints about women members that no-one can ever find us, that we don't return calls or that our mail is weeks or months behind. My electorate office is so busy that we do not get much time for dictation. I draft out my letters in longhand or roughly on the typewriter, and Josie puts them together. I do not actually generate an enormous amount of mail, as I prefer to deal with matters on the telephone when I can. Actually, constituents are more pleased if their member telephones them on the day a letter is received rather than waiting a week to receive a formal reply in the mail. I research, write and type up all of my own speeches.

We are used to getting up at 5 o'clock and getting to the office before 7 o'clock. It is amazing how much work you can get through before the telephone starts to ring. We work on weekends, of course, especially during session time. We have to catch up over weekends before we can start the next week—and we drown in a sea of paperwork.

Of course, we all have our share of loonies—the fruit loops and the nut cases. Some days we think that all the nut cases have come in at once. Some of our customers can be extremely difficult. I am lucky enough not to have had any really threatening ones, but I think the member for Mount Coot-tha, our colleague Wendy Edmond, had a brick through her office window once. And there is all that newfangled security that Q-Build has put into our electorate offices. It is perfectly useless, as far as I am concerned. I still have not figured out how to work the alarm under my desk. We haven't got a back door, anyway. If we were seriously threatened, my secretary and I would have to dash into the meeting room and lock the door. What the hell would we do then? It has just got a little trellis thing, and any active guy could kick it down. And what would happen to us? What is the point? I managed perfectly adequately in the old electorate office without any of that newfangled stuff. There is a stupid little window between the waiting room and our secretary's desk. She is supposed to be able to slide the glass across if something happens. But the visitors have to crouch and duck their heads and, one day, someone will straighten up suddenly and brain him or herself.

Some of the things that happen in electorate offices are strange and different. I used to have a violently homosexual constituent back in 1989. He was a real roughie—Jacky Howe and tattoos. He liked to come in and go crook about Russell Cooper. He hated Cooper. He said that Cooper was a homophobe. Another guy came into the office one day. The waiting room was really busy and he was haranguing my secretary about all of this stuff. Another constituent, obviously a frightfully Right Wing fellow, was also waiting. He leapt to his feet in umbrage and picked a knock-down, drag-out fight with the gay in the middle of the waiting room. The noise was fierce. So I leapt to my feet from my office where I was interviewing someone else, rushed out and kicked them both out. It is okay for the customer to be always right, but I really do draw the line at fights in the waiting room.

I had to help a pensioner lady find a home for an old cockatoo in a very large cage. She came in to see me. Her poor old arms were all gashed—she was finding the cage heavy and she was knocking herself. She just simply couldn't cope with this sulphur-crested cockatoo. The cage was enormous. I said, "No problems, Mrs Matchett, that is easy", so I rang up Fleay's. I had to put the weights on the rangers there a bit but, in the end, they said, "Okay Jude, just for you, we will take the cocky." So they picked up the cocky and they took it down to the fauna reserve. They settled the sulphur-crested cockatoo down by the turnstile where the children could appreciate it. A couple of days later, they rang me up and said, "Look, if you ever do that to us again, we will never speak to you." The cocky had such a flow of fine, disgusting language that he got expelled from Fleay's Fauna Reserve, and I had to find another home for him out in Tallebudgera Valley.

One of our regular visitors now is an old tramp who rode his bicycle down from Cairns last year—and, Lesley, you are welcome to him and I wish he'd go back. He lost his little dog, and he likes a little bit of a chat—and we have to spray the aerozone around when he leaves. One day, not long after he had arrived, he came in and was telling my secretary, who has a fairly sensitive stomach, all about a dreadful wound in his leg. She was petrified that he was going to rip his dirty old jeans down and show it to her. Finally, she persuaded him to go next door to the doctor's surgery to seek some attention. So he did that and that was fine. But, after a couple of visits, the young woman doctor there—she looks about 19 and has long blond hair—couldn't stand it. She made him have a shower in their surgery's shower room. Peter Morley, the doctor, when he built the new surgery, had installed this beautiful new shower room for his own use after he played squash. He had never used it, and he was absolutely livid when he came back in to find that the first customer was the tramp. After he had his first shower and had paddled across the tiled floor, Joanne made him go back and have another one to wash his feet; he had left dirty footmarks all over the place. Amongst some of the other people who come in is a little old lady who likes us to

photocopy prayers for her. I do not know what she does with them—I think she puts them in the bus shelters. Another one brings her yappy little terrier in to visit—and it smells, too.

Seriously, women are particularly good at constituency work and this aspect of elected representation. We have an ability to listen, and we spend a lot of time just listening. There are a lot of lonely people out there. Often just a chat does them good. So we find ourselves acting as grief counsellors. We also give considered attention to the whole gamut of ratbag ideas and solutions to the nation's problems that are presented to us. Of course, we are all patrons of many organisations. We go to the annual meetings, the trophy presentations and, naturally, we make donations. The organisations that we are patrons of try to encourage us. I am no gardener—even my pot plants die—but the Gold Coast Orchid Society is trying very hard to teach me how to grow orchids. I have neither the time nor the inclination to play bowls, but the Mudgeeraba Ladies Bowls Club is trying very hard to get me out there for lessons. I will have to become a lot older before I do that.

Most people, though, really come to their member of Parliament for help, because they do not know where else to turn. Even if some problems may seem quite trivial to us, they are not trivial to the constituents who come to us. Their problems are important to them, so we take them seriously. Their gratitude is sometimes quite touching when, all along, we are only doing our job.

I asked my colleague Di McCauley, the member for Callide, how she finds representing an electorate covering some 71 000 square kilometres. Her work entails a lot of travelling and lots of late night driving. She has a rule that, if the drive is two hours or less, she will go home—anything more and she stays the night. When driving alone, it is dangerous to stop. Although, late one night when her husband was with her, they came across a very drunk man yelling and staggering all over the road. He and his equally drunk companion had put their car over the range. So Di and Ian took them into Biloela hospital. To get to her country constituency, Di goes to a lot of cattle sales, local shows and agricultural field days. She uses a 008 telephone number. Her postage bill each month is between \$800 and \$1,200. Her vehicle expenses are pretty steep. One car bill last year was \$7,000, which is more than the annual car allowance she receives. One day, while visiting schools out the back of Wandoan, she broke down and had to walk for an hour and a half to get help. Di is the first woman in Queensland to represent a truly rural electorate, and she says that the Callide electorate, in its present form, presents such a hefty challenge that only a woman could meet it. I can drive from one end of my urban electorate to the other in 15 minutes. When I was first campaigning, I actually walked up and down every street. There is a big difference.

We are all politicians, so we need to feel that we are gaining electorate approval. Constituency acceptance is not only counted by the big achievements—although, they can make you feel pretty good—electorate success is counted by the small, everyday jobs you handle successfully for hundreds of ordinary people's worries and difficulties. It is about helping to make life just a bit easier for them, just a bit more comfortable. It is not about getting major works for your area; it is about helping a pensioner to access podiatry treatment for his or her poor, old feet. It is not about getting a lavish overpass over the highway—although, that would be great; I wish we had one in Burleigh—it is about getting the Housing Commission to finally clean up the flooding problem that has been going on for years in the backyard of a block of units. It is about helping with a local authority objection. It is about helping a parent with a disabled child to access school transport. It is about getting a set of traffic lights at a busy intersection or at a pedestrian crossing near some pensioner units. It is about getting the Main Roads maintenance gangs to slash the long grass on the road verges. It is about helping an old lady to fill out a social security form. Social security problems can be very time consuming. I refer a lot of my Federal matters to the Federal member.

Lots of local authority complaints come our way, too. I am particularly lucky in that my husband, Paul, represents a good chunk of my electorate on the Gold Coast City Council. So my council complaints are actioned very quickly—sleeping with the alderman helps. We do not have political party endorsements for the Gold Coast City Council. As an independent, Paul's voter support comes from all quarters. I must say that I was a bit put out when I was doorknocking before the last election. I came across a couple of diehard Labor voters who said, "Sorry love, can't vote for your party, wouldn't touch the Nationals. I vote for your hubby, though." I didn't get much sympathy from Paul when I told him. "Tough", he said. But, by golly, I wish I had his margin.

To enhance my contacts with community groups, I take lots of clubs and groups through Parliament House—probably more than any other member. I give them morning or afternoon tea and they have a great time. They have a much better tour if the House is not sitting and they can

go into the green Chamber. This is my own personal system of getting to some hundreds of people. I give them a great excursion, and they just love it.

Women members of Parliament have had the same battles to get there, the same battles to stay there, as women have had breaking into other professions, business or industry. Now that we have made it into this august male society, we still have to battle to stay on top and to perform just that little bit better. There are some diehard old male chauvinists on both sides of the House. One or two of them have tried to patronise us—only once, they do not try twice. I think all women members have experienced that. I will not forget the day that one of my older colleagues, who likes to think of himself as an old roue but is really quite harmless, leaned up against me in the lift—you know, that brushing sort of lean. The lift was crowded. I said, "Listen mate, when I think you are sexually harassing me, I will let you know." He jumped back about 15 feet.

But I still envy any male colleague for the comparative ease with which he can manage his long days out and about in the electorate, particularly in the matter of dress. With his shirt and trousers, tie and coat ready to put on, he can go anywhere. It is really hard to get dressed at 6 o'clock in the morning, deal with an early meeting or breakfast, perhaps an inspection—sandy beaches or muddy roads—perhaps a luncheon engagement, sandwich in some office appointments and go straight from the office to a service club changeover or a P & C meeting, all without having time to change. So women have to choose all-purpose clothes that will take them anywhere and everywhere day or night. But men don't have to worry about their clothes too much—or their make-up. The major decision they have to make is which tie to wear. And when I see them all together in the Parliament, it is obvious there is a competition as to who can pick the most hideous tie. We all use pagers. Aren't men lucky; they have a belt that they can put their pager on, and it is great. We girls, if we are wearing a skirt, can hook it onto our skirt or onto something with pockets. That is fine, but what else do you do with it? Hang it around your neck on a chain or something? You know, it is easier for men.

In conclusion, we all lead busy and complicated lives—tiring, yes, but you learn to pace yourself. It is not the sort of life you should take on if you are not going to enjoy it. Every day is an interest and a challenge. Male members, that dominant force, would perhaps give you a different picture—but it is a man's world. We women juggle our homes, families and our professional lives. Most of us can do our own typing, if we have to. Some of us lease our own computers for home or for our Parliament House offices. We do not mind answering the phone ourselves and we can find our way around the filing system.

Stress is a way of life. I guess that applies to both men and women. Personally, I find myself working better under stress. I am quicker and more efficient, if I am working against a tension. And we have little leisure. We save reading for pleasure over the Christmas break. It is hard to fit in a facial or even a manicure. We take work home at night, and we catch up on weekends. We don't close our electorate offices during the holiday period. It is a 24-hour a day job, seven days a week—we wouldn't change a bit of it. I enjoy waking up and going to work. Parliamentary sessions are important, committee work can be absorbing, but the real world, the down to earth world, is with the constituency—in the electorate. That is where it all begins, and that is what the job is all about. Thank you.

Paul REYNOLDS: It is very interesting to have that kind of perspective, because I suspect that that is the kind of cutting edge, the difference where people bring their own skills and their own perspectives to the job. It sounded to me as though that was a very good description of what a lot of women have spent all their lives doing in one capacity or another.

"Women Parliamentarians and Family Life"

Ms Judy Spence, MLA, Member for Mount Gravatt

Paul REYNOLDS: Our last speaker is Ms Judy Spence, the member for Mount Gravatt. In 1989, she won the seat, and held it in 1992. She has been a member of the Parliamentary Public Works Committee, and is currently the Chair of that committee, ably assisted by the treasurer of this organisation. Judy holds a BA and a Diploma of Teaching. She was a secondary schoolteacher at Browns Plains before entering Parliament. Our last speaker is addressing herself to family and Parliament.

Judy SPENCE: Thank you. Chairman Paul, Mr Speaker, parliamentary colleagues, ladies and gentlemen—I thought I would begin my address tonight by reading to you a very wonderful quote from Janine Haines, the former leader of the Democrats, who said—

"It has been my unfortunate lot over the last 25 years of my life to belong to three of the most reviled, underrated and overworked professions in the world. In that time I had been, occasionally simultaneously, a mother, a teacher and a politician. If one of me wasn't being blamed for the problems of the world one of the others of me was."

Unlike Janine Haines, I cannot claim to have notched up 25 years in these professions. However, I do have 17 years' experience in these jobs: 11 years as a teacher, nine years as a mother and four years as a member of Parliament. Unlike Janine Haines, I do not consider this experience to be my unfortunate lot but, like her, I do consider these jobs remain underrated and overworked. While many women accomplish the roles of mother and teacher, very few become members of Parliament.

I should like to quote some figures on women's representation in Parliaments in Australia and elsewhere. I know that Lesley Clark has already done this tonight, but my figures are somewhat different. I think that they bear reinforcing, because the figures on the representation of women in Parliament truly are appalling. I think we need constantly to remind ourselves of them. I believe that they symbolise a fundamental flaw in Australian politics.

In the Federal Parliament, there have been a total of 1 200 male members, but only 50 women. Of the 837 members of Parliament currently sitting in all Australian Parliaments only 118, or 14 per cent, are women. Of the total number of ALP members of Parliament in Australia, only 17 per cent are women. Internationally, looking at all the democratically governed countries, the figures are deteriorating. Women make up only 12.5 per cent of parliamentarians around the world. Despite the hurdles, some women have succeeded in winning and holding not only seats in all Houses of Parliament but ministerial and prime ministerial positions. They have won the respect of their electorates and, occasionally, the grudging respect of their male colleagues.

Clearly I believe that women play an important role in our Parliaments. Women comprise 50 per cent of our population, and we should be aiming for 50 per cent of their representation in our Parliaments. Currently, they are not there, and our society is the poorer for it. Most of you would be unaware that, since Parliament began in this State in 1859, there have only been 20 women elected to the Queensland Parliament. Altogether, there have been 1 042 people elected to the Queensland Parliament, and these 20 women represent 1.96 per cent of the total. At present, 13 of the 89 members of the Queensland Parliament are women, and this represents 14 per cent of the representation of women in the Parliament in this State. Although this figure represents an improvement on the past, we obviously still have a long way to go.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Queensland Chapter of the Australasian Study of Parliamentary Groups—you and your committee, Paul—for organising this seminar, which examines the place of women in Parliament in this State. Obviously, it is a topic which normally receives very little attention in this place.

It is quite appropriate that I have been given the topic of women parliamentarians and family life as my subject tonight. The first day that I walked in to take my seat in the Queensland Legislative Assembly, I was pregnant with my second child. Young Jack was born eight months after my election to Parliament. I still vividly remember the looks of surprise—or was it horror—on the faces of my colleagues on both sides of the House when this new member, who was not only a woman but pregnant as well, kept appearing in the Chamber.

Out in the Mount Gravatt electorate, my introduction to Lions Clubs and Rotary groups, Chambers of Commerce, school assemblies and the like must have been a shock to the constituents. For the first time ever, they had a woman to represent them, and she was pregnant. Conscious that it would have been so convenient for some of the critics to say, "See what happens when women become politicians", I set about working harder in those months than I ever have in my life. I accepted every invitation, conscientiously made speeches in the

House, attended every meeting and undertook every travel obligation. In fact, I had a meeting with the clergy of one of my churches two hours before labour began before going into hospital for the birth. But I had something to prove not only to myself but for women who might follow me. Whether I felt like it or not, I felt like I had to be a superwoman. I have no doubt that there was a degree of disappointment felt by those who would prefer to keep women out of Parliament that I have managed to fulfil my obligations in this job and also raise a young family.

Almost every female member of Parliament can cite stories which prove that the concept of women taking part in public life has yet to be fully accepted by the public in general and by the men against whom they compete in particular. The most frequently raised issue relates to how well or otherwise women members of Parliament can meet their obligations to both House and home. No-one seems to object to the fact that there are countless fathers who must be but shadowy, distant figures to their children and, I might add, to their wives. Queensland Parliament has a number of male members and Ministers who have very young families and who could well explain how they manage, but they are never asked that question.

Every married woman who enters the paid work force, while her children can still be described as dependent, challenges traditional theories about the proper division of physical and emotional resources within the family where mothers are supposed to nurture husbands and children, while fathers primarily earn money. I believe that almost every working married woman with children reacts to the criticism in the same way: by trying to do it better than the mothers who stay at home. I ask myself if this is why I give my children very elaborate birthday parties each year and feel a failure if I don't have time to make the birthday cake and have to go out and buy one; and it probably is. I know that I constantly put myself under a lot of pressure to ensure that my children do not suffer from my years in Parliament—much more pressure than their father, who also works long hours, ever subjects himself to.

In accepting the invitation to speak on the topic "Female Politicians and Family Life" this evening, I was in two minds regarding the wisdom of again allowing myself to be pigeonholed into the stereotype of politician/wife/mother and allowing my private life to take precedence over my professional career in the minds of others. On the one hand, most women in politics feel that the electorate is on their side. In the main, women are perceived as more honest, more trustworthy, less ruthless and less self-interested than their male colleagues. I would have to be the first person to agree with those perceptions.

Many female members of Parliament also see themselves as having a particular responsibility to be different to men, to clean up the image of politicians and to change the political agenda so that clear goals for improved legislation to make women's lives easier and more flexible can be achieved. Whatever the perceptions in the electorate at large, it is a fact that women candidates are worth more at the ballot box than men and are more likely to win marginal seats.

Carmen Lawrence said, during her election campaign, that "a lot of the appeal I had, particularly among older women in the electorate, was precisely because I am a woman." When the time came for the Labor Party to choose a new leader, she was seen as having clean hands; not a wheeler and dealer, and not someone who went in for political point scoring.

Thus, the electorate has some positive images about women as politicians and is reassured that these women are mothers; that they are normal; and that they are not women who buck the system by being sour faced, unattractive, barren and single. Women politicians are conscious of their electoral image and understand the electoral advantage of conforming to a female stereotype. But it is frustrating to know that, by reflecting and perpetuating social myths and attitudes to women, we both validate and entrench social attitudes which are antipathetic to women individually and to women as a group. The mother figure suffers from the fact that motherly figures are regarded as strong on niceness but perhaps not on nous. When the appearance of women politicians is not the primary focus of articles and other media comment, their fecundity is.

The influx of 13 women into the Queensland Parliament after the 1989 election caused much media comment. We were all profiled in newspaper stories about our marital status, our children and our interests far more than were our male colleagues. I received far more media attention for my pregnancy than I ever have for the work I have done in Parliament.

I believe that I am the first woman in any Parliament in Australia to chair a public works committee. This is an important committee, which oversees the expenditure of the State's capital works budget. But this fact has not attracted much media attention. It is almost as if the journalists need to reassure themselves and the readers that women members of Parliament are normal and that, because at some stage they have rocked the cradle, they have not rocked the

boat completely; whereas chairing a committee, in such an all-male domain as public works, is not such a comfortable perception for them.

I think this attitude may have been understandable, if not appropriate, in the days when, decades ago, women first began to make their mark in business, the professions and politics. It is sad that here we are in the 1990s and women are still regarded as an oddity on our political scene. By the year 2000 there will be 10 million women and girls in our nation. But then, as now, parliamentary office will remain an elusive goal for Australian women unless women do something to redress the imbalance.

I believe that there are a number of things that women must do. Firstly, whether they like it or not, they must get out there and join political parties. There is no tradition of electing independents to Parliaments in this country. So if women want to get political representation, they do have to join political parties. They must then work within these parties to get them to change their rules about preselection of candidates. The ALP has the Half by 2000 campaign, which was explained in detail by Lesley Clark. I would challenge the other political parties to adopt similar courses.

Women must also get involved in the policy and committee areas of the party and not allow themselves only to be used for cooking for the next function. As Rosemary said, never join the ladies auxiliary. Women must also offer themselves as candidates at elections, demand the right to contest winnable seats, and not allow themselves to be put up only for marginal seats which everyone knows are fairly unwinnable.

Finally, women must stop feeling guilty because they want to work. They must have confidence that their contribution is as good as, if not better than, men's. The President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, stated that her purpose in politics was "to enhance the purposes and condition of humanity". That should be the purpose for all of us. The quality of our parliamentary representation will be enhanced when more women are here to ensure its progress.

In the meantime, women like me and the others who share the stage with me will continue to work harder, smarter and longer to prove that we can indeed do it all. We will continue to put up with a political life that is run by men under their rules. We will continue to shake up notions of female stereotypes. We will continue to make a difference. When you hear that this State Parliament is sitting sensible hours and not the midnight to dawn finishing times that are the norm here, then you will know that women have gained a real say in the way things are done in Queensland political life. Thank you.

Questions to the Panel

Paul REYNOLDS: I have two quick glosses on what Judy and the others have said. As to that last comment, I am sure there are many women on the staff of this building who would say "Hooray!" to that. I think it is disgraceful that so many women are kept on the premises until very late hours and then have to face going home alone.

I think the message we have all received from our speakers can be summed up in the answer that Lawrence of Arabia gave after World War I, when he was asked how it was that, as a slightly eccentric Englishman, he was able to lead the Arabs. He replied, "You do all that the Arabs do, and you do it better." It is time for questions.

Beryl HOLMES: I know that each speaker has said that the world is designed by men and we work under men's rules. We all know that. I am troubled by Mrs Gamin's speech—not that I don't admire the work you do; I do, and I think it is great. My experience of life has taught me that men and women do work in different ways. Women work to do a good job, and they hope that if they do a good job they will be noticed and they will be promoted. But we know that that is not true. We know that, as you go into any kind of work, you have to look for a mentor and you have to work for your promotion. That does not matter whether it is the public service or anywhere else. It worries me that, while women do a really good job by their electorate, probably they need a safe seat so they do not have to do such a good job by their electorate to get re-elected, so then they can look for the mentor and work for their promotion. Has any study ever been done to see how many members of Parliament get to be Cabinet Ministers who are not in safe electorates? Do you have to spend a lot of time looking after your electorate so that you never get to work for your promotion?

Judy GAMIN: I don't know of any work or any research that has been done into women—and there have not been very many women who have achieved Cabinet recognition—and whether their seats are safe or otherwise. A couple of speakers mentioned that the endorsement by a political party for most women is into marginal seats, that very few of us have the luxury of representing safe seats. But then, on the other hand, most of us would be working hard to try to improve the safety of those seats. But I don't know that any research has been done at all on whether the electorate margin and the appointment to Cabinet have any correlation at all. Paul, do you know about that?

Paul REYNOLDS: The short answer to Beryl's question is "No". There is no research that I am aware of that has correlated safeness of seat as against position in Cabinet. But I can say two things. The first is that, in the Queensland Parliament, the two female Ministers both represent safe seats. Although Molly Robson won her seat in 1989, on the present boundaries it is safe for Labor.

The other thing is that it is no coincidence in Federal politics—under Labor or the Coalition—that most women members of Cabinet are senators. Senators are not elected at territorial level; they are elected on lists. They are promoted onto lists by their parties. Because the Senate is the inferior House, if you come from the Senate you don't get to get the big jobs in town—unless you are Gareth Evans.

John McCULLOCH: Mr Chairman, I have a general comment to make, and then I would like to ask Rosemary Kyburz a question. Judy Spence mentioned that she was the first woman in Australia to chair the Public Works Committee. Let me tell you that, as far as the Queensland Parliament is concerned, all previous women up till 1986—apart from the very first woman who was elected—were members of a parliamentary committee and, in each case, would you believe, it was the Parliamentary Refreshments Committee—from the kitchen at home into the kitchen at Parliament House, so to speak. That did not change until Di McCauley was elected in 1986, a quite interesting fact.

The first woman in Parliament was elected in 1929. She was not allowed to go to the members' dining room, which was an all-male precinct. She had to eat her meals on the veranda outside the parliamentary dining room. There was no female toilet at the time in the whole of Parliament House. Whether she had to go over to the Bellevue—I do not know what arrangements were made. The next woman who was elected was Vi Jordan in 1966. When she was elected, they had actually converted a male toilet having just crossed out "Men" and put "Women" on the outside. Vi Jordan had to share that toilet with all female members of staff. There were no female sanitary facilities or anything like that in that toilet. That did not change until Rosemary Kyburz actually came to the Parliament. Things were pretty grim for some of those early women.

I have to preface my question to Rosemary. I guess the Queensland Parliament had seen nobody like Rosemary Kyburz before. Lesley did say that Vi Jordan was a pioneer, but Rosemary Kyburz was a pioneer par excellence, because she was a pioneer who did not play the system. She bucked the system. It is a pity that, for some of the members, it was like casting pearls before swine, because they did not listen to what she said. I have read all her speeches, and I can tell you that most of those speeches were fabulous. One of the more famous ones, I suppose, was when she bucketed the League of Rights and said that "Women Who Want to be Women" were the League of Rights in drag. That is a particularly memorable speech, and I suggest you read it. Some of her speeches were very fiery.

Paul mentioned that she is known for her defeat of that particular, obnoxious abortion Bill. But in actual fact, I think her most famous achievement was changing the rape laws. She actually had those laws changed so that the victim's past history could not be brought up and used in evidence. I think that is what Rosemary Kyburz will always be remembered for.

Rosemary took on people like Russ Hinze, as has already been said, and Joh, and also some Cabinet Ministers, including a member of her own party. She copped enormous personal abuse. Even reading *Hansard*, it is completely unreal. Some of that personal abuse was woman oriented—getting at her because she was a woman. I think Rosemary holds the record for the number of times that a person has crossed the floor in the Queensland Parliament, because she was willing to stand up for what she thought was right, rather than toe the party line. In the midst of all this, Rosemary suffered a very severe road accident during the time she was in Parliament, and she had two children while she was in Parliament. I am sure the average male politician could not have coped with all this. Rosemary, how on earth did you cope?

Rosemary KYBURZ: I coped with the children because I think I have a healthy attitude towards good sex. I really wanted to have the children, and that's why I got married. Did I cope? Let me see. I am now doing a qualitative research subject at university for my masters degree. Paul, you will be interested to know that, like all good students, I listen to every word and I think, "Cope; what does that really mean? What is really behind that? Did I really cope?" I am a whole bag of front. I am a very severe migraine sufferer, which a lot of people do not know, and I choose not to make it extremely public. So I have to retreat into that every couple of weeks. It is still going on, unfortunately. I suppose I have a lot of outlets, too. I am learning to meditate, and it is taking years. I do not know how the Buddhists do it.

Also, I think life should be fun. I remember one comment that a colleague made to me about being in the Liberal Party and how plotting goes on in the party room. I am cognisant of the fact that Bill Hewitt is here, and Bill really is a wonderful man. I don't decry the fact that Bill always supported me in all those years. When I was getting very fiery, banging the table and thinking, "These bloody idiots. Why can't they see another person's point of view?", that particular person said, "Don't take it all too seriously. It's just like having a game of chess. Move a few pawns here, knock a few over. Tomorrow you'll get a win." And I thought, "Is it true that these people really see this important decision making as a game of chess?" Unfortunately, I think the vast majority do. So maybe it's a bit like taking up knitting. It is something that I've never done, but perhaps I ought to. John, I think I had better introduce myself to you later. I am a very ordinary person.

Colin KENNARD: The panel have gone into the mechanics of being a politician. I welcome the little details. But in the coffee houses and the university lounges—and this has been referred to recently—people think there is more to politics and more happening in Parliament than the mechanics—seeing the local people attending the P & C and doing the mechanical jobs of being a representative of the people. If the women's movement is to come of age, it has got to develop some sort of philosophy or theory, and it has got to apply that theory. What are your ideas, say, Dr Clark, on this matter?

Lesley CLARK: I speak for myself. I don't think that I have what I would call a coherent theory that I bring to my role as a parliamentarian. I think perhaps one of the problems for women, when you talk about it in an all-encompassing way like that, is something that Rosemary referred to. Whilst women may have a commitment to equal representation and some fundamentals about equality of women, I think it is hard for women within the Parliament to work across the party lines and across the factional lines. I am afraid that is a reality of the competitive nature of politics. It is one that I personally regret. Maybe I should work harder to try to bring all women in the Parliament together to have some common purpose. But within the Parliament it is very hard for women as a group to move forward in any coherent way with a theory that might guide them in that sense. For the women's movement outside the Parliament, I think that it certainly is important that, within the universities, one keeps progressing theory in terms of the

women's movement. There certainly needs to be more interaction between the women outside the Parliament and the women inside the Parliament.

I notice in my reading that, in the past, some of the Labor Women's Organisation conferences have been open to women who were not Labor members. Thinking about that, perhaps there is value in that, because maybe there is not enough interaction between Labor women as members of the Labor Party and the broader women's movement. I think that might actually help us to encourage more women to join the party. I think a lot of us have friends in the women's movement and other kinds of movements outside the Parliament. But if we are looking at another move forward to get over that hurdle of the preselection issues, maybe we need to go back and work more closely with the women's movement again. I am really thinking about that as I am talking.

Paul REYNOLDS: It is perhaps salutary to remember that we have had an adversarial mode of parliamentary politics since the seventeenth century and that, whilst our legal system is based on the principles of adversarial interaction, this sits very comfortably with the way that Parliament is structured. Put in this perspective, it is no mean task to attend to change it.

Kathy SINCLAIR: How do women get on parliamentary committees—by factional deals or seniority?

Lesley CLARK: Factional deals.

Bill HEWITT: I do not have a question but a little piece of history that I would like to share with you. I was Chairman of Committees in the Parliament for five and a half years. The much-loved Vi Jordan was one of my Temporary Chairmen. When one is Chairman of Committees, one has a panel of Chairmen and one can ask them to take the Chair at any time, particularly in long sessions. After Vi was appointed, on the occasion I invited her to take the Chair for the first time, I invited the Parliament to note the occasion. Vi was either the first or the second woman in Australian history to preside over an Australian Parliament, albeit in Committee. The person with whom she vied was a lady in Western Australia. To my discredit, I never did research who was the first, but Vi was the first or the second woman to preside. I am very happy to share that piece of history with you.

Ms MONET: I have two questions, the first of which you may like to answer later. What is a factional deal? My other question is: as people representing an electorate, I presume that members of Parliament would normally have a lot of ideals before they start. When people join up with a party, how do they compromise their personal ideals? How does that part of it all work? I know that that is probably a complex question. How do normal people, who go into Parliament full of ideals, bring themselves to toe the party line or, as Ms Kyburz said, not toe the party line. But then, a member is sacrificing the time that he or she may be able to spend to do good for the people that he or she is honoured to represent?

Paul REYNOLDS: Thanks for that question. I will ask Judy Spence and Judy Gamin to take that one on board as representatives of different parties, and the other two panellists can come in afterwards if they wish.

Judy SPENCE: I will not go into the factional deal side of things, but I will go into the second part of your question. When joining any political party, you do compromise your ideals. You do not win in caucus every time. Every vote does not go your way. That is the way it happens in the real world, too. I think that we just have to accept that we are here and we are trying very hard. If, at the end of the day, you have argued your case very strongly in caucus and done your best and it goes against you, you have been there and you have done all you can.

I must say that I get really cranky at members of the women's movement who skirt around the fringes of politics all the time in different lobby groups, who do not get their way and then complain because the parliamentarians will not give it to them. I say to those women: get out there and join political parties—join any political party; I do not care which one it is. Get out there and be part of the main game. Do not stand outside the doors waving banners. Get inside where the decisions are really made and play the game.

Judy GAMIN: I can add only a brief comment to what Judy said. Obviously, you have joined a political party in the beginning because its philosophies, its policies or its ideals were in some way aligned with your own. You have played your role through the party life and through the party's structure, helping to formulate that party's policies. As Judy said, you fight for it in your party room. You do your best. You do not always win.

The other point that the question asked was: how do you compromise those ideals when you are voting in the House? You really do not. You have gone into it with your eyes open. You know that you are not always going to win your points. Rosemary was unique. She crossed the floor lots of times. But in the political climate that we have in the Queensland Parliament today, it

would be almost unbelievable, I would say, for one of the women on the conservative side to cross the floor and vote with Labor or for one of the Labor women to cross the floor and vote with us. You have had your fight; you have made your point; that is it. You simply cannot win them all.

Lesley CLARK: As someone who once considered crossing the floor, the reality is that it is political suicide and the reality for you is that you have to weigh up whether you want to trade away totally your ability to have some influence within the party or whether you want to be a total outsider. If it was something so serious for me that I really felt that I could not have confidence in the party on a whole range of issues rather than just one individual issue, I would resign from the party rather than cross the floor. Once you take that step, you have lost any ability to have any status and influence within your own party.

On the outside, it seems that people have the attitude, "Goodness me, if that person had any integrity, they would stand up for what they believe in; they would not go along with the party line." People say that out there. You would make a hero of yourself for a day, because people would say, "Gee, that Lesley Clark stood up and did what her constituents wanted", but what have you really gained? You have felt good for a day, but you have lost the opportunity to be part of the process in the longer term, where you can perhaps achieve more good. It is hard.

Paul REYNOLDS: And the *Cairns Post* would not even remember your name the next day!

Judy GAMIN: The other point, following on from what Lesley said, is that you did not nominate for election as an Independent. You accepted the nomination of your party, and in doing so you accepted its ground rules and its rules. You do not have that luxury. Judy mentioned that Independents are very rarely elected to Parliament. None of us serving today has that luxury. We were endorsed by our party, and we are expected to follow the rules. At the beginning of my speech, I said that politics is the art and science of government. Politics is also pragmatically known as the art of the possible.

Kathy MILLAR: I would like to pick up on a point that Judy Spence made about women skirting around the fringes. I agree that it is vital that more and more women join parties, but I also think that women who skirt around the fringes play a very significant role in highlighting significant issues to women that members of Parliament are not necessarily in a position to highlight. I would not want the women's movement to be seen as not recognising the importance of joining a party, but I believe that our roles complement each other in the outcomes that we are trying to achieve. As a woman from the non-Government sector commenting on women's issues, I would like to feel that I play a vital role without having to join a party.

Paul REYNOLDS: Did you bowl that up to any panel member in particular, or is it just for everybody?

Kathy MILLAR: No, it was just a general comment.

Judy SPENCE: This feeling has come on me overwhelmingly as I have become more involved in the Labor Party. I am on the party's State Council, a position to which I was elected in my own right without being part of any affirmative action program. One has to work very hard in the Labor Party to be elected to the State Council, the State conference body. Having been elected to that body, I realised that I was tied in to three weekend meetings a year where I had to go into conference for the whole weekend.

Having served on it for well over three years, I have discovered that State Council is a really tough experience in the Labor Party. You sit there for a whole weekend in a room full of men. There are very few women there. Most of the women who are there got there through affirmative action; many of them are the wives of politicians. There are very few women there in their own right. Every time I go to a State Council meeting, there are protesters outside. Most of the protesters are women who are protesting against this Government and its stance on prostitution, abortion or whatever. Every time I have to fight my way through those protesters, it makes me cranky that there are not more of them inside, that we still let the men run the show in political parties. I think that more women have to join parties, get in there and be part of the real decision-making process of their parties.

At present, women constitute only about one-third of the membership of the Labor Party in Queensland. That is very poor. I do not know about the other political parties, but we have a long way to go. Those women who are members of the ALP are not getting themselves elected to important decision-making bodies within the party. I see an important place for lobby groups, but I do not think it is good enough for women to stay in lobby groups. I think they have to get in there and do other things as well—the harder things.

Lesley CLARK: I might comment from an environmental perspective, because one confronts similar dilemmas when one has been active with any lobby group. Having been an active conservationist and coming into the Parliament, I have had similar experiences and feelings to those that Judy mentioned. Certainly, the friends that I have in the green movement have very high expectations of me. In my own area, I have received more criticism from the green movement than have other colleagues who are less green than me. It has been an interesting process for me to attempt to understand why that would be. Clearly, they are the expectations that those people have of me. They expect me to be there criticising the Government if necessary. They expect me to be there putting forward the principles that they maintained I was there for. Sometimes, I am disappointed that those people fail to see the change of role that I have.

I think that I have come to accept that, if there is more understanding on both sides of the role that each of us plays, it can be a complementary role. In common with Judy, obviously I would like to see more people coming into Parliament with a very strong commitment to those issues, but at the same time I think that we have to accept the value of the lobby groups. They are the groups that are pushing community opinion in the direction that we hope to move it. As we know, politicians will move only as far as the community will allow them to. I often say to my friends in the environmental and other movements, "Rather than criticising me and rather than criticising the Government, you should be out there doing much more community education so it is safer for us to move in a greener direction, so that it is politically acceptable and safer for us to move strongly on women's issues."

It might not please people too much, but I want to point out something that Goss has said about abortion. He is waiting until there is a much clearer commitment and support for it in the community. I know that people will say that it is there already, because the surveys have shown that it is there. However, it is a sad fact of life that the pro-life lobby is a much noisier group that gets its message across very clearly. It makes it very hard if there is not a group within the community pushing the debate for us and, if you like, ahead of us. That would help us. There are no easy answers. We need groups both inside and outside the political process, and we need to work out a strategy to work together rather than being in conflict with one another.

Carol BAXTER: I work for an Australian Democrat senator, which is why I am here tonight. I have a couple of points. I have actually been in the work force for 30 years, and I come from a family where women worked. I have been in the Australian Democrats since 1977. It is a party in which women have equal rights. There are as many women members as there are men. Women do not concentrate on women's issues; women get involved in everything. That is one of the points that the speakers have made: that women should be involved in everything. They should not just select women's issues, whichever party they happen to join. I am concerned that the push is still on that women politicians have to be superwomen, instead of just being a woman who is a politician. I am wondering how on earth we can overcome that.

Rosemary KYBURZ: As to the push to be a superwoman—I think you have to look at the history of media manipulation. Over the last 50 years, the media carefully manipulated women into the work force during the war and then carefully manipulated them out of the work force. For the last 20 years, women have been starting to stride out again. I would hate to see the media once again manipulate women back into the kitchens, bathrooms and bedrooms.

Do we have to be superwomen? Absolutely not! I think everyone has to say, "I've had enough. I'm tired. That is it." As I said, in many respects, women are their own worst enemies. We should start saying to people, "Listen, quit this guff. Come straight with me. Stop beating around the bush." We should start saying all the things that we are thinking in our heads. We should start verbalising our self-talk.

May I say another thing to some of you. I do not know whether you know Janet Irwin and Beryl but, through their work with lobby groups, they have given years of dedicated service to the women of Queensland. They have given far more than I have ever given. I certainly look up to Janet and Beryl, and they are well aware of that. Lobby groups are extremely important. Consider the pro-gun lobby. I could shoot the lot of them! Consider the Right to Life Association. I am on the Family Planning Association of Queensland. We work so hard to have sex education taught everywhere. It is a grind, and how far are we getting? Slowly but surely, we are making progress. We have achieved little things like handing out condoms at universities, and so forth. But where does the Right to Life Association get? There are probably five of them in the ladies' toilet having their annual general meeting! I cannot imagine that a real-life person would be in it. Lobby groups are extremely important. People should not only join them but also yell, wave placards, dance, run up and down George Street naked—do anything to get their point of view across.

Toni VINCENT: Thank you for that, Rosemary. My question is: what is being done by the women in Parliament now to carry on Rosemary's work and all the things she fought for—the rape issue, the abortion issue, child abuse—the whole list of what are seen as women's issues but are not? What is being done?

Lesley CLARK: Speaking for the Labor Party, the way in which we as women parliamentarians contribute to legislation is the same way that all members do, whether they are male or female. Each Minister has a committee comprised of backbenchers, and they work together with the legislation that a Minister is bringing to the Parliament. Judy Spence might follow me in responding to this question, because she was on Anne Warner's committee, where some of the women's-type legislation to which we are referring has been considered. That is our opportunity to input into that legislation and to ensure that it is meeting what we believe is required for women. We are fortunate in that we believe our Government has been putting forward legislation that is much more pro-women than the sort of legislation that Rosemary had to fight. But that is the structural mechanism. All of us, through our contact with groups or individual women, bring their voice to the Parliament in forums such as the caucus and the backbench committees. That is basically how it happens.

Judy SPENCE: I would have to agree with Lesley. There are probably three issues out there on which women demand more action. Many women are not very happy with the prostitution laws we have ended up with. Hopefully, that matter will be reviewed in the next year. The Premier said that those laws would be reviewed after two years. We have had one year of them so, at the end of this year, I expect that they will be reviewed and perhaps altered if they really are not working. We could probably do a lot more about child care. I believe that we are all just chipping away at that. Rosemary referred to that issue. The other big issue is abortion. Until we get the numbers on the floor of the House, there seems to be little point in putting that issue up to the Parliament. Anyone who has seriously done the numbers for abortion law reform knows that they are not there now.

Judy GAMIN: I would not agree with either Lesley or Judy on the abortion matter. I would agree with the comments on the prostitution laws. We are not happy with those laws. Victims of crime is another issue. I am a member of the Opposition, of course, so we do not get to see the legislation until after the Government has formulated it. But some of the social justice matters had started to come forward in 1989, including rape in marriage. They were starting to come forward from the previous Government, and I was involved with some of those. Many aspects of social justice that are now coming forward in this State have been supported by the Opposition. As I said, abortion is one issue on which I would not agree with either Lesley or Judy, except to say that I would agree with Judy that the numbers are not there to carry it at this time. I do not believe that Queensland is ready for abortion law reform.

On the other hand, as I listen to the questions and as I am looking at the audience, I realise that I am not really a member of the women's movement. I have never looked on myself as being a member of any movement. I think that ordinary women work and act and play their role within society. To answer the question—the changes that will occur will occur with time, with education and with a different generation of young women coming forward, the girls who are still at school now. They will not face the struggles that my generation had. The other speakers are a younger generation than me. The girls who are still in year 12 will have it easier as they try to live their roles not just as women but also as people in society.

Paul REYNOLDS: We will take one more question. After that, I want to wind up and thank the speakers. We have facilities for light refreshments. Perhaps then is the time to move to individual interaction between the speakers and the audience and with each other. If that is acceptable, we will take one more formal question.

Joan MAYNE: A comment that Mrs Gamin made certainly prompted me to ask this question: how far away is it until legislation will not discriminate? Why do we have to have women's issues, Aboriginal issues and ethnic affairs issues? Why are we not all people, all equal Australians, and why can't legislation cover all of us?

Lesley CLARK: That is a very general question, and I think the answer lies within society itself. That is a social issue and a social question. While we have a community that discriminates against certain elements in society, we will need legislation to try to counter that.

Rosemary KYBURZ: If you read the employment ads in the *Courier-Mail*, you will find that the biggest growth industry in Queensland is policy advisers.

Paul REYNOLDS: They are all young men from central casting.

Rosemary KYBURZ: They are all young men from the central casting, are they? I am sure that they are QUT trained. What a pity they are all young men. There is one of them here

tonight—sorry, Simon! The reality is that many decisions are now being made by public service boffins who are actually advisers on \$55,000 to \$65,000 a year. Wouldn't that be nice; then one could look across the broad spectrum! However, I believe that people must start discriminating in favour of across-the-board issues. We must start to view issues such as child care, care of the elderly and education as people issues. Those issues are everyone's concern, and we have to start saying that publicly. Thank you for your question. It was a very good one.

Judy SPENCE: I would have to agree with the previous speakers and say that, hopefully, one day such issues will be people's issues and will not be seen as women's issues. I am always amused when I look at the *Courier-Mail* every Friday and see the *femail* section. It covers issues such as child care, which should be people's issues. Most of the topics that that section covers are issues that should concern men and women, but they have to label the page "*femail*" just in case someone with the wrong chromosomes reads it and says, "Oh, child care. That is not my deal. Only women can read these pages." We have a long way to go not only in the Parliament but also in the media.

Judy GAMIN: As I said earlier, the time is coming—and it will come with the next generation of women, the girls who are at school now—where the distinction between the male role and the female role will be merged; it will be blurred. Both genders will play ordinary roles in life without looking on them as men's roles or women's roles. Women will no longer be fighting to get into a male world, and that sort of thing. Time will be the answer. However, I do not know how many generations it will take.

Paul REYNOLDS: It remains for me now to thank our panel of speakers, who have, I am sure you will agree, put a great deal of time, effort, thought and research into their remarks. Each spoke as they saw it in the context of the particular sphere that we asked them to address. Each has done that in a very competent and articulate way. Many of them probably would rather not have answered some of the questions that you bowled up, but they are all politicians, after all.

Rosemary KYBURZ: I'm not.

Paul REYNOLDS: Rosemary is the exception. We expect politicians to be quick on their feet and alert and agile. Thank you all for your interest in and your support for this meeting of the Australasian Study of Parliament Group, Queensland Chapter. Would you please thank our speakers in the customary way?