

NOTE: There could be differences between this document and the official printed *Hansard*, Vol. 317

WEDNESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 1990

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. J. Fouras, Ashgrove) read prayers and took the chair at 2.30 p.m.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Adoption Law Amendment

From **Mr J. N. Goss** (84 signatories) praying for significant changes to the Adoption of Children Act Amendment Act 1990.

Religious Education

From **Mr Stephan** (78 signatories) praying for the Education Department to be directed to abandon all work on the P-10 religious education curriculum and allocate resources to the existing religious education system.

Tobacco Levy Increase

From **Mr Coomber** (95 signatories) praying that the tobacco levy be increased and that the proceeds be channelled into an independent foundation for health promotion, research and sponsorship of sport and the arts.

Milk-vendors

From **Mr Briskey** (494 signatories) praying that milk-vendors be allowed to continue to operate and that price widening be not increased.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table—

Orders in Council under the Summer Time Act 1990

Ordinance under the City of Brisbane Act 1924-1990

Reports for the year ended 31 December 1989—

Board of Senior Secondary School Studies

Queensland Conservatorium of Music

Regulations under the Partnership (Limited Liability) Act 1988-1989.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1.

Government Contract Tendering Procedures

Mr HARPER asked the Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for The Arts—

"(1) Will he take action to ensure that quotes and tenders for goods or services to Government establishments such as schools, police stations and residences in country areas are dealt with in such a manner as to ensure unfair advantage is not given to competitors, particularly from those located in cities, by disclosure to them of local quotes or prices?"

(2) Will he take action to ensure that quotes and tenders are provided in sealed envelopes opened at a specific time and place to ensure that those tendering have an opportunity to be present at the official opening and that none has an ability to take advantage of prior knowledge of prices submitted by competitors?

(3) Will he spell out his Government's position in regard to retaining and stimulating business in smaller country centres by providing preference to them in the supply of goods or services to the Government?"

Mr W. K. GOSS: (1 and 2) All Government departments are required to comply with the provisions of the *Queensland Government Standard Code Tendering*. The code provides that every tender shall be enclosed in a sealed envelope and placed in a secure tender box. In accordance with the code, after the specified time for receipt of tenders, tenders are required to be opened by authorised officers and, at the discretion of the authority concerned, tenderers or their representatives may be present at the opening.

In accordance with the State purchasing policy, where the value of a contract does not exceed \$6,000, verbal quotations may be obtained so as to ensure a reasonable measure of competition. The obtaining of such prices is done on a commercial, confidential and common-sense basis. Those measures ensure that unfair advantage is not given to competitors. If the honourable member has any information as regards breaches of security or confidentiality, I suggest that he provide that information to the Honourable Minister for Administrative Services for investigation.

(3) The State purchasing policy defines the current Government's position in regard to decentralised preference that gives a preference to suppliers in country areas. This policy provides for a 5 per cent Queensland regional preference on top of a national preference of 20 per cent for Australian products, and it applies to any firm with a manufacturing base outside the Brisbane statistical division. It is to be appreciated that this preference is applicable only to intrastate Queensland tenderers.

2.

Ross River Meatworks Dispute

Mr HARPER asked the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations—

"With reference to an answer to a recent question regarding the activities of the AMIEU in Queensland in which he indicated that it would appear that current legislative provisions and industrial arrangements are quite adequate to deal with strike action which had crippled the Ross River meatworks and in view of the fact that only 11 days work was carried out there during a period of five weeks and that the beef cattle industry is in turmoil due to the uncertainty resulting from the State executive of that union continuing to pull out workers on a regular basis of one day each week, apparently by direction of the Victorian State secretary—

What action is he prepared to take in order to protect the incomes of those meatworkers who do not wish to strike and to protect the embattled primary producers as well as the State's economy from this further threat brought about by militant union leadership?"

Mr WARBURTON: I am advised that since 5 November 1990, there have been no stoppages over the local dispute at the Ross River meatworks, which was the subject of the honourable member's question on 9 November. As I indicated in my answer to that question, that dispute has been subject to proceedings in the Australian Industrial Relations Commission and has been resolved. Since that dispute was settled, employees at the Ross River meatworks have been involved in some brief stoppages in connection with a national campaign by the AMIEU over delays and perceived stalling by employers in the structural efficiency award restructuring process.

Mr Harper: One day a week!

Mr WARBURTON: Yes. My understanding is that the decision to participate in the campaign was taken by vote of the employees at each of the separate works, without direction from the union executive. The employers' organisation has applied for the

specific insertion of a bans clause and removal of preference in the relevant Federal award, and today this matter is being heard before the Federal commission. Hearings of the structural efficiency matter will proceed on 3 December 1990.

Given those developments, no useful purpose would be served by the Queensland Government's involvement in the matter. It is most unfortunate that the process of award-restructuring, which is so vital to Australian industry, can be subject to delays and frustration. However, this does occur from time to time. This process can be successful only if both parties approach it in good faith, negotiate on a genuine basis and are prepared to accept the arbitrator's decision.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Nindooinbah Homestead

Mr COOPER: I refer the Minister for Environment and Heritage to the Government's announcement of a proposed dam site near Beaudesert which includes the National Trust-listed property Nindooinbah Homestead, which, according to the Water Resources Commission report, will have to be removed. I ask: was he consulted about the impact of that on his heritage list, particularly as the property is also registered by the Australian Heritage Commission? Did he make representations to save that historic Queensland property in its natural setting? Has the Government's action in locating this dam site circumvented the operation of the Heritage Buildings Protection Act?

Mr COMBEN: I will answer the last part of the question first. The honourable member asked: has it circumvented the provisions of the Heritage Buildings Protection Act? The answer is: no, it has not, because that Act has an 18-month sunset clause. The dam to which the honourable member is referring is some 60 years down the track.

In relation to the other matter about whether I was consulted by my colleague Mr Casey—of course I was consulted. I do not know what sort of consultations occurred in the days when the honourable member's party sat on this side of the Chamber, but we in this Government talk and consult.

Mr Cooper: I am asking you the question.

Mr COMBEN: Yes, I was consulted. That particular building is in the buffer zone. There will be no detriment to it whatsoever.

Distribution to Gold Coast High Schools of Pamphlets Encouraging Homosexual Behaviour by Students

Mr COOPER: I ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services: in view of his Government's support for the decriminalisation of sodomy, what action will his department now take to help parents protect their children from material such as the pamphlet distributed to some Gold Coast high schools encouraging students to take part in an end-of-year homosexual gathering described by concerned local police in today's *Gold Coast Bulletin* as encouraging sexual perversion?

Mr MACKENROTH: In answer to the honourable member's question——

Mr Stephan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gympie will cease interjecting.

Mr MACKENROTH: I think the Leader of the Opposition answered the question when he said that the police were concerned about it. Of course the police are concerned about it and of course this Government is concerned about it. I understand that either the Minister for Education or his department has been in touch with all schools on the Gold Coast advising them that none of that literature is to be distributed throughout any school on the Gold Coast. I am sure that everyone would applaud that action being

taken. We certainly do not wish to see distributed throughout schools the type of literature that has been reported in the press. This Government cannot be responsible for what people write. But it can certainly take action within its own schools to ensure that it is not distributed.

As far as the police are concerned—we will look at the actions that have been taken, and if any action can be taken, it will be taken. However, it should be remembered that the laws under which that action will be taken will be those that the honourable member's Government put in place.

Campaign by Local Authorities against EARC Electoral Reforms

Mr PREST: I refer the Deputy Premier and Minister for Housing to a report in this morning's *Courier-Mail* that 20 local authorities in Queensland have appointed a Canberra academic, Dr Jones, to coordinate a campaign against EARC electoral reforms, and I ask: who will meet the costs of that campaign? What is the true situation in relation to the review by EARC of local authority electoral systems?

Mr BURNS: I read with interest the story in this morning's paper. I make it quite clear that I think councils should be encouraged in every way possible to make submissions to EARC. I do not have any objection to their hiring lobbyists or anything of that nature; that is the way it should be. However, it is difficult to understand why the lobbyists, who are being paid by the local authorities, would attack EARC, which is an independent commission, and the commissioner himself. The facts of life are that, as a result of the Fitzgerald inquiry and its recommendations, the legislation setting up that commission was introduced by the National Party in Government. All the people who were appointed to the commission were appointed after consultation between the Liberal Party Leader, the National Party Leader and the Labor Party Leader.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Lockyer will cease interjecting.

Mr BURNS: The independent commission was set up with full consultation. This Government has made no submissions to EARC on these matters.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

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

Mr BURNS: As an independent commission, EARC has issued a discussion paper. To read in this morning's paper of some personal attack on the chairman of the commission by a consultant who is being paid \$900 a day is a fair indication that the campaign is going to be a political one rather than a sensible one around the issues that EARC has raised. No matter how hard the National Party tries, it will not be able to turn this into a political issue. Very simply, the issue is that, at the last election, the people of Queensland made it clear that they wanted reform. When they voted for that reform, they voted for a commission in the style of EARC. There is an opportunity for every person who is interested in councils right throughout the State to have a say, not just local authorities, councillors and politicians. Members of the community must be very clear in their mind that, in the next six months, they have an opportunity to have a say about the EARC process. We want them to have a say, and we encourage them to have a say.

If we get down to personalities and make attacks on the people involved, I do not believe that this issue will ever be properly debated. The real issue in the whole review by EARC is how to get the best possible, most democratic and most economically viable local authorities. The people—not the politicians—will have a say about the future of local authorities in this State.

Corporatisation of Government-owned Enterprises

Mr PREST: I ask the Treasurer: can he inform the House of the status of consultation on the Government's Green Paper on corporatisation of Government-owned enterprises?

Mr De LACY: Honourable members would be aware that, in September, a Green Paper on the corporatisation of Government-owned enterprises was released. As is customary, those enterprises are referred to as GOEs. The distribution of over 1 200 of those Green Papers in the marketplace has stimulated a significant response. Many submissions have been received from all sections of the community. Although most of them are positive, not all of them are. A couple of submissions were received from backbench members of Parliament. I welcome that. I am pleased that the public in general is taking this matter very seriously. I personally have attended a number of seminars to speak about the Green Paper. I remind honourable members that submissions on it must be received by the end of this month. If they intend to prepare submissions, they had better do so very quickly.

During the consultation process, it became obvious to me that the status quo is no longer an option in regard to Government-owned enterprises. They really must be more efficient and more commercial. This Government has ruled out privatisation as an option. Therefore, corporatisation is the only option. If those enterprises are not corporatised and made more commercial, they will remain inefficient, become a drain on the taxpayers of this State and the Budget and, furthermore, become an impediment to business. One of the best things that this Government can do for business is ensure the existence of an efficient public sector. During that process, this Government must involve the unions and the work force in those enterprises.

Mr Cooper: Deregulate the labour market?

Mr De LACY: No, I mean by way of consultation. The Labor Government does not regard the reform of Government-owned enterprises as an accounting function. It believes that the human dimension is very important. Consultation is necessary. This Government must take account of legitimate concerns of the work force. It must get out there and explain to them the objectives of corporatisation and how it can benefit them and the whole community. I take this opportunity to send out the signal to the work force that this Government will be consulting with them and explaining the real objectives of that process.

Roma Street Marshalling Yards

Mr BEANLAND: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to a report in today's *Courier-Mail* about the buck-passing by the Treasurer, the Local Government Minister and the Transport Minister over who is responsible for the Roma Street marshalling yards and why those yards are not being offered as a site for a casino. I ask: as three of the Premier's Ministers have evaded responsibility over that matter, can he inform the House which Minister is responsible for the Roma Street marshalling yards? Why are they not being offered as a site for a casino? Which Minister ruled out the marshalling yards, and for what reasons?

Mr W. K. GOSS: The Ministers responsible for the progress of this particular issue are part of a special Cabinet committee which I have formed, which I chair and which includes all Ministers to whom the member for Toowong referred. We decided that the best course of action was to offer a multiplicity of sites, to determine the best sites in terms of the reaction from the private sector and in terms of our own judgment, and to offer a range of those sites with a view to attracting from the private sector and interested parties bids, tenders and what have you so that we could get the best possible result and draw from the people who have to make the investment and risk decisions.

This Government did that. As a result of that process of consultation and our own judgment, the three favoured sites were those that were offered, that is, the south bank, the Treasury building and Queensland Place. The Roma Street yards are a possibility.

However, they did not make it into the top three choices. Furthermore, they are involved in the complication that no final use has been decided for that particular property. There would have to be greater consultation with the Brisbane City Council than has occurred up to the present time. Further, the site itself is too big solely for a casino. Until the issue of the use of the balance of the land is resolved—which cannot be done at present—it is not really a suitable site to be included in the list. This Government believes that it has determined the best three sites. Three sites are enough. On the basis of those sites being offered in terms of their position and nature, we believe that not only are they the best three sites but also they provide a good range that will attract a bid that we believe will meet our requirements and those of the community.

Racing Industry Reform

Mr BEANLAND: In directing a question to the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing, I refer to his claims that, at a meeting on 12 November, fruitful negotiations occurred between him and the principal race clubs. I ask: if those negotiations were so fruitful, why have the principal clubs today issued a statement describing those talks as brief and unproductive and strongly criticising the Minister for declaring that all major proposals contained in the Green Paper are non-negotiable?

Mr GIBBS: I am delighted that the honourable member asked that question, because it coincides with a statement that was issued and sent up to me today by Sir Edward Williams. The only person who makes the accusation in the press release is Sir Edward Williams, and I am disappointed that he has done so. At a time when people are attempting to approach the matter in a sensible and rational way, the statement is highly provocative. Quite a number of people were present at the meeting that I held with the chairmen of the principal clubs, and that was certainly not the impression that I gained. I do not believe that it was the impression that a number of other people received, either. I stress that I have held two consultations with the chairmen. In addition, on a number of occasions, I have spoken to Mr Eric Walsh, whom they have hired as a consultant, about the proposals in the Green Paper.

It is worth while saying that the statement by Sir Edward Williams simply does not reflect the overall view of the racing industry. For example, I draw the attention of the honourable member to an article in today's Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin*, which is headlined "Gibbs and race clubs allay fears" and which states—

"Rockhampton Jockey Club secretary John Wolsey attended the conference, as well as delegates from seven other clubs—Ipswich, Toowoomba, Caloundra, Mackay, Townsville, Cairns and the Gold Coast."

They are the major provincial clubs throughout Queensland to which the Leader of the Opposition referred recently. In that article, Mr Wolsey said—

"I believe everybody came away from the meeting with a lot more confidence.

The Provincial Clubs Association is now drawing up a proposal in line with the thinking of Queensland's Principal Clubs to put to Mr Gibbs."

When I sat down with Sir Edward Williams and the chairmen of the principal clubs, I said that two points were non-negotiable. I made reference specifically to the role of the stewards within the racing industry. At no time did I say that the other matters in the Green Paper were non-negotiable. That point can be verified by others who were present at the meeting. I reject the statement that was made public by Sir Edward today.

Property Resumptions in Wolffdene Dam Area

Mr PALASZCZUK: In directing a question to the Minister for Primary Industries, I refer to the new water resources strategy for south-east Queensland, and I ask: will any additional properties in the old Wolffdene dam area be subject to resumptions?

Mr CASEY: Clearly and positively, there will be no—I repeat, no—acquisition of additional properties in the Wolffdene dam area. In the past two days, rumours were floating around that that would occur. I must be frank and admit that those rumours were caused by an administrative error in the electronic databank at the Water Resources Commission that was used to obtain for me the names of people who were to be notified regarding resumptions. As soon as the discovery was made that approximately 50 property-owners in the Albert Valley below the proposed site for the Glendower dam would receive letters from me stating that their properties may be resumed, immediate action was taken to notify by telephone all of those people to tell them that they should disregard the letters that they were to receive. This morning, I re-signed a number of letters to those people indicating clearly the reason for the error. It was an administrative error. From time to time, we all have hiccups. There is no question about that. When they do occur, one must be decent enough to take the medicine that cures them.

Leave-of-Absence Scheme for Prisoners

Mr PALASZCZUK: I ask the Minister for Justice and Corrective Services: will he inform the House of the success of the leave-of-absence scheme since the review of the guidelines this year?

Mr MILLINER: I thank the honourable member for his question, because it is very important that the Government states publicly the success of the leave-of-absence scheme. That scheme is a very important part of the rehabilitative program to help offenders to come back into the community. It is true that the system has had some spectacular failures. However, earlier this year, the Government introduced very strict guidelines for the leave-of-absence scheme. Leave of absence is an incentive towards which inmates have to work. I am very pleased to report that, in the seven months from February to August this year, the scheme had a success rate of 99.75 per cent. Obviously, the Government is working towards a 100 per cent success rate. Hopefully, in the not-too-distant future, that will be achieved. Day leave has been granted 3 846 times, resulting in only seven breaches. The success of the leave-of-absence scheme is a credit to all those who work in the corrective services area, particularly the custodial correctional officers and the community corrections officers who oversee the scheme. That indicates a degree of professionalism in the system that is great to see. I look forward to the next set of figures. As I said, I hope that, in the future, a success rate of 100 per cent can be achieved.

Nindooinbah House

Mr BORBIDGE: Further to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition, in directing a question to the Minister for Environment and Heritage, I refer to the Heritage Buildings Protection Act 1990, which provides for fines of up to \$1m for breaches of protection provisions for listed properties. I refer also to historic Nindooinbah House and I table a document showing its listing.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr BORBIDGE: That house is included in a dam site that was announced by the Minister's colleague the Minister for Primary Industries, and I ask: why does the Minister now reserve the right to exempt the Government from all provisions of its legislation, which imposes massive fines on private property owners?

Mr COMBEN: I do not seek to exempt this Government from the provisions of the Heritage Buildings Protection Act, or the new legislation. The last paragraph of section 8.2 of the Green Paper—I think it is on page 13—identifies the Government's intentions. The Government will be examining the alternatives available to it.

Introduction of Land Tax on Leasehold Land

Mr BORBIDGE: I direct a question to the Treasurer.

Mr Palaszczuk: How is your nervous energy?

Mr BORBIDGE: It is going well. I would debate the honourable member any day.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that, if the honourable member for Archerfield wishes to have a conversation, he do it later on. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will ask his question.

Mr BORBIDGE: I am sorry, Mr Speaker. I was provoked.

I refer the Treasurer to page 149 of the Wolfe report, which canvasses the introduction of land tax on leasehold land. I ask: will the Treasurer give an unequivocal assurance that this proposal will not be implemented by the Government.

Mr De LACY: No, I will not give an unequivocal assurance, but let me say that the Government has no intention of introducing land tax on land which is held on leasehold tenure.

Kennedy Report into Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation

Mr McGRADY: I ask the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing: can he inform the House when he expects to have the recommendations of the Kennedy report into the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation implemented?

Mr GIBBS: The final recommendations of the Kennedy report were discussed and finalised at the Cabinet meeting on Monday. It is my intention that the final decisions will be released tomorrow. I might say that, by and large, the majority of the Kennedy recommendations have in fact been accepted. There have been some modifications in a couple of areas. I will reveal those to the House tomorrow. I intend making a ministerial statement in that regard.

Land Management Office in Mount Isa

Mr McGRADY: I ask the Minister for Land Management: is he aware that the Land Management office in Mount Isa has been moved recently from the Mount Isa Court House to a building known as Mount Isa House? Does the Minister realise that the office is situated on the first floor of that building and that elderly persons, handicapped people and young mothers with children find it difficult to negotiate the two flights of stairs involved? Will the Minister investigate this matter with a view to rectifying the situation?

Mr EATON: Yes, we are aware of the situation in Mount Isa. It is a small office occupied by two people to service the needs of the community. The miners' homestead perpetual leases and miners' homestead leases were transferred to us from the Department of Resource Industries. My colleague the Minister for Administrative Services has his officers looking for suitable accommodation, with emphasis on ground floor accommodation, so that we can provide a wider service in Mount Isa when we make it one of the districts as part of our regionalisation program.

Water Resources Strategy for South-east Queensland; Mr J. Egan

Mr LINGARD: I have a question for the Minister for Primary Industries. Yesterday, I stated that one of his staff members approached Mr Jim Egan at Rathdowney to gain extra population details so that the Tilleys Bridge site population figures could be changed and that the site at Rathdowney could be removed from the final list of dams for south-east Queensland. In his answer, the Minister only stated that he had not made the contact. However, I repeat my allegation about his staff member and Mr Egan and now state that, compared with the figures previously submitted by the committee, the

final report shows that his department has increased the population figures for Rathdowney by 30 per cent. Will the Minister make available the names of those people affected by the dam site at Rathdowney so that it can be determined whether the figures have in fact been adjusted by Mr Egan and the member of the Minister's staff?

Mr CASEY: The honourable member was not in the House when I replied to his fairytale speech yesterday about Mr Egan and everything Mr Egan does. I spent 10 minutes telling the House exactly what is happening. Let me reassure the poor old member for Fassifern that there were no changes, that there was no contact with Mr Egan and that there is no Tilley's Creek dam. But there is a report, and a copy of it has been put on his table today. He may go and look at it and examine the facts and the figures. If he cannot interpret them and if he has no knowledge of the technical data, he should come and see me and I will give him a personal explanation.

Proposed Industry Commission Inquiry into Sugar Industry

Mr HAYWARD: I ask the Minister for Primary Industries: is he aware of the terms of reference of the proposed Industry Commission inquiry into the sugar industry and what effect, if any, it will have on the current sugar industry restructuring proposals?

Mr CASEY: This question is very important to the major agricultural industry in Queensland. The Federal Government recently announced that the Industry Commission would conduct an inquiry into the sugar industry. This is nothing new and is nothing out of the box. Under the Commonwealth legislation, it is done every five years or so to all organisations in Australia that have Commonwealth or State regulatory provisions. It was also well known about two years ago, when the Federal Government announced its decision to scrap the sugar embargo on the importation of sugar, that there would be an Industry Commission inquiry in 1990. So the industry has been fully aware of it.

I have a copy of the terms of reference issued by Mr Keating. The commission is given 12 months to carry out the study. The study will be carried out in consultation with the State Government and all sectors of the industry. It is designed to identify institutional, regulatory or other arrangements subject to influence by Governments in Australia. Why should we not have an overall body having a look at these matters, particularly when we remember what happened under the previous Government? The commission will evaluate the production and marketing arrangements for sugarcane and sugars in Queensland and New South Wales. The entire industry in Australia will be looked at.

The commission will look at the tariff arrangements that should apply for sugar imports after 1 July 1992, which is something that was also promised back in 1988 when the sugar embargo was removed. It simply puts these things into place. Some people in the sugar industry have become alarmed and uptight about the matter. The commission is to have regard to the established economic, social and environmental objectives of the Government and does not want there to be any duplication of the recent substantive studies that have been undertaken elsewhere. This is very important. The Sugar Industry Working Party inquiry has taken place into the industry and I am most anxious for the Industry Commission to examine the results of that inquiry and the new system that will be introduced as a result of it.

Legislation is almost completed, but it will not be debated this year. It is possible that this Government may introduce it at the end of this year and debate it during the February session next year. I am anxious that the legislation is passed so that the Industry Commission's inquiry can be held into the new framework of the industry. It is important for the framework to be updated. In that way it will not be based on the old industry framework and be adversely reported on, and a wrong impression of the industry will not be given to other people in Australia.

Ensham Coal Mine

Dr WATSON: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to the answer given last week by the Minister for Resource Industries concerning the Ensham mining area when he stated that he required the new joint venture partners to "establish a mine capable of producing at least 1.6 million tonnes of coal a year by September 1991". Given the continuing legal problems involved in the granting of this exploration permit to only three of the original joint venture partners, I ask: does this Government intend cancelling the exploration permit if the condition specified by the Minister is not met, or does the Premier intend to interfere once again with the commercial arrangements between joint venture partners?

Mr W. K. GOSS: The time period originally specified was reasonable. Obviously, the delays caused by the court action will put some pressure on that timetable and that is something we will have to judge. I am not aware of the latest score in the brawl between the various companies involved in the court proceedings and who were in the original consortium. It is a matter of common sense that the court proceedings will put pressure on the timetable and we must keep an eye on that. The Government would like to maintain that timetable to the extent that it is possible, because, unlike the members on the other side of the House, we are trying in a positive way to get the project up and running. We are not adopting this stupid, mindless, head-in-the-sand approach that would leave these characters to argue until the cows came home and have the public interest go by the board. That is not the approach of this Government. Our approach is a positive one that is designed to get this project up and running for the benefit of Queensland at the earliest opportunity. We will continue to operate on that basis.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I will take the interjection from the member for "paradise". We are moving a lot faster than the National Party ever did. I understand that the member has his eyes on colder climates at the moment. Leaving that aside——

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: No. If I had a nice, warm Gold Coast seat I would be very happy. I would not want to go to the Darling Downs. The point is that under the previous Government the whole project was bogged down because of the mistake it made putting together a consortium of partners who were ill-matched and did not want to be put together. This Government has inherited that situation and is moving it along. The project has been the subject of some delay because of the fact that the partners are still brawling with each other, and now they are brawling in court. This Government will continue to push the project along and is optimistic about the outcome.

Normanton State School

Mr BREDHAUER: In directing a question to the Minister for Administrative Services, I refer him to the concerns of parents and teachers at the Normanton State School about the lack of shade facilities for students. Given the extremes of climate experienced in this region, I ask: will the Minister advise what action his department can take to alleviate the lack of facilities?

Mr McLEAN: The honourable member has approached me about this issue on a number of occasions. I congratulate him on the manner in which he represents his constituents. He is most alert and very active. As a former schoolteacher and union official, he obviously has the welfare of the children at heart. The lack of school facilities is a serious problem Statewide. Any member who listened to the Estimates debate would realise that this problem occurs right across-the-board. It affects almost every electorate in this State. The reason is probably that most of the modern schools are built close to the ground and there are no shaded play areas underneath the buildings. This problem

must be faced and is one of which this Government is certainly aware. I am informed that the Normanton State School is on the list and the improvements are not far down the track. As soon as Mr Braddy's office gives my department the okay, my department will be only too pleased to go ahead and build.

Consultation by Minister for Police and Emergency Services with Rural Fires Council

Mr FITZGERALD: In directing a question to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, I refer to the fact that for the last two decades Queensland has faced a very serious threat from rural fires. I ask: since winter, has he met with the rural fires committee to discuss the matter?

Mr MACKENROTH: As a former Minister for Emergency Services, I really would have thought that the honourable member would be aware of the changes that were made to the State Fire Service earlier this year whereby the Rural Fires Board was abolished and the Rural Fires Council, which reports to the Commissioner of Fire Service, was set up. The commissioner reports to me.

I point out that, since winter, I have spoken to the Chairman of the Rural Fires Council. I have spoken to him in relation to the fire dangers. The things that surprise me when I read newspaper cuttings are the statements made by members of the National Party who criticise this Government over the funds that have been made available for rural fire services.

Mr FitzGerald: There has been a cut-back this year.

Mr MACKENROTH: There was no cut-back. In fact, the funds for rural fire services this year were increased by a percentage equal to that of the rate of inflation. The Government looked at the amount of money that the previous National Party Government had allocated to rural areas over the last five years. The Government decided to use last year's allocation—which was an election year—as a good basis, and increased that by the same percentage as the rate of inflation. Now, when I pick up the paper and see statements made by people such as the member for Fassifern—

Mr Lingard interjected.

Mr MACKENROTH: There is a difference.

Mr Lingard: You don't buy a chainsaw now.

Mr MACKENROTH: When the member for Fassifern was a member of the previous Government, he was party to a scheme that provided funding on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The rural fire services could get funding on a dollar-for-dollar basis for anything that they wanted to buy. In December last year, when I became the Minister for Emergency Services, I discovered that the total amount of subsidy made available by the previous National Party Government had been spent by September. It is all right to have a scheme for dollar-for-dollar funding if there are no funds made available, and that is what members of the previous National Party Government did.

Report on Future Sports-funding

Dr CLARK: In directing a question to the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing, I refer to a report received by him in September relating to the future of sports-funding in Queensland and point out that, while I was in Mount Isa recently, I was approached about that report. I ask: when will he release the report for public comment in order to finalise the Government's new strategy for the funding of sports which will come into operation during the next financial year?

Mr GIBBS: As the honourable member has correctly said, the report has been completed. It is presently with officers of my department. The department has completed its work, and I might say that the report is a highly impressive one. It is my intention to release both reports on the inquiry into the funding of sport in Queensland and the inquiry into women's sport in Queensland, which are two separate entities.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr GIBBS: No, I am not restrained. I simply refuse to be aggravated by a fool such as the honourable member. The fact is that those reports will be released over the Christmas-New Year period.

Coastal Protection Plan

Dr CLARK: I ask the Minister for Environment and Heritage: could he describe the progress that has been made in his department in the preparation of the coastal protection plan that will ensure appropriate management of the Queensland coastal zone?

Mr COMBEN: The coastal protection plan was a major promise made by the Government prior to the last election. In keeping with all promises made by the Labor Party, the Government is delivering on this one. The last Budget allocated \$750,000 to my department for the preparation of the coastal protection plan. Presently, I have been consulting the Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government, Mr Burns, the Minister for Primary Industries, Mr Casey, and the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development, Mr Hamill, to produce a Green Paper that I had hoped to release this week. However, because of the extent of consultation undertaken prior to its release—to include the Local Government Association of Queensland, developers, individual communities, conservation groups and even members of the Opposition—the Green Paper has been delayed. I hope to release it for public comment early in the new year. Arising out of that, the Government hopes to oversee proper coastal protection and management, which is something that never happened under the previous Government. Those 234 marinas, the coastal resorts, the canal estates and other projects that would have raped and pillaged the Queensland coast were allowed under the previous National Party Government. This Government is protecting the coast by declaring national parks, by the work of the Beach Protection Authority, and now by producing the coastal protection plan.

Transportation of School Students to Pialba State School

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Peak Downs.

Mr Lester: Oh!

Honourable members: Ha, ha!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am extremely pleased that the member "jumped".

Mr LESTER: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. And I thank honourable members for the ovation.

My first question without notice is directed to the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development.

Mr Hamill: Good.

Mr LESTER: Yes. It is no problem. It would be even better if he could answer it. I ask: will the Minister allow schoolchildren in the Dundowran/Craignish district in the Hervey Bay area to be given free bus travel to the Pialba State School, which they have been attending? I ask the question because of the building of the new—these names are hard to read—Kawungan State School, to which free bus travel will be allowed but which will not have the facilities such as special education that the Pialba State School has. Those parents simply want to know whether their children have the choice of free bus travel to each school. If the children do not, their parents would like to know why.

Mr HAMILL: Obviously, by the way in which he rendered that question in the House, the honourable member is in need of some special literacy classes himself. It is a serious matter that the honourable member cannot pronounce words such as "Kawungan", which is the name of the new school that has been built in the Hervey Bay area.

The point that needs to be made is that the honourable member for Isis has worked very hard on the matter. Because there was serious overcrowding at the Pialba State School, he has seen a new school come to fruition, which will be operating next year.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister to talk about transport.

Mr HAMILL: As I tried to interpret the honourable member's question, it related to school transport to Kawungan. The point is that a new school is opening and it will provide facilities which have been sorely needed in the Hervey Bay area. As we well realise, the population growth in that area has been significant and there has been severe overcrowding in the existing schools. Because of the opening of the new school, it is only sensible that students avail themselves of the new and very expensive facilities that have been provided. Certainly, we will continue to consult with the local community to ensure that the best possible school transport arrangements are arrived at to service that school.

My colleagues the Minister for Education and the member for Isis have both been working hard on this issue. We have been concerned that young children would be forced to change buses and be waiting around for another bus to take them on to the new primary school. We are very concerned that the most secure and appropriate transport arrangements are put in place. Because it is a new school, we are prepared to make special arrangements to enable access to school transport to be provided to the vast number of people who would take advantage of the new school.

Transportation of School Students to Pialba State School

Mr LESTER: I presume that that is both schools, is it?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Is that the honourable member's second question?

Mr LESTER: Well, he did not answer the first question.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am taking that as the honourable member's second question.

Mr LESTER: He did not really answer the first question.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will take that as the honourable member's second question.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Peak Downs will resume his seat. I am doing this to indicate to members that I will not allow members, after having asked a question, to have a second bite at the question. That will be regarded as the honourable member's second question. I call on the Minister for Transport to answer the question.

Mr HAMILL: I refer the honourable member to the answer to the first question.

Proposed Closure of Special Schools at Ipswich

Mr LIVINGSTONE: I ask the Minister for Education: is he aware of concern in the Ipswich community that the Department of Education plans to close special schools? Can he advise the House whether there is any truth in those rumours and what is the future of special education facilities in Ipswich?

Mr BRADY: Yes, I am aware of the unfounded rumours which are circulating in the Ipswich area about the supposed closure of special schools. The Education Department has no intention of closing those special schools. In fact, all existing special schools in the Ipswich region will be continuing for the foreseeable future. Our Government has a commitment to special education. It is important that the facilities and services in the Ipswich area be expanded. For children who need to attend a special school at Ipswich, a new teaching block will be constructed at the Ipswich Special School—it has nearly been completed—at a cost of \$400,000, and at the Ipswich West

Special School there is a program to spend \$600,000 on a remodelling, of which \$100,000 will be spent this financial year and the further half a million dollars in the next financial year. Those two initiatives certainly give the lie to the unfounded rumours circulating about the closure of the special schools.

Fire at Blair State School

Mr LIVINGSTONE: In directing a second question to the Minister for Education, I refer him to a fire at the Blair State School in my electorate on 28 October, and I ask: can he advise the House what provisions have been made for the students at that school since it was extensively damaged?

Mr BRADY: The students at the Blair State School were initially disrupted by the fire at the school. Although the fire destroyed two class rooms which were being used by Year 1 students, we were able to make available other space at the school to make sure that their education was only momentarily distracted. In fact, immediately after the fire, an architect from the Department of Administrative Services and senior officers from my department attended to plan for the future needs of the school. The damaged buildings have been demolished and the site has already been cleared. A plan has been drawn up to build at least four new teaching areas and improvements to the library and school administration facilities. As part of the consultative process, all interested parties will be involved in determining the best plans for the school. Discussions will be held with the p. and c. association and the principal. I am aware also of the honourable member's deep interest in the matter. He will be invited to attend the discussions to ensure that the plans that are finally determined will be in the best interests of the students at the school.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The time allotted for questions has elapsed.

At 3.30 p.m.,

SUPPLY

Twentieth Allotted Day—Reception of Resolutions

The Resolutions reported from Committee of Supply on 27 November were presented and, on motion of Mr De Lacy, received.

Adoption of Resolutions

The Resolutions being taken as read—

Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns—Treasurer) (3.31 p.m.): I move—

"That the Resolutions be now agreed to."

Motion agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS

Opening of Committee

Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns—Treasurer) (3.33 p.m.): I move—

- "(a) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1990-1991, a further sum not exceeding \$3,924,364,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland.
- (b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1990-1991, a further sum not exceeding \$5,509,280,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

- (c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1990-1991, a further sum not exceeding \$53,265,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund.
- (d) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1989-1990, the Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated, not exceeding \$58,935,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland.
- (e) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1989-1990, the Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated, not exceeding \$586,564,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.
- (f) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1991-1992, a sum not exceeding \$1,500,000,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland.
- (g) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1991-1992, a sum not exceeding \$2,800,000,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.
- (h) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1991-1992, a sum not exceeding \$10,000,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund."

Motion agreed to.

Resolutions reported, received and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

First Reading

A Bill, founded on the Resolutions reported from the Committee of Ways and Means, was presented and read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns—Treasurer) (3.37 p.m.): I move—
"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The Appropriation Bill (No. 2) primarily seeks to provide legislative force to the State Budget, which I presented to the House on 5 September. Specifically, it seeks approval for—
expenditure included in the Budget Estimates for this financial year;
unforeseen expenditure incurred during the last financial year; and
expenditure for the first two months of the 1991-92 financial year.

Accordingly, the Bill provides for expenditure of \$18,983.9m on Supply services for 1990-91 for the Consolidated Revenue Fund, Trust and Special Funds and the Loan Fund. That sum includes \$9,497m previously appropriated through the Appropriation Act 1989-90 (No.2) and the Appropriation Act 1990-91 (No.1). The Votes of expenditure for 1990-91 are provided in Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the Schedule to this Bill.

The Bill also provides appropriation for unforeseen expenditure of \$645.5m in 1989-90. While the unforeseen expenditure has had Executive authority, it now requires formal parliamentary approval. Parts 4 and 5 of the Schedule to the Bill, together with the document *Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated* that was tabled recently in the House provide details in this regard. In order to maintain Government services beyond 1990-91, the Bill provides Supply of \$4,310m for the first two months of 1991-92 until further Supply is granted through the first Appropriation Act next financial year.

I do not propose to occupy the time of the House in going over in detail the 1990-91 State Budget. Honourable members have had ample opportunity to review closely the Budget papers—the most comprehensive set of Budget papers ever presented in Queensland—to participate in the Budget debate, and to raise relevant issues in the context of the Estimates debate that, for the first time, covered all ministerial portfolios. With the State Budget having been scrutinised by both the Parliament and the community generally over the last three months, there is no doubt that it has passed all tests with flying colours.

The Budget has been widely, and justifiably, acclaimed. It has been variously described by respected sources as—

"the very model of fiscal rectitude";

"thoroughly sensible"; and

"one of the most sound strategies seen in a State Budget to date."

This Government has been able to deliver what no other State has been able to deliver—

Mr Stephan: Are you comparing it with Victoria?

Mr De LACY: I am comparing it with every other State in Australia. It has delivered—

a Budget with no new or increased taxes;

a Budget with a negative net financing requirement;

a Budget with no borrowings for social capital such as schools and hospitals;

a Budget with borrowings only for assets that can generate an income stream to meet debt-servicing costs; and

a Budget that maintains reserves sufficient to meet future superannuation liabilities and provides full actuarial funding of workers' compensation and motor-vehicle third-party insurance liabilities.

And even within this disciplined approach to fiscal management, the Government has moved on a number of fronts to commence its key social policy reforms for its first term in office, including—

an increase in funding for education by over 5 per cent in real per student terms;

a boost to resourcing for police services, including additional operational police in line with the commitment to an additional 1 200 operational police in our the first term;

a 60 per cent increase in funding for the Department of Environment and Heritage, including \$10m for the acquisition of land for national parks;

implementation of the seniors card;

significant housing initiatives, such as the Home Ownership Made Easier scheme;

700 additional staff for public hospitals; and

addressing the needs of women, including the establishment of a women's policy branch, additional child-care places and improvements to women's health services.

It has given me a great deal of pride to have introduced the first Labor Budget in Queensland for 34 years. This Budget has not only set the scene for the first term of the Goss Labor Government, but also has laid the foundation for a process of much-needed reform for the remainder of this decade. This Bill will confirm the Budget and what it stands for in legislation.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (3.43 p.m.): Today, I rise to speak in the debate on the Appropriation Bill (No.2) to indicate that the Opposition's attitude generally is one of support. As the Treasurer has indicated, this is the legislative process that puts in place the strategies that were announced earlier this year by the Treasurer in the Budget.

However, it would be remiss of me if I were to let this opportunity pass without making a further contribution and some suggestions that I believe the Government should be implementing in order to maintain a course that promotes this State in different ways during the very difficult times ahead and makes allowances for the difficulties that have already been experienced.

Although the Treasurer has taken great pride in announcing those new Budget initiatives, it is unfortunate that they do not include other initiatives that provide for job creation, capital expenditure and other incentives to kick-start or to maintain the State's economy. Unless the taxpayers are given new initiatives to enable them to take the bit between their teeth in order to make money and underpin the tax base, all of those very fine processes that the Treasurer has this afternoon spoken about cannot come to fruition.

I have said in this House before that this State quite clearly is embarking upon the Victorian experiment, and that is a very sad state of affairs. It is necessary to return to the days when Governments took the lead and created enthusiasm and market demand to allow the community to pull itself through the very difficult times that are being faced. Daily, job opportunities decrease and bankruptcies increase. The QCI quarterly pulse survey of employment levels states that 74 per cent of Queensland companies expect a decline in employment levels over the next six months. They are expecting a decline because they have had to plan for a decline. They know that the climate is not good, that the goods and services they provide will be put on the back-burner and that therefore the people who would normally be a part of their operations will not be required. The article continues—

"Through the Survey findings, the QCI predicts that employment figures will actually decline by .09 per cent over the next six month period. Respondents from all sectors minus the mining and transport areas, anticipated employment declines.

Increases in employment numbers within the tourism sector are based on seasonal trends. The increasing cost in transport, and the high interest rates could change the early trend which is emerging."

The article then deals with unemployment, and states—

"Eighty-six per cent of respondents anticipated unemployment levels would increase over the next six months. Only two per cent of respondents were optimistic for a decline in this figure over the short term period."

That is a tragic reflection of the attitude that prevails in the marketplace. It is an attitude that this Government should be taking into account in the framing of any Budget. In fact, I suggest to the Treasurer that the Government should bring down a mini-Budget to give the economy a kick-start.

Mr Hayward: Ha, ha!

Mr STONEMAN: Well may the member for Caboolture laugh. But who laughed when Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen brought in a package over and above the \$400m capital works program? An additional \$600m was injected into the economy of this State. That had a tremendous impact on confidence in this State and on job creation. Every member of this House has seen throughout the State the benefits that flowed from that \$1 billion injection of capital. But without that injection of capital, the State could have been in the same position as it is now. They are the sorts of initiatives that are required of Governments when the economy is in the state that it is now. The old adage, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going", is still true. That is exactly what should be happening. I do not denigrate the Treasurer for being proud of the points that he spoke about, but I have to question his statement that the comment has been made about the Budget that it is "one of the most sound strategies seen in a State Budget to date". Only history will judge that. In fact, I suggest that the strategies are not sound. The things that the Treasurer applauds in the Budget are not creating jobs or wealth. They do not create a foundation upon which the community can assist those who are most in need.

The Treasurer stated also—

"This Government has been able to deliver what no other State has been able to deliver . . ."

He then listed five points, which I will not reiterate. Those five points have been in place in this State for the last three decades. They have been part and parcel of Queensland's success. Yet the Premier is constantly proclaiming that they are unique and that this Budget is fiscally sound. The fact is that those principles are a mirror image of those that were set in place through the years. In tandem with those principles, there is also a requirement for innovative thinking and innovative kick-starting of the kind that occurred a few years ago when Sir Joh introduced a widely proclaimed package which injected so much into this State but which did not cost the taxpayer a single dollar. On the contrary, it not only enabled many, many taxpayers to continue in their jobs, but also allowed companies that were supplying building and structural materials to grow and prosper. The multiplier effect went on and on. That is the sort of thing that needs to be addressed when the management of this State is being considered. When times are tough, an innovative and positive approach has to be taken. That creates confidence and jobs. As I said, it has a multiplier effect. People become enthusiastic. Sadly, that enthusiasm is missing.

I would need four times the 83 minutes that remain to me in this debate to read from one newspaper the list of things that are happening in relation to the economy of this nation. An article on the front page of the *Australian* states "Farmers' terms of trade plummet to all-time low". One headline that refers to the Kern Corporation, a major and very proud Queensland company, states that Kern buildings worth \$60m are to go in an assets sell-off. The company has to do that in order to survive. When a company has to sell its assets in order to survive, new jobs are not being created and new construction is not being undertaken. If there had been a recurrence of that initiative of a few years ago, when extra money was injected into the capital works program, companies such as Kern could have been part and parcel of that operation and could have continued without selling off their assets.

The headline in the "Business" section of today's *Courier-Mail*, states "Treasurer rules out big coal rail cuts". I guess that is probably not unreasonable. Nevertheless, along with problems resulting from those cuts, many, many businesses have to cope with rapid increases in taxes and charges across-the-board. There is no such thing as a CPI level of increase. Small businesses, large businesses, the rural community and the whole gamut of society are affected. I have here an article which states—

"Taxes and charges increased 169 per cent for the 10 years to September 1990, interest payments rose by 245 per cent and electricity costs went up 103 per cent."

While I am speaking about electricity prices, I will refer to an article about the effects that the SEQEB voluntary employment agreement and contract structure has had on consumers. I do not have the article with me, but I am familiar with it because it was very soundly written. No doubt it was drawn to the Treasurer's attention. It indicated that, since 1985, those initiatives, which have been torn down by this Government, saved the consumer \$21m. That \$21m did not have to come out of the taxpayer's pocket.

The report to which I refer indicated that, if the same strategies had been in place across the nation during that period from 1985 to the present, \$851m would have been saved in electricity generation charges. SEQEB was able to reduce the cost of kilowatt operations. From memory, I believe it was reduced from 1.69c to something like 1.34c per kilowatt hour, which represents a significant saving. That is reflected in the \$21m to which I referred. It is interesting to note that, at the bottom of that article, a SEQEB spokesman said that the savings had nothing to do with voluntary employment agreements or contract arrangements. Blind Freddy knows and acknowledges that that is exactly what occurred.

As to electricity charges—I am particularly concerned about the suggestion that Queensland should become part of a national grid system. If that occurred, the efficiencies

that have been built up in Queensland would be lost and Queensland would be watered down with the rest of the nation. The freeze on electricity charges, which was put in place by the previous National Party Government, and the equalisation of power charges across the State were the most innovative and forward-thinking moves of any Government in this nation. The former National Party Government is to be applauded for that. I must admit that that occurred prior to my entry into this Parliament. I give credit to the members of that coalition Government who were forward thinking and innovative enough to introduce a unique power-equalisation structure. No matter whether one lives in Boulia or in Brisbane, one pays exactly the same electricity charges. That is a most important generator—and I say that in both senses—of confidence.

The Treasurer's officers must view with considerable concern the processes that would water down electricity generation benefits in Queensland. The Treasurer must be thinking seriously about the impact of that legislation that was introduced some time ago by the Minister for "Revenge", Mr Warburton, which turned back the clock 30 or 40 years to the late fifties. Consumers have benefited by the actions of the former Government. Queensland no longer suffers from electricity failures or power black-outs. Power has been provided throughout the State without a hitch. I pay tribute to the SEQEB workers and everyone in management right across-the-board who have given so much and grasped the nettle. Unfortunately, consumers have been rewarded by having their clocks turned back 30 or 40 years.

The article in the *Australian* titled "Farmers' terms of trade plummet to an all-time low" could well be titled "Business community's terms of trade plummet to an all-time low". This issue affects everyone. People tend to think that, when one section of the community is affected, somehow or other it can be separated from the rest of the community. The fact of the matter is that what happens in Queen Street affects what happens at Boulia, and vice versa.

Mr Schwarten: Boulia!

Mr STONEMAN: I am sure that, one day, Mr Schwarten will go out there and discover that it is a wonderful place with wonderful people. Sadly, the people of Boulia are increasingly battling without the support of the Government. Families are being forced to leave that area. I cite Boulia as an example, not necessarily as the only place in this State that has a problem.

The article to which I refer states—

"Government taxes have risen 14 times faster than wheat prices."

That is incredible. It continues—

"There was a 12 per cent increase in government rates and taxes . . . almost double the overall rate of farm inflation or business inflation of 6.8 per cent."

That is a damning indictment of the management of this nation and the processes that do not recognise that the producers of our wealth—people who work in manufacturing industries and rural communities—must be assisted to survive during difficult times. I realise that, at the State level, it is impossible for the Treasurer to do everything that he would like to do, regardless of the Government that he represents. There is a limit on State powers and a State's capacity to assist. During the past 8 to 10 years of the Hawke Government, the Queensland Government was able to assist largely by way of a number of measures that softened the blow. As a result, Queensland is still regarded as a place in which people can continue to invest, despite the Hawke/Keating operation in Canberra.

I turn now to some of the costs that have increased at the national level. During the past 10 years, machinery prices have increased by 114 per cent. Spares and maintenance are becoming an important consideration in the community. Taxis, transport trucks and refrigerated vehicles are not being replaced; they are being repaired because people cannot afford to replace them in these harsh economic times. During the past 10 years, spares and maintenance prices have increased by 124 per cent. The cost of buildings

and fencing has increased by 101 per cent. Farm fertiliser costs have increased by 89 per cent. As well, marketing costs have increased by 83 per cent. That sad trend is evident throughout the community. It is particularly sad to note that the Kern Corporation is planning to sell off \$60m worth of assets. I hope and trust that it can use that money to continue to secure its very vital part in this State's future. The Kern Corporation, which had its beginnings in Townsville, has grown to become one of the great companies of this State. Unfortunately, during these troubled times no-one can continue to absorb the current economic mess.

Another article in the Rural Mail section of the *Courier-Mail* stated that the wool industry is panicking over the reserve price of wool. Who would want to be involved in the wool industry? Unfortunately, one of my colleagues has left the Chamber.

Mr Welford: You would make a good proof-reader for Queensland Newspapers.

Mr STONEMAN: It would be well worth while for the member for Stafford to listen to this. I am sure that the member for Warrego will not mind my citing these figures. A few months ago, the 10 500 sheep on his property were valued at approximately \$160,000. Unfortunately, in common with many Government members, including members of Cabinet who agreed to imposing the huge increases in rentals on Crown land, the member for Stafford thinks that everyone who lives in the rural community is a millionaire. However, the flock owned by the member for Warrego would not be worth enough money now to buy three farm motor bikes. Those bikes would cost more than \$10,000. In the past 10 years, the cost of machinery has increased by 114 per cent, but people must still purchase the machinery to run their businesses—the cold rooms, motor bikes, trucks etc. In a few months, the value of that flock has diminished in value so much that it would not buy three agricultural motor bikes.

Mr Welford: You are going on with all this doom and gloom. You said you were going to make some suggestions to the Treasurer, but as yet you haven't.

Mr STONEMAN: I have. I said, firstly, that an innovative approach is required, as was taken a number of years ago by the then Premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen who, in conjunction with Cabinet and Treasury, injected \$600m of capital works programs into Queensland. That is the type of approach that is required.

Mr Welford: How does that help the sheep farmer?

Mr STONEMAN: I will make a point that is obviously lost on honourable members on the Government side. The economy impacts upon every Queenslanders. Events in Queen Street, Brisbane, have an impact on western Queensland, and vice versa. All areas of Queensland are locked into one economic structure. It does not matter where one looks. The people who shear sheep create jobs for rouseabouts. The wool must be transported, which creates jobs in the manufacture of trucks in the cities. The trucks must then be maintained by local garage-owners in the country. Spare parts are sent out from Brisbane or Melbourne, or wherever they come from. Tyres must be manufactured somewhere. A multiplying effect is created. Then, the people who earn money by that production visit places such as the Gold Coast. They go on holidays, invest their money and buy goods on the Gold Coast. If they did not have the capacity to do those things, the Gold Coast would suffer. Therefore, when Boulia suffers, the Gold Coast suffers, and vice versa.

Mr Welford interjected.

Mr STONEMAN: From that brief overview, I hope that the honourable member for Stafford understands how the economy is vitally important to everyone in this State. I realise that the honourable member is a young man who is just finding his way. Hopefully, in time, he will understand. Sadly, by the time that he is in a decision-making position, he will be on the Opposition side.

An article in today's paper states that sugar-producers face a 30 per cent decrease in the price of sugar. The problem is that the sweets-manufacturers do not receive the

benefit of those reductions and consumers still pay the escalated cost after the sweets are manufactured; they are not receiving the benefit of the price decreases. Unfortunately, in the current economic climate, it is impossible for those price decreases to flow through to consumers.

Signals must be sent out. I see the member for Springwood shaking her head. I am not maligning her. This is part and parcel of the process. Yesterday, an article in the *Townsville Bulletin* stated that the Government had said "No" to a wetlands resort.

Mr Hayward: Are you still proof-reading a newspaper?

Mr STONEMAN: Yes. I have another article, which is headlined "Bank to chop 1 000 jobs". That will have a flow-on effect. Confidence is gone. That story is most important. The Government must give confidence. For those members who are unaware of it, I point out that the Secret Harbour operation is a vital development that is proposed for the Hinchinbrook area of north Queensland. My colleague the member for Hinchinbrook has played an important role in trying to organise the investigation leases so that a sensible and sensitive process can be adopted in that development. Before the last election, Mr Casey visited the area and discovered that the local member was in a lot of trouble. That community has an ageing population and is based only on rural industry. It needs another industry that will create jobs for young people. Unfortunately, the mono-economic structure of that community cannot provide a job base for the many young people who live there and who would have worked on farms if the jobs were available. The council, together with a group of businessmen and a developer from Western Australia identified an opportunity near Ingham. On 4 November 1989, an article in the *Herbert River Express* contained a letter from the Minister for Primary Industries and was headlined "Goss in a position to stop the rot". The Minister for Primary Industries gave support to the process that would allow the development to be investigated. An investigation lease was required, and was finally approved. In fact, I was the responsible Minister at the time and, in concert with my colleague the Minister for Lands, Mr Harper, I took the matter to Cabinet, which allowed an investigation lease. Both Mr Casey and the present Premier approved of the plan. They said it was part and parcel of survival, because they wanted to get the ALP candidate up.

An Opposition member: They didn't get him there.

Mr STONEMAN: They did not get him there. Instead, one of the best and most supportive members was voted in. But let me continue with this because it is a vital component of what drives the economy. Promises were made that there would be an investigation lease. After all, that is all it was. It was an investigation to see what processes were required to structure the resort and to take into consideration all of the environmental aspects and so on. Because a large area of mangroves was involved, they were vital components. It was a huge opportunity 110 kilometres north of Townsville. This Government, instead of applauding that process and saying, "Let us continue with that process", then said, "All bets are off. Our man did not get up." All of the headlines are contained in this very well put together booklet. It makes the claim, "If you elect our man, we will help Hinchinbrook."

Mr Rowell: They re-offered the lease at the end of January.

Mr STONEMAN: Yes, and now let me outline what is happening. It must be remembered that hundreds of young people now have to leave the district in which they grew up because job opportunities have diminished. The shire chairman, Councillor Ray Brown, and his council have been most enthusiastic in trying to do something to get this job creator going. They were aware of all the environmental impact statements and studies that were required. The present situation is that all bets are off and the Goss Government is saying that it will not be involved any more. It has made it impossible. The developer in Perth, Boncourt, which I understand has no connection with Mr Alan

Bond, is in an unenviable situation. Let me read a memo written by the secretary of the member for Hinchinbrook, who passed it on to me. It reads—

"Helen just rang with the following message to keep you up to date on the development situation—

1. Graham Cooper phoned this morning to advise that Elizabeth Merrick from Wayne Goss's office said that Mr Goss did not want to talk to anybody unless they talked on 'dry land and no marina'."

What is the good of having a development on the coast if it has to be on dry land with no marina? That is just ludicrous. The memo continues—

- "2. Goss's office is not returning any phone calls now to the developer or the Hinchinbrook Shire Council."

That is shameful.

Mr Rowell: They are not even listening.

Mr STONEMAN: That is right. They are not evening listening. They are not concerned about the young people up there. They are not concerned about this tragic situation. This memo continues—

- "3. It is the developer's view that you will have to talk about this in the House."

I agree, but what is the point of talking unless sensitive ears are listening? Why is the Government adopting this killjoy attitude, this attitude of, "We will save the world from itself"? It had the opportunity. It had an investor up there who had identified the location and believed that, with a rearrangement of some of the mangrove areas, it could work its way through it. It believed it had a development that was appropriate and would have been of world class.

Mr Rowell: It was worth \$1 billion.

Mr STONEMAN: It was worth \$1 billion, but what did we get? Goss's office was not returning any phone calls to the developer or to the Hinchinbrook Shire Council. If that is the Government's idea of a consultative process, what will happen in the future? What will people in the electorate of Southport think? They depend on development and job creation. It is the mecca and magnet in Australia. Small businessmen and large businessmen have got their backs to the wall.

Mr Veivers: It has come to a grinding halt.

Mr STONEMAN: That is exactly right. What they need is help but what do they see—a 39 per cent increase in land tax. The Gold Coast is one of the main areas in this State for the collection of land tax. A huge amount of land tax comes from that area. Yet people there are getting the message that the Government no longer supports development and will not even let developers investigate proposals. What the Government is effectively saying is, "Don't ring us up." I pay tribute to Councillor Ray Brown and the councillors on the Hinchinbrook Shire Council and to the many businessmen whom I know for the support they have given their local member, Marc Rowell, and previously to Mr Row.

Mr Rowell: I tried to arrange two deputations to see the Premier and the appropriate Ministers and they were not acceded to.

Mr STONEMAN: That is exactly the situation. It is shameful. This is what we have been talking about, and we will continue to talk about it because the community must be given the message. The businesspeople are getting the message. They know that they are having to put off staff, that they are getting bills that they cannot pay, that they are going to the wall, and that they are closing up their shops. What they need is a signal from the Government that it knows what is going on and that it will communicate—that it will talk. We do not want a Government that says that it will not ring people back. What about Mr Cooper from Boncourt in Western Australia? Here is a major

developer who wants to spend money in this State but he is not even able to communicate with the people who make the decisions. It is a sad and sorry day for this State. Unfortunately, it is happening all over the State. Is it any wonder that the Kern Corporation considers that the only way out of the problem is to rationalise, sell up some assets, disappear into a hole for a while, hope that there will be a change of Government and hope that there will be a return to the days when things happened in Queensland.

I again pay a tribute to the people involved in the Secret Harbour development. I also acknowledge the work done by the people of the Taylors Beach Progress Association who have had concerns. When I have spoken to them, I have found them to be reasonable. I walked onto the beach and looked at the whole area before I made a considered judgment and took to Cabinet the proposal to grant the licence. All of that has gone by the wayside. I do not know who will find some other means to help that community.

Mr Rowell: It will shake business confidence right throughout the north.

Mr STONEMAN: The member is absolutely correct. After being dragged along this far, why would anyone bother? I do not want to take up too much time of the House. I noted the other night that land tax has increased by 39 per cent over the 1989-90 figure to \$190m as a result of escalating land values. Unfortunately, land values will now be depressed and people will be stuck with high taxes, a low market and no way of escaping. For the first time in many, many years, relief from the escalation in land tax has not been given and this must come out of the community pocket. Small businesses are suffering hardship and there is a window of opportunity for this Government to slash the tax considerably. The Government could introduce a mini-Budget, thereby recognising the position the State is in. This Labor Government has failed the business sector abysmally. Its performance is sad and unfortunately this means that there is more to come. Payroll tax is expected to jump by 8.7 per cent over the financial year. The September-quarter collections totalled \$188.2m compared with \$179.5m in the same quarter last year. Queensland is a low-tax State, which has given it a competitive edge. This is no thanks whatsoever to the Treasurer because all he has done is rubber-stamp the principles laid down in the past and not the innovative processes of the past.

The necessary reforms and kick-start of the economy cannot be achieved overnight. These things have to be worked on. Exemptions levels have to be increased. It is a commitment of the next National Party Government that these taxes will be phased out. The long-term objective must be to phase them out and to remove the impost on communities, particularly those in the south-east corner of the State. Payroll and land tax are two of the most invidious taxes that are imposed. In fact, payroll tax was flick-passed from the Federal Government at the start of World War II. I concede that it has now become a major component of the State Budget and is extremely difficult to remove. Many businesspeople feel cheated because they employ a staff of 20 and pay payroll tax, and some law firms employ only a few people, pay no payroll tax and make substantial profits. Some people are earning huge amounts of money by employing only a small staff and not paying much tax. I refer to a little known but major problem that occurs in the Bowen electorate just south of my electorate. If Mr Smyth was awake he would recognise the problem. It refers to the horticultural industry in his electorate. The people involved in that industry pay unbelievably high wages. Some individuals pay up to \$1m a year in payroll tax, which is quite phenomenal. It is a huge impost. The only way they have of overcoming the problem is to reduce employment.

I am not simply concerned about problems in my electorate, Mr Veivers' electorate or other National Party members' electorates; I am concerned about the economy of the whole State and this tax impacts across the whole State in every area. The Government must address all these matters. The Labor State Government has made more economic decisions after the Budget than it did during the framing of the Budget itself. Unfortunately, the Minister for Primary Industries is not in the Chamber, but if the Government can argue effectively for a port or a scheme that will provide Cabinet Ministers with a

car that they can keep, and which will be paid for out of taxpayers' money—as was done by the Minister for Primary Industries—then surely the Government can do something to help the business sector. Perhaps the current Treasurer should be replaced by the Minister for Primary Industries, because that Minister is certainly innovative, as can be seen from the Peel report and Caspalp, which were very innovative operations. Perhaps he is the guy who we need.

It is a shame that original thinking was not applied to the rural assistance package. This was nothing but political rhetoric and posturing and, in the main, a grab bag of inconsequential issues. Truck registrations were not mentioned, but increases in truck registrations impact on farmers.

Mr De Lacy: Why don't you sit down, you mug? You are talking rubbish.

Mr STONEMAN: I am merely stating a few home truths. After all the backflips and posturing about ministerial expenses, the Minister for Transport stated that the expenditure was for departmental staff. I was sorry to hear that one of his personal staff members—and I do not know if my colleagues are aware of this fact—apparently threw in the job of press secretary and slammed the door as he left. That is a sad reflection on the Minister's operations. The Minister for Transport is very good at creative accounting and has some runs on the board for the Treasury portfolio.

Mr De Lacy: You are just making a fool of yourself.

Mr STONEMAN: The Treasurer may not like it, but he has to cop it. Motor vehicle registration fees that were previously paid into Main Roads funds are now paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund. At one time, every dollar went back where it came from, that is, back onto the roads of this State. These funds are estimated to be \$351.2m. The overall area of licences and permits, including registration fees, has been the subject of a huge increase. Receipts for the quarter totalled \$139.5m, compared with \$47.9m for the same quarter last year. That is an incredible increase that comes at a time when the number of new car registrations are plummeting. People cannot afford to purchase cars and the people who have jobs in the car industry are the losers.

I will return to the topic of the rural package for a moment and make some comments on it because this package has been a major component of the Government's activities during the past couple of months. Government members chide me for quoting from papers, but every day the Premier selectively quotes not only from papers but also from letters that have been received from various people, and he omits to mention those that do not reflect credit on him. Let me say that the first measure provides for an immediate injection of \$5m into QIDC funding, with provision for a further \$5m later in the year. This measure will increase the loan-raising capacity of QIDC's commercial and concessional borrowing programs by \$150m. When will the second \$5m be injected? Will that be done later during the current calendar year, or will it be done during the current financial year? I sincerely direct that question to the Treasurer. The result of this scheme will be that the short-term loan-raising capacity of the QIDC will be increased by \$75m. Hard-nosed agricultural economists advise that this scheme is "nothing very wonderful and will not help rural industries very much." Those statements are the types of statements that the Premier should be reading out, instead of selectively citing favourable views. The majority of the funds will be lent out at a commercial rate, and that rate will ensure that the QIDC will make a commercial profit. This policy was part and parcel of the announcement that was supposed to herald such a wonderful scheme for primary industry in this State. The QIDC has moved towards being just another commercial operation. The Commonwealth Bank is now regarded as being a more appropriate financial institution for the rural sector than the QIDC. People come into my electorate office and say to me, "Hang on, can't we do better than that? We might as well just go straight across the road to our old bank." This is a fact of life, because these people are put through a very rigorous investigative process and run the risk of getting their names in the paper simply because they want to borrow from QIDC. It is

little wonder that these people are going back to the usual financial institutions. Customers are taking their accounts away from QIDC to other banks.

The proposal by the Government will not alleviate the high interest rate burden from which primary producers and rural businesses are suffering. The QIDC is no better than the commercial banks and, in some instances, is not as competitive. The criteria to obtain a concessional loan are difficult to meet. This initiative will not help. Many people need more than money and some people already are carrying too much debt. For six months or so, the Government should declare a moratorium on interest and arrears, and a discount on freight rates for transportation of grain and other rural products.

A Government member interjected.

Mr STONEMAN: Honourable members opposite should listen to what I am saying because these are positive proposals that could well be brought forward in a mini-Budget. The Government should produce a more substantial package instead of throwing money at the QIDC which provides that organisation with more money to operate as the ALP's de facto State bank. Thanks to Mr Polichronis, that is what the QIDC has become. It is interesting that this Labor Government has chosen to take that course, especially when it is remembered that, in the past, members of the Labor Opposition—and, indeed, the present Premier—said that the rural sector was getting too much financial assistance and the QIDC was too loose with rural lending. Labor's accusations have not stood up to scrutiny.

The third part of the package was the targeting of Government assistance schemes, which is purely administrative and provides no immediate help. The restructuring of schemes to eliminate previous overlapping is a good move, and I commend the Treasurer for that. A number of schemes had been set up for a specific purpose and should now be wound up. For example, there was a vine-pulling scheme for grape-growers, which recompensed those growers for the cost of getting rid of poorly producing stock. The Primary Industry Product Enhancement Scheme—PIPES—fixed loan ceilings at \$250,000. There was nothing new in this proposal, but what is new is that the ceiling has been firmly fixed. Prior to this proposal, there was no official ceiling, but a restriction of approximately \$250,000 was set. There is now a firm \$250,000 ceiling, which in some instances does not allow for any flexibility. The Labor Party says that in 1990-91, an injection of \$11.5m will be made into the project, resulting in an overall current balance of \$30m. I find that very interesting. In the 1989-90 Budget, the previous Government stated that total funds of \$20.8m would be provided to the QIDC for Government equity, administration, interest subsidies on rural loans and other assistance measures. As part of the \$50m commitment for PIPES, which was established in 1988-89, a \$21.5m provision and a further \$15m for a venture capital scheme were announced in 1988-89. Under the Labor package, the best that PIPES can provide is \$30m. It sounds grand to announce that amount on its own, but in reality, and by comparison, it means nothing.

The soil conservation project loan will be made available at a concessional rate of 8 per cent, and that is good. However, the problem will be that few people are undertaking soil conservation works at this point because they cannot afford to start the machines. The hard facts are that it is unlikely that they will be borrowing money for that purpose when present debts have to be paid. It is quite clear from the low concessional rate that this is not a big ticket item because, if it was, it would not be receiving a low concessional acknowledgment. If the member for Stafford were in his usual place and listening to me, I could mention another innovative process. During the term of the previous National Party Government, I obtained Cabinet's agreement to establish three chairs in land care; one in the Darling Downs area, one in the Brisbane/Moreton area, and one in north Queensland. This is an innovative package that could be taken up at this stage. The proposal was to fund the cost of establishing those three chairs. At that time, each chair was estimated to cost \$65,000 per year for the salary of the professors involved, and the scheme was to extend over a 10-year period. It was an incredibly generous gesture because it involved \$190,000 a year for 10 years. What did the Labor Government

do when it came to office? It started to talk about land care and caring for natural resources, but it wiped the proposal from the agenda. The chairs in land care have not been established, and there has been no opportunity to use the innovative processes of universities and other tertiary institutions throughout this State. As I said earlier, the 8 per cent concessional rate sounds generous, but it must be balanced against the Government's user-pays principle. Thus the detailed work on ground surveying for soil conservation works provided as a service in the past by the Department of Primary Industries is now a cost. We no longer have those services. The Government is robbing Peter to pay Paul. The increase in the loan ceiling for the young farmers' scheme from \$150,000 to \$250,000 is good, but it does not mean that more young people will be enabled to take up farming.

Mr Veivers: We will have no farmers at all.

Mr STONEMAN: Exactly. Applicants must have equity, and it is understood that it is still at 40 per cent. What young farmer in this day and age will be able to have a 40 per cent equity to obtain that loan, which is being touted as extremely generous? I will be interested to hear if the number of loans granted to young farmers increases. That is the key point. It is all very well to have the loan mechanism in place, but it is the access to them—the criteria, the framework under which the applications are made—that is so critical.

The rural housing loan ceiling will be increased from \$50,000 to \$150,000. That has brought a wry smile to the faces of the rural sector. It is not a rural assistance package measure; it shows no feeling on the part of the Government and it is misdirected. That is another sad part of the con of that nine-point plan.

The fourth point of the package is that the State Treasurer is to make a formal submission to the Commonwealth Government for an increase in the total amount of Rural Adjustment Scheme funding nationally, as well as for a larger share for Queensland. Currently, Queensland receives only 16 per cent of rural assistance funding, despite having 20 per cent of Australia's farming establishment and 24 per cent of Australia's gross farm indebtedness. This proposal is sound, but there is an irony about it. It gives the lie to what the Labor Party in opposition and members of the Federal Labor Party said about the previous Government being too free with funds from the rural assistance scheme. That is quite amazing. It is another backflip.

The fifth point about maintenance and some expansion of farm financial counselling is worth while, but it will not help with the basic and immediate problem of high interest rates and debt. Most people in rural business and small business in the community do not need to be told that they are on the slippery slide down into an economic morass. They know that. The rural counselling processes are very good, but they are even better when support is extended to give people confidence to invest in order to improve and enlarge their operations and take advantage of some of the innovative advice given by those counsellors.

The sixth point of the nine-point package, which relates to the extension of the QIDC branch network, is basic, routine administration and, at the end of the day, it is an insignificant matter.

The seventh point, regarding the recommendation not to impose liability on stock-owners whose stock are involved in traffic accidents until there is further consultation, is cautiously welcomed. All it does is put off the day of decision. I do not know what the end result of that will be. I fear that it will be a fencing process across the State, or it will bring about a huge escalation in insurance that will cripple any stock-owner so affected. I do not believe that it is understood. However, at least it has been put on hold, and I commend the Government for that.

The eighth point, which deals with the review of the stamp duty legislation so that double duty is not paid in an endeavour to effect a rationalisation of farm properties is not an assistance measure, but it is good to know that it is being reviewed. I again commend the Government for that.

The ninth point, that a submission is being prepared by the State Treasurer for the Commonwealth Government on a general allocation of funds for Queensland under the RAS, is a repeat of package point No. 4—a rehash to make it look good—and, therefore, is inconsequential and simply window-dressing to a weak package.

The second point of the package relates to the Wolfe report and states that the Government has adopted that report in principle, subject to consultation with relevant groups. On the matter of the specific recommendation on the increase in pastoral and grazing leases, there will be a two-year moratorium, and changes after that are to be phased in over a three-year period. The recommendations of the Wolfe report were always going to be phased in. In other words, it means that in three years' time there will be steep increases in land rents. The immediate problem is the significant increase in rents for some land-holders as from 1 January 1991 due to this Labor Government's changing from 10 years to 3 years the period for the phasing in of the increases contained in the Carter report formula. The scrapping of the phasing-in period means that some lessees will face increases of 100 per cent per beast for sheep and 200 per cent per beast for cattle. In the current economic climate, that measure is a politically insensitive move.

The Wolfe report recommendations are a concern for the future, but the Eaton argument to standardise rental dates for bureaucratic reasons and change the Carter formula fails to acknowledge the growing financial pressures facing primary producers. I say that with all sincerity. It is incredible when primary producers who are faced with the predicament that I talked about in relation to the value of stock—I refer to the member for Warrego—now have to cop that additional rent when their income has been totally slashed. It is sad.

Mr Dollin: \$2,000 a year for 30 000 sheep is not too bad.

Mr STONEMAN: I missed the interjection by the honourable member for Maryborough. However, it seemed to me that he was a bit off course.

Mr Welford: He said \$1,000 a year for 10 000 or 20 000 sheep is not very expensive.

Mr STONEMAN: I heard that interjection. Let me say that \$1,000 is incredibly expensive if you get no income from those sheep. I just made the point that we have a stockpile of millions of bales of wool; the costs of running the stock have to be met and the costs of running the properties have to be met. I would like to find an instance in which it would be only \$1,000. However, let me say that it is a fixed charge on top of all the other fixed charges such as shire rates and high interest rates.

Mr Johnson: They haven't got the \$1,000 now.

Mr STONEMAN: Exactly. If they have not got the \$1,000, it is an incredible amount of money. I will conclude speaking about the famous nine-point package about which so much was touted. The people are now finding that the Goss Labor Government's rural assistance package shows a superficial understanding—as the member for Stafford indicated—about the short-term downturn in the rural sector. By April or May 1991, when wheat and wool returns will be cut in half, primary producers will be facing much hardship. Wool-growers will end up with some 40 per cent net of their gross totals and, in many instances, because of the deregulation of the wheat industry by the Federal Government, wheat-growers will incur losses.

That brings me to the sugar industry. In the last few months, since the Federal Government changed the tariff package, \$12.5m worth of sugar has come into Australia, and the price has gone from \$105 a tonne down to \$95 a tonne. That is carrying coals to Newcastle. Sugar is being brought into Australia when our farmers are desperate to supply it. Because of world market conditions, the price of sugar is falling. That will affect the whole economy, but it is not being recognised by this Government in any way, shape or form.

Mr Rowell: And the new IAC report that will come out about tariffs.

Mr STONEMAN: That is correct. The studies on the new tariffs are out. This nine-point package is a cruel hoax. The media management of the package was nothing but the work of tricksters. There is no immediate help for those people who need it most. The \$150m to increase the loan-raising capacity for commercial and concessional loans is of little consequence to the immediate problems of high interest rates. The latest statistics of the Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics show that the index of farmers' terms of trade, that is, the ratio of farm costs to commodity prices, is at an all-time low of 30 per cent—lower than it was at the beginning of the decade. In the light of these figures, I have to say that the nine-point package, announced the other day with such pomp and ceremony, is superficial, lightweight and lacking in understanding.

A couple of other points need to be made. The Government can assist by answering its mail and its telephone calls and by sending out signals to the community that it is prepared to help by acknowledging that the fuel crisis throughout the world is having a particularly vicious effect in Australia and, in particular, in Queensland. I mention again that developer from the Ingham area. At no stage has this Government given any indication of its support for, or its understanding of, primary producers and businesspeople throughout the nation who are hurting. Everyone is affected. I have a daughter who works in the city. She is finding that the cost of fuel is becoming prohibitive—

Mr Littleproud: The cost of fuel has effectively doubled.

Mr STONEMAN: Exactly. The cost of fuel has effectively doubled.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! If the member for Condamine wants to interject, he should do so from his correct seat.

Mr STONEMAN: I make the point that small business throughout the length and breadth of this State is in dire straits. Large businesses all over the place are collapsing. Commodity prices in every area are falling. Car sales are down and, obviously, job opportunities are rapidly diminishing. What is needed is a sensitive Government that acknowledges that the people who pay the taxes in this State, who create the wealth, need to be supported at this most difficult time.

The Government has implemented some commendable initiatives and has said, "We want to be soft and caring." However, I again make the point that one cannot be soft and caring unless one has the money with which to be soft and caring. There is no way that the taxpayers in Mr Veivers' electorate are going to be there to pay the increased taxes—including payroll tax and land tax—rents and charges. The famous 572 charges that were increased have hit the whole community. Where in this Appropriation Bill is the support for small business? Where is the support for large business? Where is the real support for any business? The Government merely makes the statement that it will examine social justice, and makes other statements about being soft and caring. That is of no use when people are hungry and they have no shelter, which is what is happening in the business community throughout this State. At the end of the day, that is the problem that the Government should be addressing, which it has not addressed, and which it obviously has decided not to address. Now is the time for an innovative rethink. Now is the time to learn from the experiences of the past, the good management of previous Governments, and to provide approximately \$500m or \$600m, as was done a few years ago, to create jobs for school-leavers, who must be wondering what they are going to do. They cannot stay at school forever. Young people want to leave school and get jobs, but the jobs do not exist. Some sort of a kick-start process is needed.

Mr HAYWARD (Caboolture) (4.43 p.m.): It is a pleasure to join this debate on the Appropriation Bill (No. 2). The Budget brought down by this Government is a disciplined Budget. Tight fiscal management has been coupled with key social policy reforms. Most importantly, it has been received very positively by the community of Queensland and by the community of Australia. Honourable members have just heard from the shadow Treasurer, who said the same things that he has said seven or eight times before. He had no contribution to make and he offered no solutions to the problems.

Mr Prest: All he does is change the dates on them.

Mr HAYWARD: Exactly. He pulls out the same old newspaper clippings. One would think that he would at least find some new ones.

The shadow Treasurer said that the Government should be sending out signals. Those members of the Government who could keep awake awaited his suggestions, but he was absolutely bereft of any ideas. His only suggestion—I think he made it 46 times in the 52 minutes-odd for which he spoke—was that the Government should kick-start the economy. That is all he could say. What did he mean by kick-starting the economy? No suggestions were made about what the Government should do, where it should go or anything else. All that the shadow Treasurer could say was that the Government should kick-start the economy.

Mr Smyth: When he says that, he also says you have got to keep the bit between your teeth.

Mr HAYWARD: I thank the honourable member for that interjection. The shadow Treasurer also said that while one is kick-starting the economy, one has to keep the bit between one's teeth—whatever that means. He has absolutely no idea. What is he really saying when he talks about kick-starting the economy? Is he talking about more hand-outs? Is that what he is really on about? He went on about people being given cheap loans. What the shadow Treasurer has to understand is what this Government is about and what the community of Queensland wants. It wants a fair-dinkum, disciplined Government, and that is what it has got, a Government that delivers tight fiscal management.

I have forgotten what the member for Burdekin's idea was—this signal to kick-start the economy. It is from an economic philosophy that has been tried, tried, tried, and proved to be wrong, wrong, wrong—absolutely wrong. However, something even worse happens when Mr Stoneman regurgitates his old newspaper clippings. What point did he then reach? When he could not find another newspaper clipping, I noticed that he indulged in a bit of personal abuse and slander.

Mr Littleproud: What are you doing? What are you up to?

Mr HAYWARD: The honourable member has not heard it, yet! Honourable members know the snide and nasty little remarks that the member for Burdekin makes. I am going to restrain myself from making some about him because, in the last year, as I travelled around Queensland there was one statement that I heard continually—the electorate of Queensland is sick of personal abuse and slander, and the community is sick of Mr Stoneman's snide and nasty remarks. He made comments, but he has absolutely no ideas, no contribution and no signals, except 46 kick-starts and one—I forget what it was.

Mr Smyth: One bit between the teeth.

Mr HAYWARD: And one bit between the teeth. It is absolutely pathetic. It is hard to believe. His solution to everything, which is a wrong solution and a tired solution, is when in trouble, go straight into people's pockets. There is nothing innovative about that and there is absolutely nothing positive about it. He is a shadow Treasurer who has absolutely no ideas. Today, it was clear that he had not prepared for this debate. He has delivered the same speech seven times—it might be eight times. It is an unbelievable state of affairs. Again, I make the point that, in the last 12 months, the Government has delivered a Budget that is concerned about value for money, for tax dollars paid. It is a disciplined Budget, and members opposite cannot deny that it has been positively received by the Queensland community.

Two aspects of this Bill deserve attention when focusing on what is today the end of the Budget debate. The engine for much of this Supply debate is the return from the Queensland Treasury Corporation. Members on this side of the House do understand, and most members opposite would understand, except the shadow Treasurer, the

importance of the delivery of many of the services provided in the Budget. By that I mean the concept of regional development and the division of regional development, and the delivery of those services.

Mr Littleproud: But aren't you overlooking the private sector? You are talking about the Queensland Treasury Corporation. Don't you think the private sector is more important?

Mr HAYWARD: I will take that interjection. What did honourable members hear from the shadow Treasurer?

Mr Littleproud: He talked about productivity.

Mr HAYWARD: No, he said nothing about productivity. He said that the Government's job is to kick-start the economy. He said, "I have the solution that Bjelke-Petersen had." When did Bjelke-Petersen have that solution? About 1986! He further stated, "I dumped a thousand million dollars into the economy of Queensland." That has got absolutely nothing to do with the private sector. What he spoke about is the same tired, tried, failed solution.

Mr Stoneman: You are just talking from an old Bill.

Mr HAYWARD: This is what the honourable member found difficulty with. The honourable member spoke about a private-enterprise-led solution. What did the shadow Treasurer say? He said that the Government has to kick-start the economy.

Mr Littleproud interjected.

Mr HAYWARD: Maybe the honourable member is going to speak later and debunk the absolute rubbish that the shadow Treasurer talked about. The fact of the matter is, as most honourable member opposite would admit, that he spoke absolute bunkum.

I have tried to say that the vehicle for much of this recent debate is the Queensland Treasury Corporation. It commenced operations on 1 July 1988, and it had statutory objectives. They are very clear and they are spelt out in the annual report that was recently received in this Parliament. They are—

"(a) to act as a financial institution for the benefit of and the provision of financial resources and services to statutory bodies in Queensland;

(b) to enhance the financial position of the QTC and the State; and

(c) to enter into and perform financial and other arrangements . . ."

In broad terms, to advance the development of Queensland.

Mr Stoneman interjected.

Mr HAYWARD: I will take that interjection. It was a National Party Government that established the Queensland Treasury Corporation. By a coincidence, it happened to be—

Mr De Lacy: They invested in Queensland!

Mr HAYWARD: I do not want to go into the investments that the corporation commenced with. By a coincidence, the previous National Party Government happened to be the Government at that time. I get the impression that the member is implying that a Labor Government would not have established a Queensland Treasury Corporation. There is absolutely no evidence—

Mr Stephan interjected.

Mr HAYWARD: No. Let honourable members be absolutely clear—

Mr Stephan interjected.

Mr HAYWARD: I will be absolutely clear and say that there is absolutely no doubt that the concept of a Treasury Corporation was in fact inherited from a New South

Wales Labor Government. Opposition members cannot deny that because it is the truth. In fact, I did not notice the Queensland shadow Treasurer launching an attack on the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory when its Labor Opposition spokesman said, "What this Government needs is a Northern Territory Treasury Corporation." In fact, I believe Mr De Lacy issued a statement in support of that point of view.

However, what did Queenslanders hear from the champion of the Queensland Treasury Corporation? They never heard a word. Where was he? Why was not he fair dinkum? Why did not he launch an attack on whoever he is—Marshall Peron—and accuse him of being an economic illiterate? I cannot believe that the shadow Treasurer could accuse him of that. Honourable members never heard one word from the shadow Treasurer, who could have issued a statement and said, "When we were a National Party Government, we had one. We think they are a good idea." Honourable members never heard "boo". The point is that it is the Queensland Treasury Corporation. Opposition members do admit that it is important and that it does supply the vehicle for much of the debate that honourable members have been involved in over the last three weeks.

The Queensland Treasury Corporation brought together the old Queensland Government Development Authority and the investment branch of the Queensland Treasury Department. The corporation is divided into a number of areas. For the information of most members of this House, I point out that the annual report is available and that it spells out in some detail the services that are provided by the corporation. It concentrates on a number of important areas of which we should have an understanding. It concentrates on asset management, which is undertaken through the corporation's investment portfolio. What should be understood by most members of this House is that the total funds invested by that corporation amount to about \$5.5 billion.

Out of the corner of my eye I notice that the Leader of the Liberal Party is in the Chamber. He may—and I do not know, because I do not really want to speak for him—suggest that somehow he does not necessarily agree with the investment direction or activities of the corporation. Through a series of questions in the House, he has certainly expressed that suggestion. I know that Opposition members would reject his point of view. What I think is often lost on many members in their clamour for parochialism—and I can understand this because it is done in an endeavour to attract votes and get elected to this place—is that the primary objective is to maximise the rate of return subject to acceptable risk levels. When the corporation is dealing with an investment portfolio of \$5.5 billion, it has to maximise its rate of return. That does not mean that it picks and chooses investments that necessarily have a flavour that is overly Queensland. The board has to have an independent investment philosophy; there is no argument about that. It was commenced by the previous Government. As everybody knows, the chairman of the investments board is Jim Kennedy. It is a non-political board. It is very clear that it is not subject to direction from the Government or its Ministers. When Mr Beanland asks questions in this House, I sometimes think that he wants that board to be subject to such direction. However, I will leave that for later. It is unfortunate that Mr Beanland will follow me in this debate, as he will have an opportunity to have a more than reasonable chop at what I have said.

It is also important to understand that the Queensland Treasury Corporation is independent of other statutory bodies such as Suncorp or the QIDC. It is important to understand and not forget that the greatest benefit to Queensland taxpayers is the resultant savings to them from the corporation's higher than normal investment earnings on its investment of \$5.5 billion. Another matter of vital importance is that many of the investments are on behalf of other people—ordinary Queenslanders; people whom we in this Parliament are supposed to represent. Much of the money that is invested by the corporation is not the Government's but, in many cases, people's superannuation. It is very important to understand the role of the Queensland Treasury Corporation and its investments board. Because the corporation is dealing with people's superannuation money, it would be criminally derelict in its responsibility if it did not maximise the

return on those moneys. The annual report for 1989-90, which has been tabled in this House, notes that, this year, the trust has received a return of 10.8 per cent. That compares favourably with the return of 11.2 per cent the previous year. The report notes that this rate of return compares favourably with that of other similar operations throughout Australia. At the same time, the report warns not to get carried away with this result. It stresses that, although the corporation is dealing with that sort of money, it is important to bear in mind its investment strategy, and emphasises that the corporation is dealing with a 5-year view.

Apart from the corporation's asset-management program, another program relates to liability and fund management. The objective of that program is to manage the borrowings undertaken to fund capital works and other programs. The fund management involves the management of temporary cash surpluses. Those surpluses arise from all sorts of areas—from the Treasury, from statutory bodies, from any investment assets held in fixed-interest securities or from the money market. It is important that the program has two focuses. The first is to reduce the cost of money borrowed. We all understand the importance of and the necessity for that. The second is to maximise the return on any cash surplus that it is able to get from a statutory body, from a council or from wherever else the moneys come. As I said before, both those operations are carried out within an acceptable risk level. It is managed by the capital markets advisory board. The chairman of that board is a well-known Queenslander, Sir Leo Hielscher.

The Queensland Treasury Corporation focuses on a number of other areas such as support and other financial services. Some of those areas are well known to us either through the news or through the corporation's involvement in the partnership with Nickel Resources North Queensland, which comprises a 95 per cent investment by the Queensland Treasury Corporation and a 5 per cent investment by Nickel Resources North Queensland Pty Ltd. In recent months, that participating interest in the Queensland Nickel joint venture has been expanded to 28 per cent. I understand that that matter is probably the subject of court action. Previously, that holding was 12.5 per cent.

The corporation also provides support for the Queensland Events Corporation Pty Ltd. Its main activity, which is probably familiar to all of us, will be the staging of the Indy Car Grand Prix on the Gold Coast. That race, to be held in March, will bring a considerable number of tourists to the Gold Coast, particularly to Surfers Paradise. Nevertheless, at every opportunity in this House, it seems to be rejected by the member for Surfers Paradise.

Mr Littleproud: That is not right.

Mr HAYWARD: He seems to take every opportunity in this House to knock, criticise, carp, whinge or in some way complain about the management of that event. The aim of the Queensland Events Corporation is to maximise the opportunity for State development by hosting major events.

The Queensland Treasury Corporation also provides structured financing for very important projects such as the Gateway Bridge, the Logan Motorway and railway electrification. An often-neglected facility of the Queensland Treasury Corporation is that it provides general financial advice to the Government, local authorities and other statutory bodies.

I turn now to regional development which, although small in dollar terms, is a very significant part of the overall operations of this Government. As all honourable members would be aware, regional development is particularly important to Queensland's future. Flowing directly from an election promise that the Labor Party made prior to the last election, this Government established the Division of Regional Development. I remind honourable members of that promise: "A State Labor Government will underline its commitment to regional development by establishing a Division of Regional Development."

Regional development is a major plank of this Government's economic development strategy for Queensland. I believe that it is universally recognised by everybody—except the shadow Treasurer—that a substantial proportion of trade and services are generated

by the social needs and characteristics of the population. That includes issues such as health, education and the housing industry. Although regional development is only a small item in this Government's Budget, nevertheless it is important because it entails Government and private-sector involvement. The Hughes report on Australian exports highlights the importance of developing an entrepreneurial export culture in Australia. Part of that positive approach is developing a social development activity. We must put in place at local and regional levels strategies through which individuals and groups can be assisted to identify and seize economic development opportunities by promoting that sort of culture. Export culture must be developed. I assumed that the shadow Treasurer might introduce that, but he did not. He spoke only about kick-starting the economy with an injection into capital works. Approximately 55 per cent of Queensland's population is located outside Brisbane. Nine provincial cities have in excess of 30 000 people. The remainder are scattered throughout the State.

Time expired.

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong—Leader of the Liberal Party) (5.03 p.m.): I intend to speak about the economy and the public service. It is certainly true to say that, because of the policies of the ALP Governments federally and in this State, Queensland is experiencing harsh economic times. More recently, very concerned and, in some cases, scathing comments have been made by various economic forecasters about Queensland's economic scene. For example, one has only to consider the authoritative *Queensland Economic Forecasts*, prepared in September this year by the Queensland University of Technology, which states—

"On the downside however, it is worrisome that Queensland's unemployment levels are persistently above the national average (partly as a result of continued immigration) but also because fixed private capital expenditure is traditionally below the national average."

Because of growing unemployment levels in this State, people should be concerned.

I turn now to business activity. As to retail sales or turn-over—the rate of growth in retail sales is two percentage points below the inflation rate of 7.5 per cent. The *Queensland Economic Forecasts* state further—

"Retail sales will continue to be sluggish with no relief in sight. Expenditures in the December quarter, traditionally a high point, will not be cause enough to reverse the trend."

That underlying trend is expected to continue throughout this quarter, which is historically the best quarter for retail sales. That in itself must be of major concern to everybody. As to motor vehicles, the publication states—

"With little expectation of an early recovery in the economy, and downgraded investment plans, a turnaround in the current Queensland trend of declining motor vehicle sales rates seems likely."

That must also be of concern to everyone.

As to housing and construction—the decline in dwelling construction in the year ended June 1990 was over 27 per cent. Growth in private capital investment was below the national average. In relation to the role of the public sector, the publication states—

"Engineering construction in Queensland is presently being underpinned by public sector commencements as private sector work dries up."

Government members interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: It is all very well for members of the ALP to get excited and interject about these matters. However, the facts speak for themselves. This Government is not rectifying the underlying problems within the community that were created by the Federal Government. One could have expected the Budget to assist to get this State's economy up and running. However, because that has not occurred, I can understand why members of the ALP would be disappointed. If I were a member of the ALP, I

would be extremely disappointed with the Budget. It fails to encourage business to create incentives to get people back into the work force. No assistance has been provided in that regard. In a few months' time, it will be a very sorry period for young people who are leaving schools or tertiary institutions and looking for employment. Unfortunately, the forecasts reveal that youth unemployment in the early months of 1991 is certainly going to be grim indeed and, unfortunately, will balloon.

The *Queensland Economic Review*, which was prepared by the Queensland Treasury for the September quarter, states that the average unemployment level in that quarter rose by 8 500 to 121 600, or an average increase of 8.4 per cent. That compares with the Australian average of 7.2 per cent. Unemployment has been rising throughout the year. During the March quarter, the unemployment rate was 7 per cent; in the June quarter, it was 7.9 per cent; and, in the September quarter, 8.4 per cent. That review states also that the ANZ Bank's employment advertising series recorded that the figure for advertised job vacancies in September 1990 dropped by 36 per cent from September 1989. Clearly, employment opportunities are drying up as less and less investment is made in the private sector. As the downturn in the economy continues, that has a significant impact on levels of retail sales.

The Government has a responsibility to ensure that its policies do not make economic conditions worse. Rather than raise charges in accordance with movements in the CPI, the Government must substantiate tax increases. Yet, not once has that occurred. Many charges have increased in accordance with the CPI and, unfortunately, many have increased far in excess of increases in the CPI. The figures for Government revenue show a 39 per cent increase in land tax this year. Motor vehicle registration fees have increased by 12.9 per cent and payroll tax has increased by 8.7 per cent. Although the Government claims that it has made adjustments to the thresholds of a number of those charges, figures show that some charges have increased considerably, well above increases in the CPI. Yet not one of those increases has been justified. It is no longer good enough for increases to occur across the board; some justification must be given for them. Last night, I indicated clearly how the Brisbane City Council, under a Liberal Party administration, has saved the rate-payers of Brisbane \$130m by keeping increases in rates below increases in the CPI. In some cases, the council froze rates. The State Government has not done that with its taxes and charges.

The Government should ensure that it does not impose additional charges or maintain unrealistically high charges on sectors that are under stress. In recent months, a prime example of the Government breaking its election promises is the increase, in some cases by a couple of thousand per cent, in farm vehicle registration fees. That has had an enormous effect on the rural community. It should not be forgotten that, this year, the Government brought in a new tax—an electricity charge—which will flow through the economy to small-businesspeople, householders and other consumers. According to the Treasurer, the 0.5 per cent borrowing charge imposed upon the Queensland Electricity Commission will not be passed on to consumers; it will be eaten up by increased efficiencies within the Electricity Commission. Those increased efficiencies have not yet been achieved. When they are achieved, although the benefits should flow through to consumers, they will end up in the Government's coffers. The electricity charge is a new tax that was brought in by the Government after it made clear, unequivocal undertakings to the community in the last election campaign that it would impose no new taxes. There is no running away from the issue; Queensland has a new tax. It is there for all to see.

I refer to the effect on the coalmining industry of rail freight charges. Some time ago, the Government promised to give miners some relief from those charges. However, they have not been assisted. The Government still wants its pound of flesh. At a time when the private sector cries out for assistance because of the policies of the Hawke Federal Government, the Queensland Government has introduced a brand spanking new tax, but has given no assistance to the private sector of the economy. Unfortunately, the policies of this Government do not assist the private sector in the way in which they ought and in the manner in which Queenslanders would like. It should not be

forgotten that, a couple of years ago, the Premier made one of those famous statements: just as business prospered under the economic stewardship of John Cain in Victoria, so too will business prosper under a Goss Labor Government in Queensland. Of course, that says it all. Heaven help this State if the Government heads down the track of the ALP Governments of Victoria and Western Australia. Who knows what the cost was to the Western Australian people? One day, no doubt, we will find out.

I turn to the public service. I cannot help noticing that, under the new Government, the public service has come under a great deal of attack. In Opposition, the ALP was very critical of the attitude of the former National Party Government to the public service. Certainly, the ALP in Government has not improved the situation. Enormous uncertainty hangs over the heads of the vast majority of public servants. Police, nurses and teachers are very unhappy. Pay increases and new resources, particularly for the Police Service, have not been forthcoming. The Government's promise that police numbers would be increased has been tempered somewhat. The Government refers now to 400 operational police, not 400 new police, in this financial year. It is all very well for the Minister to say that it is a matter for the Police Service to take to the Industrial Commission. However, that was not the clear commitment that was given more than 12 months ago to the Police Service. That commitment was clear to police: they expected to receive pay increases and additional resources very promptly after the election. They have been constantly stymied and refused those pay increases. Today, there is a great deal of disharmony in the Police Service. However, that disharmony is not restricted to the Police Service. It applies also to the nursing profession and, to a lesser extent, the teaching service. As one moves around the State and talks to nurses, one cannot help but notice the concerns of the nursing fraternity.

I want to deal with what is happening to the whole structure of the public service. No-one denies the right of Ministers to appoint their ministerial staff, whether they come from Canberra, Melbourne or anywhere else. What I am concerned about is the way in which very good public servants are getting the axe or, if they are not getting the axe, are being transferred, while others are being brought into the public service, in many cases on secondment, from the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria or other States. Recently I asked the Premier a straightforward question about those public servants who have been brought into the Queensland public service on secondment from the Commonwealth public service or another State public service since 2 December 1989. The answer consisted of a lot of chat and sidestepping of the issue. In the end, the Premier said that it was not the sort of information that should be made public or made available. That dodged the whole issue.

I can well understand the Premier's concern about making this information available. The concerns being expressed by public servants would certainly be backed up by those figures. This is supposed to be an open and accountable Government, but we do not see that in relation to the public service. This makes a mockery of the ALP's so-called commitment to freedom of information. If it has nothing to hide, why not produce the information? That would allay the fears of so many Queensland public servants that their jobs are being taken by people from other States who embrace the philosophy or the ideology of the ALP. It seems to me—and I am sure it seems to the majority of Queensland public servants—that the only crime many of them have committed is that they have failed to give a commitment to Labor's ideology. No other reason has been put forward why these very good people who have served this State for many decades have been given this treatment by the State Government. Queensland seems to be headed down the path followed in the United States and other countries where the public service has become a political service. An article in the *IPA Review* a couple of years ago stated—

"But the direction we are taking in Australia is towards greater control by the *party* in power over all sectors of Government than is the case in the US where the outworking of the balance of powers between the Executive, Congress and Senate frequently cuts across party lines."

The *IPA Review* could hardly be considered a journal that would express Left Wing views. It would certainly be between Right and moderate in the political spectrum, yet even it is expressing grave concern about the direction of the public service in that country. What it states applies to Queensland.

A couple of years ago the Royal Institute of Public Administration expressed in its journal concern about this trend. An article in that journal states—

" 'The challenges ahead call for a much more effective and efficient management on the part of government.' 'Unless we have first rate administrators at the very top, our entire civil service, and the nation itself will suffer.' 'The intangible benefits of government work, and the opportunity to influence policy will always have to compensate for lower pay.' 'Constant criticism by one's employer is unpleasant in any circumstances—it is hardly made more tolerable when one is underpaid . . . politicians have indulged in the latest wave of bureaucrat bashing to an unhealthy extent, provoking counter attacks . . . on the ground that the Civil Service is being dangerously politicised . . . ' "

That is what is happening time and time again in this State. As well as attacking the public service, particularly the senior public servants, the Government is working its way through the lower levels. In addition, it is creating super departments. We are told that they will bring enormous benefits to the Government and to the people of Queensland. To date, we have not seen those benefits. When I move round the community I get more complaints than ever before about the public service, the additional layers of public servants, and the inability to obtain answers to straightforward questions from the community and particularly from the business sector. If it continues down the path of creating super departments, it is incumbent upon the Government to ensure that a great deal more work is put into ensuring that they work effectively. I do not believe that the super departments and super Ministries are providing a more effective service for the people of this nation. To date, we have not seen that improvement. The Queensland Government should tackle the problem. It is all very well putting in additional layers of public servants, but the Government also has to improve the services provided by the public service.

The public service has served this State well. I would hate there to be a continuation of the politicisation that has taken place under this Government. If that happens, public servants will no longer have a career path or any career prospects. Morale, which is already low, will get lower. The service that has been provided to the people will wither, drop off, and get to the situation that applies in the United States of America. I do not think that the service provided there is at all comparable to the service provided in this nation.

Time expired.

Dr CLARK (Barron River) (5.23 p.m.): I have great pleasure in contributing to this debate today because the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) provides legislative force to the excellent State Budget that was presented to this House on 5 September.

I joined the Labor Party and stood for election to this Parliament because I wanted to achieve reform in Queensland. Like other members of the Labor Party, I deplored the lack of social justice in Queensland and the treatment of women and Aborigines. I deplored the ever-increasing degradation of our national heritage in the name of progress and development and the low priority given to the vital task of educating our children. Those words may sound like the words of a starry-eyed idealist who wants to change the world overnight and who thinks that a new Labor Government can wave a magic wand and create these things immediately. That is not so. I am 42, not 22, and life has taught me a few things in that time. It has taught me to hold unshakeable beliefs and principles. Everyone must have the things that give direction and meaning to their lives. Life has taught me something else. It has taught me that a reform agenda must be set in an economic framework. The demand that any reformer must be prepared to answer is: how much will it cost and who pays? I am very well aware of the economic bottom line. If at the end of the day the reforms occur and the Government is bankrupt, then

the Government that has presided over and introduced those reforms will be swept away and the reforms themselves will be placed in jeopardy. Any reform that places the standard of living of families or the economic viability of our businesses at risk will not and should not be tolerated. This is the essence of the challenge facing all reformist Governments and, sadly, it must be said that Victoria has failed to meet that challenge. Not only has that failure cost the women and men of Victoria dearly in financial terms, but also it is now biting deeply into the reforms achieved in such areas as education and is placing much of that Government's reform agenda in jeopardy. Whilst the Queensland Labor Government has the example of Victoria before it, it did not need that example. It did not have to wait and see what happened to Victoria. It did not need that State to teach it the self-evident facts of economic life and the reality of what and who produces the wealth in this State. The Government knows it is the private sector and that Government must ensure that the private sector continues to be healthy and vibrant. The Labor Government was elected on a platform of reform, coupled with economic responsibility. At that time it understood the interdependent relationship of these two apparently opposing tenets and that understanding was the driving force underlying the preparation of the 1990 Budget.

In my contribution to the debates in this House so far I have concentrated primarily on matters of personal interest to me, education, environment, local government and electoral reform, but this should not be taken to mean that I am not interested in or concerned about matters relating to business or the economy. I learnt at first hand the importance of financial responsibility when I served as a councillor on the local authority for five years. That experience taught me to appreciate the significance of the Budget and its underlying strategy. No household, council, business or State can provide services and infrastructure if its revenue is being eaten away by merely servicing debt. Traditionally, Queensland has had a good record of debt-servicing and I do not mind admitting the fact that Labor has inherited an economy that is in a sound position. I have said before in this House that I will not engage in opposition for opposition's sake. I believe in giving credit where it is due. However, whether that credit should go to the Treasury or the previous National Party Government is a debatable point. I certainly do not agree with the previous Government's spending priorities. Suffice to say that, contrary to all expectations and predictions, the Labor Government will keep Queensland's reputation for sound economic management. Queensland will remain the State in which business can flourish.

With respect to debt, Moody's Investment Services found that Queensland ranked best amongst the States on virtually all debt-service and borrowing measures. For example, Queensland is the only State with negative net interest outlays for the general Government sector. Queensland has a AAA rating from Moody's, which it will keep. Queensland's debt position will continue to improve in 1990-91 against a range of measures. For example, Queensland's public sector net debt, debt as a share of gross State product and debt-service costs are all expected to decline. The Consolidated Revenue Fund interest costs that are estimated at \$497.2m are expected to decline by 9 per cent in real terms. Interest and redemption comprises approximately 3.5 per cent of Consolidated Revenue Fund outlays, which is a reduction from 3.8 per cent. This decline in debt-servicing is anticipated because of the sound financial strategy that underpins the Budget. Thus, the Government will only be borrowing for assets that can effectively generate the income to service the debt. In contrast to past practices, funding of social capital assets, such as schools and hospitals, will come from recurrent revenues. There will be full actuarial funding of long-term liabilities such as superannuation, workers' compensation and motor vehicle third-party insurance, ensuring that we are not storing up debts that have to be paid for in the future. This is the third part of this Government's Budget strategy.

Mr Stoneman: You've got to admit that we put that in place.

Dr CLARK: I have already said that. Perhaps the member for Burdekin has just returned to the Chamber, but I recognise that fact.

As I indicated at the outset of my speech, I recognise the need for a sound economic base if reform is to proceed, and what could be more important to such a base than a healthy private sector, in particular small business? When I talk to businesspeople in my electorate it is only a matter of time before they bring up their three favourite topics; taxes, red tape and public service inefficiency.

Mr McGrady: I could add a few more to that list.

Dr CLARK: I have no doubt that the honourable member could. It will not have escaped the attention of honourable members opposite that this Budget will continue to keep Queensland a low-tax State, despite their attempts to prove otherwise—indeed, their disappointment that the position is not otherwise. However, their disappointment that this Government has not broken its promises by introducing new taxes may be matched by their satisfaction in acknowledging that imitation is the most sincere form of flattery. The Queensland Labor Government recognises that keeping State taxes and charges low creates the best climate in which business can succeed. Queensland continues to be the only State that does not have a fuel tax and the only State that does not have a financial institutions' duty. Revenue from taxes, fines and fees, which comprise 35 per cent of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, are estimated to increase by only 6.8 per cent on comparable actual receipts in 1989-90, which is below the CPI. The most significant tax in terms of revenue is payroll tax. As I understand it, the Liberal Party's policy is for removal of this tax altogether. The member for Burdekin has indicated that the National Party wishes to phase it out.

Mr Stoneman: It is National Party policy, too.

Dr CLARK: That is right. It is clearly National Party policy. I wonder how members of the Liberal Party and members of the National Party propose to find the \$790m which is expected to be raised this financial year from payroll tax. Why did we not hear about this when the member for Burdekin made his speech? What else would the National Party tax?

Mr McGrady: Or during the election campaign.

Dr CLARK: That is right.

Mr McGrady: Or during the 32 years when they were in power.

Dr CLARK: Precisely. What cuts would they make? Would they hack into education funds, and take Queensland back to the position in which it was left when this Government came to power? Would they hack into police funding or environmental funding? Where are the cuts to be made? Honourable members should be told about it. Even Peat Marwick has recognised that, as part of the revenue-raising of this State, it is unrealistic to expect payroll tax to disappear. Let me remind the honourable member for Burdekin, before he rises to his defence, that the 5 per cent rate of payroll tax that applies in Queensland is the lowest overall payroll tax of any State in Australia, for employers with both large and small numbers of employees. In January 1990, the annual exemption level was raised to \$500,000. The Labor Government has already taken into account the issue of bracket creep. In addition, the rate of stamp duty also compares very favourably with that imposed in other States, with conveyance duty paid on the principal place of residence being the lowest in Australia.

Land tax is one of the contentious issues in my electorate and in other areas where land valuations have increased rapidly in recent times. Over the last little while, a few myths have been circulating. One is that the Government will be putting a land tax on the principal place of residence. This is, of course, just scaremongering. There has also been circulation of the myth—and "myth" is a very kind term to use—to the effect that the Government is colluding with the Valuer-General to increase valuations. Again, that is wrong, because those valuations are set by an independent body. There can be no question of this Government fiddling and influencing the work of the Valuer-General. Queensland has one of the lowest per capita rates of land tax revenue of all the States.

Let me get this issue into perspective. The estimate of \$190m for the 1990-91 accounts for only 6.8 per cent of all revenue obtained from taxes, fees and fines, which comprises only 35 per cent of all Government revenue. During the debate on land tax in my electorate, Victoria has been hailed as the State that Queensland should emulate. However, table A.6 in Budget Paper No. 4 shows a comparison of per capita land tax collections and reveals that Victorians pay \$14 more per head than is paid in Queensland and that, in New South Wales under a Liberal Government, people pay a hefty \$68 more, which is \$115 per head. Queenslanders pay only \$47.60 per head, which is second only to the rate paid by Tasmanians, who pay 40c per head less. However, the Government has recognised the problems created by increasing land taxes. It was with great pleasure that I witnessed the passing through the House this week of the Land Tax Act Amendment Bill, which will put into place the concessions that were granted in the Budget this year—concessions that will cost the Government \$32m in foregone revenue. I am sure that the people who live in my electorate—particularly in areas such as Port Douglas and along the Marlin Coast—will welcome the concessions that have been made because they are the ones who have been hardest hit.

Another cause for complaint by people in my electorate is the excessive amount of red tape and regulations. Earlier it was said that this Government is doing nothing to help small business, but what do members of the Opposition call the Business Regulation Review Unit? This unit's main role is to review and recommend changes to business regulations, legislation and controls. It also has to identify unnecessary business licences, permits, approvals and registrations and its role is also to liaise with Commonwealth, State and local Governments in relation to the coordination of business regulations. The achievement of those goals will be made possible by the allocation of \$1.5m in the Budget. What do members of the Opposition know about this matter? Have they never used the Queensland Business Licence and Information Centre, which complements the function of the Business Regulation Review Unit? Have members opposite never encouraged their constituents to use this one-stop shop for information about Queensland Government business licences and permits, approvals and registrations? I certainly have, and I know how effective it is.

The Queensland Small Business Corporation will receive \$4.3m from the Budget. Again, this is a policy that will impact directly on small business and contribute to the healthy state of small business in Queensland. The corporation has undergone a comprehensive review and will now be concentrating on the delivery of core programs of business advice, training and education, which will benefit all small businesses. The regional projects investment program is particularly welcome, and will be a major beneficiary in the Budget. Quite often, discussions are held in this Chamber about the way in which the north Queensland enterprise zone was replaced by this program. Members of the Opposition have condemned the Government for in some way sweeping away the important economic initiative represented by the north Queensland enterprise zone, but that is not so. This Government has actually extended that economic initiative throughout the whole of Queensland. In Cairns, a committee has been set up to take on board the projects previously looked after by the enterprise zone and will ensure that these projects succeed. Mention has been made in this Chamber of the aircraft maintenance facility that has supposedly been abandoned or lost; but that is not so, either. The committee in Cairns has applied for funds to carry out a prefeasibility study.

Mr Borbidge: Mr Dunning has gone to Mexico.

Dr CLARK: It is not all over, though. The honourable member should just wait and see. The Government is still in there fighting, which is the main thing.

Mr Stoneman: "Don't you worry about that!"

Dr CLARK: Exactly. I am working with businesspeople in my electorate and with officers of the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development to establish a project known as Pacific Mineral Developments. The company has an amazing product known as a soil remineralisation agent, which is produced from a special remineralised

rock. It is a very innovative program, one that will be of great benefit to the agricultural and rural industry in this country. I am giving it all the support that I can.

No discussion of the economic outlook for north Queensland would be complete without reference to tourism. It is an industry that now generates a revenue of approximately \$400m in far-north Queensland and is, together with mining, one of our most important income-earners. Earlier this year, the Government injected \$2.2m into a joint State and Federal advertising campaign that successfully lured the tourists back to Queensland. That resurgence is occurring. It has not been a terrific year for tourism, but the tourist industry is improving and the position in far-north Queensland is very bright. The tourist industry will benefit from the funds that I spoke of this morning which have been allocated to manage the two World Heritage areas in north Queensland: the wet tropics and the Great Barrier Reef. Tourists visiting north Queensland will appreciate the \$9.8m allocated in the Budget for roads, particularly for the Bruce Highway, which has been badly neglected in the past. North of Cairns new work is proceeding to duplicate the busy highway that services the Marlin Coast.

The third area in which problems have arisen relates to Government inefficiency whereby the public service is seen as the enemy by many businesspeople. People in my electorate to whom I speak feel somehow that that enterprise is there to thwart their every move. Having been involved in a few matters, I have sympathy for them. Enter the Public Sector Management Commission—the very words, I am told, strike terror into the hearts of public servants across the State, who pale at the thought that things might change. But change they will, and they will become more efficient. The commission has commenced a comprehensive review of the structure and functions of all Government departments. Considerable savings should result as productivity—which is the key word—and efficiency is improved and promotion on merit becomes the order of the day.

The Government has proposed the corporatisation of Government-owned enterprises. An editorial in *Business Queensland* had this to say—

"In so many instances it seems the free-enterprise National Party Government was in reality more centralist and selectively agrarian socialist than even Gorbachev could now stomach.

So we can take heart that Hamill will be tackling transport, getting Queensland Railways off the Consolidated Revenue Fund nipple and onto its own revenue-directed Budget."

Much has been said in the Estimates debate, and much of it has been politically motivated. I will conclude with what I regard as some reasonably informed and somewhat objective comments from *Business Queensland*, to which I referred previously. It states—

"Business could not have expected more of the Goss Government's first Budget handed down last week by Treasurer Keith De Lacy.

The Budget will not satisfy everyone and the advantage of our democratic system is that we should enjoy over coming weeks vigorous debate over the strengths and weaknesses of Labor's first Queensland Budget in 34 years.

Weaknesses there are but the strengths are dominant."

We have certainly had vigorous debate; I am not sure that it has been very illuminating, incisive or analytical. In the main part, it has been very disappointing, as well as being very tiresome and repetitive. The editorial went on to state—

"Government has given business the signal it wanted: we have economic rationalists at the helm and we have a Cabinet which recognises the importance of wealth generation within the private sector and cost-efficiency within the public sector.

It is also a Budget which points to a refreshing old-fashioned honesty within government.

So whatever the future debating points it is now important for business to recognise that, in broad terms, it does not have an adversary with the Goss Government.

Goss has delivered and now so must business."

That is a message that they need to get: stop complaining and get on with the job. The article continues—

"Queensland's business community must now start focussing on the strengths in this economy."

The economy has plenty of strengths, and businesses should be focusing on them and getting on with the job.

What does this kind of Budget mean to someone like me who is committed to a reform agenda? It means that, after 32 years, priorities can be changed so that more can be spent on community welfare services and housing, education, conservation, law and order and public safety. If business flourishes in Queensland and the Government runs an efficient public sector, it will mean that we will be able to afford to pay for the 7.1 per cent overall increase in outlays. It will mean that the size of the cake can be increased for the benefit of Queenslanders and, importantly, it means that the long-overdue reforms that my colleagues and I cherish will finally become a reality and remain an integral part of a new era in Queensland.

Time expired.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the honourable member for Nicklin, I advise honourable members that this is not the member's maiden speech; he has been in this Chamber previously.

Hon. N. J. TURNER (Nicklin) (5.44 p.m.): I rise in this House as member for Nicklin and take the opportunity to convey to the voters of Nicklin my thanks for and appreciation of the majority vote I received on 2 December 1989.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr TURNER: If honourable members listen closely, they might learn something. I am deeply conscious of the tremendous responsibility entrusted to me to represent the wishes and aspirations of all voters in Nicklin irrespective of their party-political beliefs. My personal thanks go to all those people who worked so hard to have me elected and who have morally supported me during the last 12 months.

In relation to the result in Nicklin, I would like to draw to this Parliament's attention some of the anomalies that militated against a result and attempt to do something to ensure that this problem never occurs again. I consider it scandalous that it could take 12 months to resolve a dispute over a seat in Queensland Parliament. I may bore you slightly, Mr Speaker, but I would like to go through in chronological order some of the events that took place. I had to wait one month for the return of the writs before I could lodge an objection to the Court of Disputed Returns, in which time Mr King was sworn in as a member. When the result of a seat is disputed, it behoves us to consider waiting for the matter to be resolved before allowing a member to take his place in Parliament and risking a similar event occurring such as that which occurred to Mr King. I have the greatest respect for him and I regret what has happened to him. There was a 10-week delay before I could take my appeal to the Court of Disputed Returns. I then had a 6-week delay to enable the Liberals or any other party to become involved in the dispute. There was then a 3-week delay to replace a judge who went on sabbatical leave. Many other considerable delays occurred in the court system. Might I say that any delays were of no benefit to the National Party. I believe that if the National Party had had a profile or presence in the north coast region after the election last December, it would have had a far greater chance of holding Fairfax and Landsborough.

Finally, the case went before the Court of Disputed Returns. It then took five weeks for a decision to be handed down by Justice Ryan. He determined that Nicklin was my seat; that Robert George King had not been duly elected and that Neil John Turner was the duly elected member. There was then a 21-day period in which to appeal, and it was 21 days before the Liberals lodged their appeal. Then there was a delay of two

weeks before the Full Court heard the appeal, and yet another four weeks before its finding was brought down. In all, it took a year for the matter to be resolved. I suggest that, in all areas, the time could be reduced by a quarter or less.

I draw to the attention of the Minister for Justice that, in the last nine weeks after the ruling by Justice Ryan in the Court of Disputed Returns that I had won the seat, Mr King—and quite rightly so; the appeal provisions are contained in the legislation—was sitting in this Chamber with a minority of votes. I think that this raises an interesting question regarding the legality of legislation that is passed, especially if there is a difference in a vote of just one member. It may not matter at present because of the large majority that the Labor Party has. However, how can a person be allowed to vote on legislation when a Supreme Court judge has ruled that he does not have the numbers to be in the Parliament? I think that a review needs to be carried out. A very thorough overhaul of all legislation pertaining to future elections is necessary.

Despite the problems that were evident in Nicklin, I do not believe that there was ever any real issue between Mr King and me, or the Liberal Party and the National Party. Rather, it was an issue about democracy and whether the majority should rule. I stood as a candidate in a democratic election and I won a majority of the votes. I remind honourable members that democracy cannot prevail unless we respect two things. We must respect the right of the voters to cast their votes and to have their votes counted. Throughout the world people have fought and died for the right to cast a vote, and our founding fathers have made sacrifices. Every right that we have came at a price, and it behoves us never to forget what that price can be. In addition, we must respect the judgment of the court of the land. I won the seat of Nicklin by nine votes. A majority of one rules in Parliament, and the day when the majority does not rule and the minority rules, this nation will be finished. I will have more to say on this issue in the future when amendments to the Elections Act are introduced. Honourable members should not forget what has happened because, if something is not done about it, it could have an impact on future Parliaments.

I want to speak briefly on the role of Parliament. Lately, there seems to be a move in certain quarters to get rid of the relevance of Parliament. If we continue down the road that we have been pursuing, in the not-too-distant future Parliament will be irrelevant. Parliament should be supreme. Parliament has suspended and eroded enough of its powers and sovereignty. Members of Parliament should not allow their affairs to be managed by committees and commissions. I emphasise that those who are elected to Parliament are answerable to, and directly responsible to, those who elect them. These costly commissions and committees, which would wield vast powers, have absolutely no responsibility to the electors.

I want to speak briefly about EARC and some of its recommendations. I preface my remarks by saying that I am not attacking or criticising EARC. I am talking about equality and the fact that one vote, one value will see Governments elected by a conglomerate of city voters. Naturally, most people live where the jobs are, but that is not where the wealth is generated. Where in the world does one vote, one value apply? It is certainly not in Canada, the United States, the Channel Islands, the Mother Parliament in England or the Senate. I mean that as no reflection on the Senate. However, Tasmania, which has a population of just over 400 000, elects 12 senators, and New South Wales, with a population of 5.5 million, also elects 12 senators. The Federal system works because the House of Representatives basically operates on a one vote, one value system, with the Senate overseeing the House of Representatives with what one might say is a disproportional representation. However, that Federal system is not in place in Queensland.

I want to say something about one of the major industries, that is, tourism. Tourism is of tremendous importance to the electorate of Nicklin, to the State of Queensland and to Australia. It is vital to our future. It creates many jobs, mostly for young people, who, after all, are our future. The tourists take away only photographs and memories and leave behind only their money and their footprints. They bring much-needed interstate

and overseas dollars at a time when severe problems are being experienced with our balance of payments. Tourism is a multifunction industry that embraces accommodation, entertainment, hospitality, the service industries, the travel industry and investment. I have looked around my electorate and tried to see what the ALP has done recently for tourism in the region. Everybody knows what Mr Hawke did for tourism during the pilots dispute. I will not go into that any further.

Mr Elliott: He fixed it completely.

Mr TURNER: As the member for Cunningham says, he fixed it completely.

I am more concerned about what this State Government is or is not doing for tourism. This Government has not acted on the Kennedy report into tourism, even though it has had the recommendations for six months. The expert advice for a more efficient Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation—introducing marketing reforms and strategies, placing a higher priority in Government on tourism as an income-earner and promoting it nationally and internationally—has been largely ignored. The present Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing has placed a great emphasis on racing reform and on introducing poker machines and Footy TAB in Queensland. He must have some insight that the Victorian ALP did not have. The Victorian Government would not introduce poker machines because of the problems that it foresaw with criminal activity.

Mr Kennedy would have to be the most disillusioned person in the tourist world. He is a talented man who has wasted his ideas on a much less talented Government. I venture to say that children leaving school in my electorate and throughout Queensland will find no jobs in racing reform. I go so far as to say that their parents would not be keen for them to learn how to play poker machines and bet on Footy TAB while collecting the dole. I suggest a much better and more constructive career path in tourism, so that they can get some self-esteem, some pride and some dignity from carrying out a job, and a belief and pride in their country.

I would like to know when Mr Goss made his last speech on tourism, with all its potential, or announced a major initiative. He should remember that if Queensland receives more tourists, they eat more and they spend more, and that impacts on the whole State. It impacts on the butcher, the baker, the grocer, the horticulturist and many others. I will be the first to pay tribute to this Government if it initiates measures to increase the level of tourism, with its resultant investment and job opportunities in Queensland.

Much has been written recently about the tremendous achievements of the Goss Government over the last 12 months, and I am the first to concede that it has done several things. It has introduced daylight-saving; I think Mr Goss planted a tree with Sallyanne Atkinson on the Expo site; it abolished censorship of pornographic literature; it abolished the Films Board of Review and introduced homosexual reform legislation. However, I will cite some of the things that it has not done and some of the people that it has alienated, such as the Tollbusters on the north coast, as Mr Burns would know. The Government promised assistance to remote-area schoolteachers, but it reneged on its election promise. The Government promised to sell the Government jet, but it still has not been sold. There was never any need to sell it because it was one of the wisest investments that the previous Government ever made. There is a need for that plane in this State. I believe that the Minister for Police, Mr Mackenroth, would concede the benefit of that plane during the western floods, especially around Charleville. Because Queensland is a vast State, the jet is also used to transport donor organs.

The Government wanted the multifunction polis for Queensland, but then decided that, in the final analysis, it did not want it. The Government is looking at introducing poker machines to achieve a gambling-revenue base. It stopped the Wolffdene dam, but now people are concerned about future dam sites in this State. They are also concerned about toxic waste dumps. Queensland looks like losing the spaceport development. The Government has stopped VEAs and has alienated workers in Queensland Railways. I believe that the Labor Party has not thought through the consequences of the move to

decrease the number of rail sidings throughout Queensland. It will have a severe impact on rural towns. If a small town has two or three railway workers who lose their jobs, it will lose another teacher and another policeman and the hospital will close down, and that all contributes to destroying the heart of this State where all the wealth is generated.

I also cite what has happened over the blocking of the electrification of the rail system. The world faces the possibility of war in the Middle East. This Government should be looking at expanding the rail-electrification system to avoid a reliance on Arab oil and to utilise Australia's abundant supply of coal, and yet that program has been abandoned.

A Government member: Where is the money coming from?

Mr TURNER: If the honourable member has his way, it will be funded from Footy TAB and poker machines.

The racing industry is in turmoil. It is a massive industry, including owners, workers at yearling sales, trainers, jockeys and punters. The Government has alienated schoolteachers. The police are talking about demonstrating against the Government. The public service is in turmoil. Honourable members only have to refer to today's newspaper—one should not always quote from newspapers—to discover what the local councils think about what is being forced upon them.

Small and large businesses, including the milk-vendors, have been affected by this Government. Every primary producer in Queensland is up in arms at what this Government is doing. Honourable members know what has happened to the QIDC. This Government has introduced the user-pays philosophy in the Department of Primary Industries and the Lands Department. Tomorrow, if a Brisbane home-owner was burgled, he would pay for the police to come and investigate. User pays be damned! It is another insidious tax that has been introduced. Concessional registration has been removed, and yet there were to be no new taxes and no increases above the CPI. The registration for a grain semitrailer on the Darling Downs has increased from \$118 per year to \$1,180—a 1 000 per cent increase. Under the ISC proposals, truck registration would increase from \$6,000 to nearly \$60,000. The State Budget included a half per cent levy on the borrowings of the Electricity Commission. I believe that that sets a dangerous precedent.

This Government has introduced gun legislation. In the very near future, there will be rental increases of 100 per cent on land that is used for the grazing of sheep and 200 per cent on land for cattle. Opposition members know what happened when the rural leaders asked questions about conflict of interest. Opposition members have had meetings since with those rural leaders, who know what they were told and what they believed, and it is completely different to what has been stated in this place. This House has seen the establishment of so many committees that honourable members could not count them. Members opposite were critical of the number of quangos that operated in this State over the years, and yet look at the indecisive, inept, inexperienced Government that is establishing more and more committees to make decisions on its behalf. This Government has not made a major decision at all.

Small and large businesses are going to the wall. The Federal Government has created many problems for primary industries by opening the gates for imports to enter Australia. The horticultural industry, including the growers of oranges, pineapples and bananas, will be destroyed. Can honourable members remember Lionel Bowen years ago saying that it was time that primary producers woke up to themselves, that they were not wanted in this country?

Mr Johnson: There's a few here saying it, too!

Mr TURNER: I do not doubt that. Lionel Bowen said that primary industries were not needed in this country and that the sooner those producers woke up to that, the better, because those products could be imported. What a great thing to say! Where is Australia's national export revenue to come from if there is no primary industry base?

Mr Palaszczuk: You had 32 years to organise that, and you were also the Minister for Primary Industries.

Mr TURNER: The honourable member should go out and talk to those primary producers. If he listens, he will find out what they are thinking and what was done for them. When this State had a National Party Government, one could start a business, but business incentive and initiative is being destroyed by the day by this Government. Recently, the honourable member visited Morven. I thought that he would have learnt something on that trip.

Mr Palaszczuk: I did.

Mr TURNER: But he did not keep his ears open. He should go out again and have another listen. If he does, he should not return in a year's time because he probably will not come back.

At present, Australians face a Federal Government and a State Government hostile to primary industries and free enterprise. I wonder how members of an ALP Government, either Federal or State, can face a 45-year old man who has just come home and said to his wife and family, "I have lost my job. I cannot get another job. We have to sell our home to meet the bills and we have to sell it on a depressed market."

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Is it the wish of the House that the member be allowed to complete his speech?

Honourable members: Yes.

Mr TURNER: I will be very quick, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable member still has four minutes.

Mr TURNER: I think it is time for some integrity in Government. We want less——

Mr Dollin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Maryborough will not interject from other than his correct seat.

Mr TURNER: One thing I have learnt from my return to this Chamber and from listening to some members opposite is that one does not have to grow feathers to become a galah. We want less charisma. We want less blow-dried hair. We want less crying on television. We want fewer false promises about no child living in poverty. Who will ever forget Paul Keating's remarks such as, "We have never had it so good. The J-curve is working. We have got a lovely set of figures. Things will be better next year. We have no recession in Australia." What about the classic, "Our cup of effervescence is flowing over"? If one pours a beer into a glass and it flows over, it begs the question: who let it flow over? Only the man behind the bar with the tap in his hand! Members opposite should not blame Malcolm Fraser or the tooth fairy, they should blame the man with his hand on the tap—Paul Keating. That is the problem that this country has today.

The Federal Government has done tremendous harm to the wool and wheat industries. It is looking now at forcing people to kill out their sheep. There is talk of Australia going to war. What is one of the by-products of the oil industry? It is the manufacture of synthetic goods. If a war were to start in the Middle East, this country's wool and sheep would be worth gold, yet the Federal Government is forcing people to kill their sheep.

As I mentioned before, the free-trade policy that the Federal Government has implemented discriminates against primary industries. The price of fuel, high interest rates and the tax structure in this country are destroying incentive for anyone, from small-businessmen to home-owners. The price hike in fuel has been the greatest scandal of all time, with the Federal Government raking off 50 per cent of the price. It also

rakes off 50 per cent of the price of cigarettes and alcohol. Taxation is crippling this country.

Recently, a Special Premiers' Conference was held in Brisbane. The media spoke about the marvellous cooperation that existed between the State Governments and the Commonwealth Government. Why would there not be that cooperation? Nearly all of the States that attended the conference were governed by Labor Governments. It was an advance into the new federalism that Mr Whitlam tried to introduce and about which Mr Hawke spoke in his Boyer lecture in 1979, when he advocated the abolition of all State Governments and the establishment of one centralist Government in Canberra which would deal with small local authority areas so that they would have no clout. The track record of the ALP over the last 20 or 30 years has been abysmal in all States and all Parliaments.

Time expired.

Sitting suspended from 6.04 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr VEIVERS (Southport) (7.30 p.m.): It is a pleasure to speak to Appropriation Bill (No. 2). I refer honourable members to articles that appeared in last weekend's newspapers, which had a fair bit to say about the Labor Government's first year in office. The accolades were thick and heavy. In the *Sunday Mail*, Miss Tess Livingstone painted a saint-like picture of Premier Wayne Goss. A newcomer to the State who read her report would be excused for thinking that Mr Goss is a combination of the Messiah, Mohammed and—without any pun intended—Dr Livingstone all rolled into one.

Mr Livingstone interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Ipswich West will resume his seat. I warn him under Standing Order 123A.

Mr VEIVERS: Thank you for your protection, Mr Speaker.

On Saturday, the *Courier-Mail's* Peter Morley wrote in similar glowing terms about the new Labor Government in its first year in office. What has amazed me and many people with whom I have spoken since the weekend is the lack of reference by either of those two intelligent and experienced writers to the Cooke inquiry into allegations of union corruption. Whatever the achievements—or lack of them—of the Labor Party during its first year in office, it is a glaring and obvious fact that the Cooke inquiry has the potential to prove to be acutely embarrassing—if not politically fatal—for this Government. Any first-year political science student would attest that that inquiry goes right to the core of the Labor Party in this State. That very same student would probably tell anybody who would probably listen—and rightly so—that the Labor Party is the political and parliamentary wing of the trade union movement. Any reflection on the trade union movement is a reflection on the Labor Party. The trade union runs the Labor Party. It is as simple as that. It is extremely surprising that people such as Mr Morley and Miss Livingstone should ignore such a very fundamental point and not draw at least some attention to it.

This afternoon in this House, the member for Caboolture, Mr Hayward, made the brilliant statement that the Goss Labor Government has delivered. It certainly has! Let me remind honourable members of some of the things that it has delivered. This Government lost the China Steel deal; it lost the extension to the alumina plant at Gladstone; it failed to sell the Gladstone Power House; it dismissed out of hand the gold-refining plant near Townsville; and it appears that the Cape York space station could be for the high jump. This Government has had to engage a former National Party Premier, Mike Ahern, to pick up the bits to see if the Government can deliver that. To round everything off, the Minister for Business, Industry and Regional Development, Mr Geoff Smith, swished out of existence the Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone. Government members are reasonably intelligent. If they do a quick addition of that, they will discover that more than \$2.5 billion has been lost to Queensland in jobs, revenue and plain, good old private enterprise.

None of that was mentioned in the glorious summings-up of the first year of this Labor Government by either of those enterprising journalists. I am waiting to see what the *Sunday Sun's* John Stubbs comes up with when he has a crack at it. Perhaps he has a more retentive memory. However, I must give credit to Mr Morley for at least being astute enough to hand out a brickbat to the Racing Minister, Bob Gibbs, for the way that he has endeavoured to bully the racing industry into submission with his grandiose plans for reform. I am sure that Mr Gibbs, who appears to be extremely sensitive to any form of criticism, would have been frothing at the mouth once again at the suggestion that he is one of at least five Ministers who are totally out of their depth both politically and managerially. Mr Gibbs' efforts to destroy the racing industry in Queensland by taking it out of the hands of the experts and handing it over to a public service bureaucracy is a mistake that will haunt him for many a day. The outrage at Mr Gibbs' misguided, ill-informed and heavy-handed approach has been universal. During the past few weeks, criticism has come not only from within the racing industry in Queensland but from leading racing organisations and individuals from all over Australia.

Dr Clark: What has this got to do with the Bill?

Mr VEIVERS: The criticism has been so well targeted and so biting that Mr Gibbs has had to resort to a personal attack against one of his critics. I refer to leading horse-trainer Tommy Smith, who has vowed that he will never again bring his horses to this State if the bureaucracy that Mr Gibbs intends to set up is put in place. Not a day goes by when I am not approached by someone from within the racing industry who asks, "What the hell is Bob Gibbs up to? Has he got any idea of what he is doing?" There is only one answer that I can give to those people, that is, "No, I do not think he has got a clue." Not a day goes by without a sheaf of letters appearing on my desk from people who are petrified at what is happening to their livelihood. Recently, I received a letter from a horse-trainer who stated, "We can only see a decline if these changes are allowed." That fellow comes from Corbould Park on the north coast. Those are the people whom Mr Gibbs will affect very badly. I have received letters from racing clubs, owners and breeders—particularly breeders—and a swag of punters who are deeply concerned about the future of their sport, recreation and livelihood. The situation is so bad that, when one talks about it, babies in the public gallery start crying. It is unbelievable! The people in the racing industry are not a bunch of reactionary ratbags who are against change; they are concerned about the future of racing and about its betterment. Those people have spent a life-time in the industry. They have invested their money in, and devoted their time and efforts to racing.

Mr Elder: Do you believe all that?

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, I do. Those people are petrified that, suddenly, control of the industry will be wrested from them and placed in the hands of a bunch of public servants who literally would not know one end of a horse from the other. The people in the racing industry are not reactionaries, but they want the Government to listen to them. They will be affected by changes, and they have every right to demand input into those changes. For instance, the five principal clubs have stated clearly that they are not against changes when those changes can be shown to be for the benefit of racing. Yesterday, the Minister said that he has the support of the racing industry and the five principal clubs. This morning, a press release that was issued totally contradicts that statement. Speaking on behalf—I repeat, on behalf—of the principal racing clubs of Queensland, the Chairman of the Queensland Turf Club, Sir Edward Williams, strenuously denied statements that were attributed to the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing that fruitful negotiations were proceeding between the Minister and representatives of the principal clubs. Sir Edward said that a brief and unproductive meeting with the Minister on 12 November 1990 failed to allay the fears of the principal clubs and most sections of the racing industry that what was in the Green Paper that was issued on 23 October 1990, far from being treated as matters for discussion, was being treated by the Minister as a fait accompli.

Government members interjected.

Mr VEIVERS: It is all those cigars, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: The honourable member should do something about them.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes. The pile of cigars is going down. I will have to get some more.

Sir Edward asked: why else would the Minister advise the chairmen of the principal clubs at the meeting on 12 November that all of the major proposals contained in the Green Paper were non-negotiable? Sir Edward said also that the principal clubs would be interested in some feedback from the Minister on the submission that was tabled by them at the meeting. This afternoon, honourable members heard the Minister's response to that. He indicated that he did not wish to talk further with representatives of the principal clubs until late January 1991. Obviously, by that time, all submissions will have closed and it will be too late to make any worthwhile input. Sir Edward said also—

"We would welcome early meaningful discussions with the Minister at which he was prepared to reach the 'fruitful negotiations' stage. Unfortunately, not having access to the Minister is a problem which we have encountered for the past 11 months."

Those are the words of the Chairman of the Queensland Turf Club, speaking on behalf of the principal racing clubs in Queensland.

Those people have very serious misgivings about and objections to the changes proposed by the Minister. In case the Minister and other Government members have not bothered to take a close look at the objections of the clubs, I will enumerate them for their edification. Firstly, whatever refinements may be made to present proposals, the cost to the industry will be horrendous and, in the current economic climate, the industry cannot afford any further costs of that nature to be taken from TAB profits. Secondly, under the proposal, the industry will become just another Government department, a step that Government members condone. The money will be put into consolidated revenue and the industry will be bogged down by bureaucracy. It took the National Party 20 years to free the industry of bureaucracy, but the Government will put the industry back to where it started. I know that the Treasurer will need all the extra money that he will filch from the punters of Queensland so that he can fund his airy-fairy ideas. Thirdly, no complaint has been made about the integrity of the thoroughbred racing industry and those responsible for its control in this State. Thoroughbred racing accounts for 88.99 per cent of TAB turn-over in Queensland. Fourthly, centralisation of the control of racing in Brisbane is neither practicable nor desirable.

A Government member: Have you got any horses?

Mr VEIVERS: Does the honourable member own any horses? My horses run very slowly, but at least I have an interest in what I do. The Minister is not even game to buy a horse. He is an expert on dogs. I was going to use the expression "dish-lickers" but, because I am the shadow Minister for that portfolio, I had better not. The Minister likes the dogs to run slowly.

The fifth objection of the clubs is that the management of the greyhound racing, harness racing and thoroughbred racing industries by one body is totally impractical. Sixthly, it is totally impractical to expect one panel of stipendiary stewards to attempt to supervise all three disparate activities. Government members must agree with that objection. Imagine a steward at the gallops trying to be a steward at the dogs! He would not know which way was up. The objections continue: seventhly, licensing is very much a local matter which is performed with a great deal of input from stipendiary stewards and other local officials. We do not feel that this function of the principal clubs could be satisfactorily performed in the manner set out in the Green Paper; and, eighthly, in view of the importance to clubs of the functions of receiving nominations, handicapping and preparation of the programs, it is contended that these must be left as the province of the club concerned.

All honourable members can relate to that. The racing industry in Queensland feels under threat. I have to tell the House that it is under threat. It is Queensland's third-largest money-making industry. Whether the Government likes it or not, it is the punters who must be looked after. The Minister comes into this place and says continually, "We must look after the taxpayers' money." What a load of rot! It is not taxpayers' money; it is the punters' money and all of it must go back totally into racing. In his Green Paper, the Minister said that any money that comes from the TAB will be held back for the racing industry alone. Anybody who believes that believes in the tooth fairy. The Federal Government stated that it would impose a fuel tax so that it could provide better roads in Australia. It said, "We will get money from the fuel tax and it will go into glorifying and upgrading our roads." Where has it gone? I inform the honourable member for Brisbane Central that it does not go into roads.

Mr Beattie: I do not want any more roads in my electorate.

Mr VEIVERS: Well, the honourable member can send them down to the Gold Coast. That money has not gone into roads. That Government has spent \$17,000 on the gay mardi gras. A Bill dealing with that subject will be debated tonight and we will see how good Government members are.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that honourable members on my right restrain themselves.

Mr VEIVERS: Actually, Mr Speaker, they are starting to frighten me and it is a worry. They will have to stand up and be counted later on tonight. Backs to the wall! That is what it will be. We will see a lot of unhappy ethical Christian people over there.

Mr Beattie: I am happy to be counted; I am quite happy.

Mr VEIVERS: He has been throwing this around Brisbane.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the honourable member for Southport get back to the debate.

Mr VEIVERS: Thank you for your kindness, Mr Speaker. I will go along with your suggestion and return to racing. The Racing Minister cannot continue to ignore the advice of the people who represent this great private-enterprise industry which has become our third-biggest money-earner. He has to listen, he has to overcome his inflated ego, he has to swallow his pride and he has to back down for the good of racing in Queensland. A lot of money is involved and if he is not careful private enterprise will walk away from the industry. If he thinks he can get bureaucrats to come in and do the job, he has rocks in his head. All of this work is done for love and interest. Some of the moneyed people go in and do it for nothing.

An honourable member: Fair go.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, I am giving them a fair go. These people must be kept in the industry. It is imperative that they are kept in the industry. They have been in it for decades. They know what they are about. Racing is one of our great industries and we have to make sure that it does not get into the hands of the bureaucrats. When you, Mr Speaker, were the member for West End——

Mr SPEAKER: South Brisbane.

Mr VEIVERS: South Brisbane. It was very sad to see you ousted in the way that you were. I will get back to my speech straightaway, Mr Speaker.

Government members interjected.

Mr VEIVERS: But Mr Speaker understands. He remembers when Mr Hinze and a few of them had to dig racing out of the clutches of Treasury. However, Treasury is

going to take it back again. I repeat: it will be going back to Treasury and nothing will be done.

Mr Elder: Where did Mr Hinze put it after he took it out of Treasury?

Mr VEIVERS: Everyone—and the member for Wynnum is one of them—raves about the \$75m that the Racing Development Fund has as a debt.

Mr ELDER: I rise to a point of order—member for Manly.

Mr VEIVERS: Manly, is it? Well, it is a good team and I got mixed up. Anyway, he is hardly ever in the House, yet he is an instant expert on the racing industry. He should have stuck to managing the Broncos and he would have been on a winner. It might be this year. That \$75m earned \$1 billion. The grandiose ideas of this Minister are the same as those that made Victoria, to name just one example, what it is today. It is like the list the Treasurer brought out with the great figures on how much he and his Ministers spent in 12 months compared with what National Party Ministers spent. They were the rubberiest figures I have ever seen. When the guys on this side of the Chamber were on that side they spent money, but they got investments from overseas. I am referring to all those things I spoke about earlier such as the China Steel deal and the alumina plant. We just picked those up as we went through. We were in it for private enterprise. The Treasurer will be very upset when it comes to the end of the financial year that he did not pick up all those deals that the Government shot sideways.

Mr Johnson: What has that lot over there done for Queensland?

Mr VEIVERS: Nothing! I read the press at the weekend and I could not believe that Morley and Miss Livingstone could say how well Mr Goss has done. I could not believe it at all. The Treasurer is living in an ivory tower. He has achieved nothing. I tell him that after 12 months, this State will see that he has achieved just that.

Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns—Treasurer) (7.51 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions in the debate on the Appropriation Bill. This brings the Budget process to a conclusion. It has been a long and hard process. For the Government, it started in May when the Budget Review Committee began its deliberations. Since then we have had a number of debates in the Parliament. They were the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) in July; the delivery of the Budget Speech on 5 September; the Budget debate immediately after that; the Estimates debate when, for the first time in history, every Estimate was debated; and now the Appropriation Bill (No. 2). I draw the attention of honourable members to the fact that the honourable member for Burdekin delivered the same speech in every one of those debates. It did not make sense the first time and it has not made sense ever since.

A Government member: And he has not improved in delivering it.

Mr De LACY: I take that interjection. His delivery has not improved. While I am handing out bouquets, I need to say that the performance of the Opposition Treasury spokesman was abysmal from the word go. I have nothing but contempt for a person who is not prepared to do the hard work and try to get across the portfolio. I know that he is finding it hard to be in Opposition where he has to do the work himself. He has not started to do it. All this year I have been waiting for him to say something intelligent about the financial management of this State or to ask me a simple question.

Mr Stoneman interjected.

Mr De LACY: I point out to honourable members that we have been in Government for 12 months, give or take a few days, and I have not yet received a question from the Opposition Treasury spokesman.

Mr Cooper: You have had heaps of questions and you could not answer any of them.

Mr De LACY: Hello; he is in the back seat. Mr Turner has taken his seat already, has he? If we can believe the rumours, he will go back a bit further. It is unbelievable that the Opposition Treasury spokesman could not ask a single question of me in 12 months. That demonstrates the priority that members of the Opposition put on the financial and economic management of this State. If the member for Burdekin wants to keep going on about trivial issues, he can do so. He is irrelevant to the people of this State.

Mr Stoneman interjected.

Mr De LACY: Yes, I talk to them every day and they tell me how relevant the honourable member is.

I thank the two Government members who contributed to this debate. The standard of their contributions highlighted the poor standard set by members of the Opposition. The Leader of the Liberal Party made a contribution of sorts. He has the peculiar attitude that, because tax receipts increase in a certain area, tax rates must also have increased. It does not take much intelligence to work out why tax receipts increase in certain areas. If one applies his logic across the board, one could say that, because stamp duty receipts have decreased, stamp duty rates have reduced, and everyone knows that is not true.

The member for Burdekin's only contribution of note was his suggestion that we ought to kick-start the economy. I have noted his comment, but it is not original. Other Governments have tried to do that, particularly those in Western Australia and Victoria. Stimulation of the economy from the public sector does not work and it is not the way that this Government will run this State. Those sorts of artificial subsidies to stimulate business may achieve something in the short term, but in the long term they will simply lead the State into trouble. I note that a few of the members of the Opposition said that the Government has been unable to sell off the Gladstone Power Station. The Government could sell it off tomorrow at the National Party's price, but this Government will not give it away. Getting into bed with private enterprise——

Mr Veivers: Private enterprise is not on with you?

Mr De LACY: It is not on with me and it is not on with this Government. If an industry cannot stand on its own two feet, it should not exist, and in the long term it will not exist.

It was good to hear the recycled member for Nicklin back in this Chamber. I think he added something to the debate. Many people are saying he will be the next Leader of the National Party. Because he is recycling all the old stuff, he does not instil much fear in us. As Mr Foley said, the honourable member for Nicklin is pushing those buttons that seem to excite so much ecstasy in the minds of the members of the National Party, but they are not relevant any more. Times have changed. These ideals sound good to the honourable member's National Party constituency, but the people out there are not interested in those old cliches, slogans, solutions and allegations about the Labor Party and the socialists.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Burdekin, the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Southport!

Mr De LACY: I conclude by saying that this debate brings the Budget process for 1989-90 to a conclusion and marks the beginning of the preparation of the Budget for next year. It has been a satisfying year. By all reputable measures, the Labor Party Government's Budget has been very well received. By popular acclaim, it was the best Budget in Australia.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr De LACY: That is very difficult for members of the Opposition to accept. The Budget is widely accepted and, whether or not members opposite want to accept it, the

public, the media, financial and business communities, and—I hesitate to say it—even the rural community, all regard it as such. I thank all honourable members for their contributions to the debate and look forward to seeing members opposite back here next year with the same old cliches.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 5 and Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CHINATOWN MALL) ACT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Withdrawal

On the order of the day being discharged, the Bill was withdrawn and the Clerk read the original order.

New Bill

Hon. T. J. BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government) (8.02 p.m.): Mr Speaker, I move—

"That another Bill be brought in founded on that order."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

New Bill and Explanatory Notes presented and Bill, on motion of Mr Burns, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. T. J. BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government) (8.03 p.m.): I move—

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

On Tuesday, 27 November 1990, I introduced the Local Government (Chinatown Mall) Act and Another Act Amendment Bill. The main intention of the Bill was to amend the Local Government (Chinatown Mall) Act to enable the Brisbane City Council to control the management, operation and use of the proposed Brunswick Street Mall, and any future extensions to that mall, or the Chinatown Mall. As I indicated in my speech, the legislation was prepared at the request of the Brisbane City Council and in consultation with the council.

I have now received an approach on behalf of the Lord Mayor requesting that all references in the Bill to the Brunswick Street Mall be changed to refer to the Valley Mall. As there were some 30 references to the Brunswick Street Mall in the Bill previously introduced, I decided to seek leave to withdraw that Bill and introduce another Bill with the appropriate alterations. In all other respects, the Bill now before the House has the same intent and objectives as the withdrawn Bill.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Gunn, adjourned.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. T. J. BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government) (8.04 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Local Government Act 1936-1990, the City of Brisbane Act 1924-1990 and the Building Act 1975-1988 each in certain particulars and for related purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill and Explanatory Notes presented and Bill, on motion of Mr Burns, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. T. J. BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government) (8.05 p.m.): I move—

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

I introduce the Local Government Act and Other Acts Amendment Bill which amends the Local Government Act as well as two other Acts— the City of Brisbane Act and the Building Act. It contains a number of major amendments, the first of which provides for the fencing of swimming pools on residential properties. The Government is concerned at the high rate of child-drownings and serious injury that continue to occur in private swimming pools.

This year, the Government consulted with the medical profession, industry associations and, most importantly, the community—covering a period of 9 months. The legislation also takes into consideration the comments of hundreds of people who wrote to me following the release of a Green Paper in March and continuing debate in the media. At the same time, the Government recognises that there are other steps that must be taken to reduce these terrible tragedies.

Recently, \$50,000 was allocated towards Operation Waterwise, a program organised by Olympic swimming coach, Laurie Lawrence, to make parents aware of all aspects of child water safety. The objective of this legislation and other measures supported by the Government is to minimise drownings involving preschool children in this State. In doing so, we are anxious to contain the impact of this legislation on pool-owners who may have to erect or modify swimming pool enclosures.

Local authorities can presently make by-laws requiring pool fencing and, in fact, approximately 50 per cent of the 134 councils in the State have taken such action. The problem has been a lack of consistency, which this Bill now seeks to remedy. The legislation sets minimum standards for fencing. Local authorities are still free to make their own by-laws for even more stringent requirements, but that is a matter for their individual discretion. For the purpose of this legislation, a swimming pool is defined as an excavation or structure that is capable of being filled to a depth in excess of 300 millimetres and is intended principally for swimming or other human aquatic activity. Excluded from the definition, however, are dams or tanks principally used for rural purposes, and watercourses. Portable or moveable pools less than 450 millimetres and pools wholly within a building are also excluded.

Statistics show that the majority of child-drownings in the target age group of up to five years occur in private backyard swimming pools. To this end, it was decided that the proposed legislation should encompass only those swimming pools erected on land where there is a private residential building or buildings.

These include houses, flats, townhouses, apartment buildings, etc. Local authorities retain the authority to make by-laws on the fencing of swimming pools associated with other classes of buildings, or in respect of indoor swimming pools. As I have explained,

the aim of the Bill is to restrict the danger of unsupervised access of young children to swimming pools on private residential properties. The legislation requires a swimming pool-owner to have a fence or other device in place that complies with standards laid down in the Standard Building By-laws made under the Building Act.

All pools will be required to be fenced to prevent access directly to the pool from any neighbouring property. However, access to the pool from within the property will differ slightly, depending on whether it is an existing pool or a new pool approved or constructed after the commencement of the Act. No direct access from a house will be permitted into the pool enclosure of a new swimming pool. However, a blank wall of a house, or a wall with a window or security screen that is permanently secured against access will be permitted. Fences for existing pools will be permitted to use the wall of a house which includes a door, provided that it restricts the access of young children into the pool enclosure. An example would be the addition of a security door or fitting an existing door with self-closing, self-latching devices. The main reason that the fencing of new pools is to be slightly more stringent than that of existing pools is that new pools can be designed with these fencing provisions in mind. I would also like to emphasise that if an existing boundary fence complies with the legislation, it may be incorporated as a part of a swimming pool fence.

The construction specifications for swimming pool fences will be the Australian standard AS1926, "Fences and Gates for Private Swimming Pools". The standard will be called up in the Standard Building By-laws made under the building Act.

As members would appreciate, there is considerable variation in the location and construction of existing swimming pools and associated fences. So that this legislation can be implemented effectively yet fairly, and keeping in mind the policy of the Government to provide local authorities with greater autonomy, councils will be given discretionary powers in relation to many of the prescribed requirements for fencing. These will include the power to approve an existing fence, if it meets the objective of restricting access, even if that fence does not exactly comply with the relevant standard.

An example might be if an existing fence is only slightly less in height than the prescribed fencing height. Similarly, if a natural obstacle effectively prevents access to the swimming pool, a fence between the obstacle and the pool may be deemed to be unnecessary. As an example, a local authority might dispense with the need for a fence between a pool and a canal or cliff face, if it is satisfied that access is adequately restricted.

The Bill provides that the owner of a swimming pool will be able to contact the relevant local authority and seek advice on the compliance of an existing swimming pool fence with the Act. The local authority is to advise the owner whether the fence complies and, if it does not, indicate what works will be required for the fence to comply. The owner of an existing swimming pool will have until 1 January 1992 to ensure that the pool is fenced in compliance with the legislation. However, one situation I wanted to avoid was placing individuals under undue financial stress or other hardship. Therefore, in such cases, local authorities will have the power to extend the compliance period. In addition, if the number of existing swimming pools in a local authority requiring adjustment to fencing is such that it would be difficult for all to be fenced by 1 January 1992 or impractical for the council to process the relevant applications, that council can extend the date of compliance for existing pool-owners in its area until 31 March 1992.

I am advised that young children are at greater risk of drowning in unfamiliar situations such as when they move into a new home which has a swimming pool. Therefore, if a property with a swimming pool is sold after 1 January 1991, the pool will need to be fenced within 60 days of the completion of the sale of the property. The Government, through this Bill, is determined to protect young children within their own home environments. Gates or doors providing direct access to a pool enclosure must be kept closed at all times when not in actual use and a pool fence, including access points, must be kept in proper working order. Penalties are substantial, with a maximum

of 83 penalty units and eight units per day for a continuing offence—one penalty unit is \$60.

An appeal process is included in the Bill. A person who disagrees with a decision of a local authority under this legislation will have right of objection to a referee under the Building Act, and, if still dissatisfied, a right of appeal to the building advisory committee. I am confident the provisions of this Bill will provide sufficient flexibility for pool-owners and local authorities to determine the most appropriate form of fencing for individual circumstances.

I now address other aspects of the Bill. As members are aware, many local authorities operate their own civic centres or community halls which, because of their location, are often suitable for use as polling places during local authority elections. However, many of these centres or halls have some form of liquor licence and, under the current provisions of the Local Government Act, no polling place can be operated from licensed premises. The Bill will permit a local authority to conduct a polling booth in such a centre or hall, under two restrictions. Firstly, the returning officer must designate the particular area which is to be used for the taking of the poll and, secondly, the local authority must ensure that no alcohol is sold or consumed in the building between 8.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. on the day of the poll.

The Bill also increases maximum penalties for breaches of by-laws under the Local Government Act and ordinances made under the City of Brisbane Act. The existing maximum penalty of \$500 and the penalty for a continuing offence of \$50 per day are no longer considered to be an effective deterrent. The proposed maximum penalty of \$5,000 and \$500 per day for a continuing offence are more in line with the increase in average earnings that has occurred since the existing provisions were enacted in 1978. Such increases have been sought by local authorities and I believe they are necessary for the effective enforcement of by-laws and ordinances.

Yet another important aspect of this Bill is that it includes proposals on electoral review arising from the recommendations of the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission. The Bill deals with three of the recommendations. Firstly, Federal or State parliamentarians will not be permitted to nominate for or to occupy elected office in local government in Queensland. In the interim period up to the end of the 1991 local authority elections, a parliamentarian already elected to a council may continue in that position, provided that, if a member of Parliament wants to continue in local government and stand for the 1991 elections, that person will have to resign from Parliament before lodging a nomination form. Secondly, employees of local authorities will be permitted to stand for election, but must cease employment if elected. Those employees who nominate for council elections will be entitled to leave of absence for a period not exceeding two months for the purposes of contesting the election. Thirdly, it was intended to provide, in accordance with EARC's recommendations, that the voter's rolls for local authority elections would close on 31 January, prior to the election, unless a postal ballot was held. In that case, the voters roll was to close on 31 December. These provisions will apply for the 1994 and future elections. However, because a State referendum on four-year terms will be held in conjunction with the 1991 local authority elections and there is a need to have a common roll that also provides local authorities with sufficient time to prepare for the election and referendum, the voters roll for the 1991 election will close on 2 January 1991.

The Bill also contains a provision to empower the Governor in Council by Order in Council to abolish electoral divisions in a city, town or shire after advertising for public comment. Members should note that the Local Government Act presently allows the Governor in Council to divide or redivide a local authority into electoral divisions, but there is no specific power to abolish electoral divisions. I have been approached by a number of local authorities requesting that such action be initiated in their areas prior to the 1991 elections.

Another provision of the Bill relates to joint boards. In 1987, the Local Government Act was amended to incorporate new provisions for joint boards, or joint local authorities

as they were previously known, but these amendments did not provide automatic procedures for the continued selection of a president for a joint board established previously. Accordingly, the Bill provides that such joint boards can have, and always had, the power to select the president by means of the methods used before 1987. One method involved the board members, at their first meeting after the local authority elections, selecting one of their number to be president. Alternatively, the Governor in Council could by Order in Council give directions that the president be elected from among the members representing a particular local authority or group of local authorities.

A minor amendment in the Bill also allows a local authority to provide or contribute to the cost of providing facilities to receive and rebroadcast radio and television signals from ground-based transmitters as well as from satellites. The Act was amended in 1985 to enable a local authority to contribute to the cost of facilities for receiving such signals from satellites. Changes to Commonwealth policy on television services have resulted in the extension of commercial television services to rural and remote areas and in some cases this has occurred by means of ground-based transmitters rather than by satellite. Accordingly, a minor amendment to the legislation is proposed.

I believe that all members will agree that this Bill contains a number of important provisions, particularly those relating to requirements for the fencing of swimming pools. I commend this Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Gunn, adjourned.

CONSTITUTION (DURATION OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY) AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (8.14 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to extend the term of future Parliaments from 3 to 4 years."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill and Explanatory Notes presented and Bill, on motion of Mr W. K. Goss, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (8.15 p.m.): I move—

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

The Labor Government was elected with a commitment to a more efficient and effective system of public administration in Queensland. It also wants to ensure that the cost burden of Government in this State is reduced across the board. It is with this aim in mind that I am today introducing this Bill, which will extend the term of future Parliaments from three to four years. This will reduce the number of elections that the people of Queensland must face, a move which will bring greater efficiency to the administration of the State and consequent savings to the taxpayers.

Throughout the world, democracies are, in one sense or another, captives of the political cycle. The activities of Government are inevitably influenced by the necessity to prepare for elections and, when new Governments are elected, the aftermath of those elections. Short periods of time between elections can impede the decision-making process. Too long between elections can effectively deny the voters a regular enough democratic choice. The challenge for us, as elected politicians, is to strike the balance. It is to find that period of time which suits efficient administration and the sensible staging of elections.

For the past two decades, at least at a State level, the trend throughout Australia has been to have less frequent elections. Queensland now stands as the only State that still operates on a three-year term. Every other State has changed to a four-year term. The Queensland Government believes that this is a sensible and necessary reform, which is why I have introduced this legislation today. In our view, three years is not long enough. It allows for an effective period of Government that is far too short for rational and sensible decision-making. On the other hand, four years does provide a decent amount of time to put in place the programs and policies upon which Governments are elected. Any longer than four years, as is the case in some democracies, would, in the view of this Government, be too long. The voters rightly demand, expect and deserve regular opportunities to exercise their democratic rights.

As I said before, if this reform is adopted, Queensland will be the last State to institute it. Tasmania was the first, having moved to a four-year term in 1973. In the past decade, all the other States have moved to four-year terms: New South Wales in 1981; Victoria in 1984; South Australia in 1985; and Western Australia in 1986. There has been some public debate about the frequency of elections and what effect this reform might or might not have on that frequency. State elections in Australia are held on a fairly regular basis, with most Parliaments running their full term, except in what are sometimes exceptional circumstances. In fact, in 1974, the National/Liberal Government in Queensland chose to go to the polls early simply to exploit an unpopular Federal Government and for no other reason.

I believe that Parliaments should run their full term. Governments are elected for a specific period, and voters are entitled to expect that Government will run for a specific time. But there must also be enough flexibility in the system to allow for exceptional circumstances and to allow for early elections if a Government loses confidence on the floor of the House, the business of Government becomes unworkable, or an extraordinary mandate might be required.

It has been suggested that there should be a constitutionally protected minimum term. This might be superficially attractive, but it could lead to a constitutional crisis which could paralyse a State and make the business of a State unworkable. The situation could arise in which a coalition partner, for example, might withdraw support but still ensure that confidence was maintained in a Government and Supply was passed. This could mean that all other legislation would be rejected, reducing the governance of a State to a shambles. What advocates of such a system suggest is that we have a cocktail of the Westminster system and the United States Presidential system. The simple fact is that the two do not mix, and those who propose such a mixture do not understand the fundamental operation of the Westminster system.

Another suggestion that has been made is that the current term of this Parliament should be fixed now. I am unsure exactly how this proposal would operate, but I assume that those who propose it want me to now set the date for the next election. I have said often, and I repeat today, that I fully expect this Parliament to run its full term. I can see no need for an election that could be considered early. But, by the same token, there is not a political leader anywhere who operates under the Westminster system who would commit himself or herself to such a proposition. This Government was elected to serve three years, and I expect that it will run its full term.

The proposed reform that this legislation enables is a proper balance. It will give to Queensland a more predictable and stable political cycle. The business of Government will be more efficiently planned and conducted, making the business of Queensland more efficiently planned and conducted. Not only will public policy be able to be planned on a more rational basis; life will be easier for those whose affairs are, to a large extent, governed by what we do as a Government. There will be more coherent economic planning, something that will benefit everyone in the State.

I will shortly be introducing a Bill to provide that this initiative be submitted as a referendum of the voters of Queensland.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Cooper, adjourned.

CONSTITUTION (DURATION OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY) REFERENDUM BILL

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (8.22 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to provide for the submission of the Constitution (Duration of Legislative Assembly) Amendment Bill 1990 to the electors."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill and Explanatory Notes presented and Bill, on motion of Mr W. K. Goss, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (8.23 p.m.): I move—

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

Following the introduction of the Constitution (Duration of Legislative Assembly) Amendment Bill, I propose by this Bill to submit the extension of the term for the Legislative Assembly for the approval of the electors. The Constitution Act Amendment Act of 1934 provides that any amendment aimed at extending the term of the Legislative Assembly must be approved by the electors qualified to vote for the election of members of the Legislative Assembly.

The Constitution (Duration of Legislative Assembly) Referendum Bill provides that the Constitution (Duration of Legislative Assembly) Amendment Bill shall be submitted to the electors for approval or otherwise. That vote is to be taken under the Referendums Act 1989. That referendum will be held in conjunction with the local authorities elections in early 1991. Significant cost savings should result from holding the referendum with those elections.

I commend this Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Cooper, adjourned.

CRIMINAL CODE AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 21 November 1990 (see p. 5026).

Mr LINGARD (Fassifern) (8.24 p.m.): The National Party Opposition has absolutely no hesitation in opposing the Criminal Code and Another Act Amendment Bill in its entirety. The Opposition is absolutely disgusted that the media would suggest that it might go soft in its opposition to this particular Bill. There has been absolutely no caucusing of Opposition members, and even if it was a conscience vote, all Opposition members would vote against this Bill. If the Government is sincere in its attitude and wishes to have a conscience vote, then obviously Opposition members would appreciate that. However, if there has been a caucus of the Government, and if it is quite obvious that the Government is going to caucus all the way through the debate on this Bill, then the only suggestion that the Opposition will offer is a change to the Government preamble. However, in suggesting any change to that preamble, I state emphatically that the Opposition believes that homosexual activity between adults is morally reprehensible. It believes that it is the role of the criminal law to regulate consensual behaviour between

adults in private. It believes that the Parliament should not in any way condone or encourage homosexual activity or homosexual life-style. The Opposition believes that this Parliament should not in any way regard a homosexual relationship as the equivalent of marriage. It believes that this Parliament should not give any recognition in law to homosexual couples. It believes that this House should not encourage any homosexual relationship between adults and that any such relationship should be subject to punishment by the strongest possible criminal sanctions.

The Opposition believes that any solicitation for homosexual activity must be subject to punishment by the strongest possible criminal sanctions. It believes that any attempt to promote or teach homosexual practices or life-style in any school should be subject to the strongest possible punishment. It also believes that any action to produce, publish, sell or distribute any material, in whatever form, which in any way promotes or depicts homosexual activity or life-style as desirable should be punished by the strongest possible criminal sanctions.

Once again, honourable members have witnessed this Government's introducing a Bill and attempting to force it through this House in the shortest possible time allowed. This is the second occasion that this has happened, but this is worse than when the Weapons Bill was debated. That debate occurred on the last night of the parliamentary session, and that may have been a reason for moving that legislation through the House as quickly as possible. However, all of next week is available to discuss this legislation, and the House could even then utilise the following week, but once again this Government is pushing legislation through in the shortest possible time—seven days. Opposition members ask, "Why?" Is it because of the divisions between Government members themselves? Is it a fact that those divisions are there and that the Government wants to pass this legislation quickly to try and control those divisions, or is it a fact that the Government is worried about public opposition? I admit that that opposition is not as strong as it was over the gun laws. However, the Government has decided to push this legislation through as quickly as possible.

I find it difficult to believe that some members of the Government could possibly support this legislation. I find it hard to believe—in fact, impossible—that members opposite, who are Christians or hold other beliefs, could vote, as a caucus, to give 100 per cent support for this legislation. It was with obvious relief that the ALP adopted the homosexual issue from the Fitzgerald report and handed it to the CJC. What happened when Sir Max Bingham was given that issue? He wanted to throw it back as fast as he could! Honourable members are now witnessing this same procedure with the parliamentary committees. This Government cannot make a value judgment. It is not prepared to state what its beliefs are and state that the legal system should implement its policy. In the case of the drug legislation, the Government was not prepared to direct the legal system to impose penalties upon those people trafficking in drugs. Once again, the Government is not prepared to state what it honestly believes.

What did the Government do? It forwarded the issue to the CJC and asked the commission to reach a decision. How can the CJC possibly make a value judgment? How can those men who are sitting on the Criminal Justice Commission or the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice make such a value judgment when they are looking at the law as it stands? They have to make such a judgment on the law as it stands. It is impossible for the members of the commission to make a value judgment on issues such as prostitution, homosexuality or drug trafficking. The Government has to make that value judgment and, to this date, that has not happened. Government members ridiculed members of the National Party because they had the guts to stand up and say that anyone trafficking in drugs would receive a sentence of life imprisonment. They thought that that was absolutely ridiculous and absolutely wrong. Obviously, the value judgments of members differ. Opposition members were certainly prepared to make that statement. One of the intriguing aspects of the law to come out of the studies is the legal position in respect of the Vagrants, Gaming, and Other Offences Act and the Liquor Act.

Once again I ask members opposite: how can the CJC judge whether it is correct for two men to walk down the street holding hands? How can it decide whether two men should cuddle in the street? That is a value judgment. I suppose it could be asked: who says that it is right for a man and a woman to do that? It is a value judgment, which society has made. Allowing this type of activity is a judgment which only the Government can make. Yet what does the Government do? It throws the matter straight back to the CJC and asks it to come back with a report.

Mr Booth: They want an extra four years to do things like this—an extra year.

Mr LINGARD: Correct. It has demonstrated the ALP philosophy of not imposing discipline on what it believes are the people's wishes. Throughout the world we see this angle in relation to personal liberties emerging. I know that the Government believes it faithfully. But I do not believe that, as an administrator, the Government should continue to allow people to have the personal liberties that they demand. By this legislation we see the philosophy that it is improper for the State to impose upon the privacy of the individual. The Government believes that the State should not impose upon the privacy of the individual.

I undertook a trip to London—and it was the subject of some controversy—and I saw what was happening in some of that city's streets. I also saw what was happening in Belfast, Rome and Athens. I have no doubt that anyone who has been to Los Angeles and has seen what happens when people are allowed to do in the streets exactly what they want to do would agree with me. Honourable members opposite should go to Los Angeles and see the gay activities that occur in that city's streets. They should see the people who are begging openly in that city's streets. They should then go to Singapore and tell me that the philosophy of that country's leader, who up until yesterday was Lee Kwan Yew, was wrong. I ask them to tell me that the philosophy of enforcing very strict discipline is wrong and that the philosophy of saying that society should not allow homosexuality because, if it is allowed, down the road it will have a detrimental effect on that society. If honourable members opposite look at London, Rome and cities in other countries in which this philosophy which the Government is promoting has been introduced, they will know as well as I do that society goes down the road towards some sort of ruin and that finally someone has to turn around and say, "This has to be improved. This has to be fixed up with very, very strong opinions."

The Government is developing a hand-out mentality—a mentality which I saw in London, where I asked the politicians, "How can you allow young children to be running around in those gypsy caravans? How can you allow young kids to be out there with their mothers when their mothers are openly begging in the cold?" The politicians turned around and said to me, "But we have given \$200,000 to that particular drug program. It is a magnificent drug program. We will fix the whole situation up." But who goes out into society and says, "This should not happen"?

Who has walked through the mall recently or in Anzac Square or the Botanic Gardens? If honourable members walk through the Botanic Gardens they will see about 100 men lying down there in what they call starlight hotel. They are there with their drone blankets—the piece of newspaper that is down the front of their shirt—and with their "baby", which is their liquor, and they are all worrying about the bandicoots, who are their mates, who come along and pinch——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I would like the member for Fassifern to convince me that his comments are relevant to the Criminal Code and Another Act Amendment Bill, otherwise I will have to ask him to return to it.

Mr LINGARD: I am talking about the lack of discipline—the control—which is allowing the type of activity that is being promoted by the amendments to the Criminal Code. If that is allowed to continue, and if the Government allows the philosophy which it is presenting in this Bill to continue, this State will have a society which, as I said, lacks discipline and control. It will result in the breakdown of the family unit. I know that we can all argue about whether the family unit is the correct life-style. However,

being a teacher of ancient history, I have studied the life of the Spartans. I know that their life is very, very idealistic. However, the end result is that the family unit is not there to pick up the people who we know need to be picked up. It is a very idealistic life. But as a long-term prospect, it is not the way we should go. We as a party believe that the family unit, strong discipline and strong control is the way to go, not the way of personal liberties, which is exactly what is being presented in this Bill, which will allow the decriminalisation of homosexuality.

If I had to provide an analogy of what this Bill seeks to do, I would have to talk about it from the angle of an administrator in a school in which some of the students might smoke. If the principals of such schools had to control smoking—and, Mr Speaker, I am relating this to discipline—some principals would say, "I cannot control it. Let it happen in my school. I will provide a place where the students can go and smoke." However, other principals might say, "I will not allow this sort of thing in my school or in my society." If kids are able to get into a particular room—for example, a toilet—and do these things and no-one can stop them, that does not mean to say that rules should not be imposed on them. In relation to decriminalising homosexuality—this angle of the Government saying that it is not able to control what goes on in the bedroom and that, therefore, because it cannot control it, this law should be implemented, is absolutely ridiculous. The Government does not have to control every situation in order to make a law. It does not have to say that because it cannot control something and because it cannot go looking behind doors, this legislation needs to be introduced. It would be wrong of a school principal to say, "Because I cannot look at every little spot in my school, I will therefore allow smoking." I say that some members opposite are not showing enough courage; they are not showing enough guts because they are allowing the whole situation to slip out from behind them by saying, "If I can't control it, let's allow it." As a result, they are allowing the decriminalisation of homosexuality.

Clearly, this was not a matter that should have been referred to the CJC. A similar statement can be made about the use of drugs. How can the CJC make a ruling when the rule is unclear in the first place? I notice that, from the discussions held by the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice, there were quite a few interpretations of what the rules were here in Queensland. Even the committee, which comprises some legal people, could not interpret whether it was correct to do certain things in the streets of Queensland. So what did we find? There was a general recommendation along the lines, "Okay, we will decriminalise the whole thing. We will not have to look at the rule at all." If this is to happen all of the time, there will be many, many contentious issues. I say to members opposite as a party that if they intend to allow these sorts of things to occur in relation to family laws, drug laws and corporal punishment, then we really will see our standards fall away. The only constructive thing that I saw in the reports was the fact that both Tasmania and Queensland are the only two States which have not decriminalised homosexuality. Yet the Minister is trying to promote his cause a little more by claiming that Queensland is the only mainland State that has not decriminalised homosexuality. That is a silly statement.

The Minister should be honest. He should admit that two States of Australia have not decriminalised homosexuality. The Minister tried to argue that, because Tasmania was still part of the Accord and would be able to decriminalise homosexuality, Queensland would have to follow. That philosophy is not correct. Nor is it correct to continue to push the AIDS issue and say that, unless homosexuality is decriminalised, AIDS will become more prevalent. Similar arguments were put forward in relation to whether condom-vending machines should be allowed in public toilets. Statistics prove that the introduction of those machines in New South Wales and Victoria has not brought about a significant reduction in the incidence of AIDS. I shudder to think that this Government is using the contentious AIDS issue to push the angle that homosexuality should be decriminalised. This Government is trying to push the angle that two people who are involved in a homosexual relationship would not be game to go to a doctor and say, "This is what we are doing", because they would be prosecuted. I know of only two

people who have ever been prosecuted for such behaviour. However, this Government pushes that angle as a reason for decriminalising homosexuality.

I have mentioned civil liberties and criticised this Government's philosophy on this issue. Clearly, the National Party supports moves to protect children from sexual molestation. I was pleased that the report of the CJC committee relating to homosexuality law reforms contained a special recommendation emphasising that aspect. It would be very wrong for the Government to say to the National Party, "If we do not do these sorts of things, look at what will happen to children." The National Party supports any angle to protect children from sexual molestation. It certainly supports any move to protect victims of non-consensual homosexual acts. That has always been the attitude of the National Party, which also supports any policy that will guard public decency. I congratulate the CJC committee on those recommendations.

I do not intend to argue that this issue can be proved one way or the other. It involves a value judgment. One cannot prove that the decriminalisation of homosexuality will encourage an acceptance of that form of behaviour. No-one could claim that, if this Bill is passed, there will be more homosexual activity. That is a value judgment. I must admit that my value judgment is that there is more likelihood that such behaviour will increase rather than decrease. Plenty of evidence exists to support both sides of the argument. However, I believe that it will be more difficult to prevent such behaviour from occurring in public places. When I visited Los Angeles with Mr Warburton and Mr Burns, we went to a street in Hollywood where such activity was occurring. We were all disgusted. Unfortunately, I suppose, people tend to make judgments upon seeing such behaviour. However, Mr Speaker, you know as well as I do that our children and families will be faced with such behaviour more and more. Those types of people, who are certainly not the norm in our society, will be doing in the street and in society things that we find repugnant. Personally, I believe that allowing such behaviour to occur—and even encouraging it—will certainly lower standards in our society.

The National Party believes that homosexuality does not encourage the concept of the family. I have stated previously my thoughts on the family. Regardless of the arguments put forward by other speakers during this debate, one must admit that the family provides an excellent unit on which to base our society. If that family unit can be maintained, that will save many worries, expense and social welfare in our society. Whatever we do, we should promote the family unit. I am not saying that families can always be kept together. I am not saying that the family unit will stay together. I am not necessarily saying that two people must live together if they hate each other. However, this Government should do everything possible to encourage the family unit. The more that children and families can be kept together, the better our society will be. I am not saying that people who do not live in a family unit will not be successful. As a former schoolteacher, I have seen many children from broken homes who, because they have taken responsibility, have probably ended up in a stronger personal position than they would have within a family unit. However, we should not aim for that concept. We should aim for the concept of the family.

I believe that any move to allow two homosexuals to live together in a family situation is incorrect. Any parent would realise how a young child reacts when it is cuddled and caressed. Although it is a value judgment, Mr Speaker, you know as well as I do that a family unit is extremely important to a young child. It is also a value judgment as to whether a child who does not receive that treatment is neglected as it grows older. But who wants to make that value judgment? Parents and adults must accept that a child that is cuddled by its mother or father certainly responds to that treatment. It is almost impossible to define the benefits that flow to that child. This National Party Opposition will not support any move away from the family unit. Any person receives great support from being part of a family unit. Regardless of whether fights occur or conflict exists within that unit, it should be promoted. The Government is not moving in that direction. The former National Party Government moved unashamedly in that direction. It faced the criticism and said that that was what it would tell society and that was the concept that it would push onto the judicial system.

The Opposition believes that the decriminalisation of homosexuality will upset the concept of marriage, upon which our society is based, regardless of one's religious values. It is a judgment on the way we live as a society. The fact that a man lives with one wife rather than two wives is a value judgment, which, in western societies, has changed depending upon the situation. At one time in England, a man was allowed to have two or three wives depending upon how many men were killed during war-time. It is a value judgment that Governments make. A Government should not turn around and say that, if a man wants to live with three wives, he is allowed to do so simply because he has the personal liberty to do so. The Government should state what it thinks is the best way for our society to exist. How does one explain to a person who lives in a small country town, such as Boonah, that one should not jaywalk? That person would say that jaywalking is the quickest way in which to cross the road to the shop. It is impossible to argue with that. The only argument that can be put is that society needs that sort of discipline; society needs that sort of control. The National Party believes that society needs the Government to be strong and to say, "These are our values; these are the values that we will push."

The National Party is concerned that moves will be made towards decriminalising male prostitution. Now that the Government is decriminalising homosexuality, Government members know as well as I do that the next move will be to decriminalise prostitution. All of the laws have been written in the neuter gender. As soon as homosexuality is decriminalised and as soon as prostitution is decriminalised, male prostitution is accepted.

Mr Harper: And male brothels.

Mr LINGARD: Exactly. The Government has allowed neutral gender to be used in the terminology of the legislation. What is the Government's view on male prostitution? Of course, it is a personal liberty. Will the Government say that it will allow it because it is a personal liberty? Sometimes, even in their own hearts, Government members would turn around and say, "No. My value judgment as a person is that it is wrong, and I will make that value judgment." In regard to this legislation, Government members are putting their value judgments underneath the desk. How many backbenchers would have thought that, as they walked into the House, they would be voting for the decriminalisation of homosexuality?

A report from the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice states—

"Opposition on medical grounds gains strength from the description of homosexuality in standard psychiatric textbooks as 'deviancy'. This is seen as a depraved and perverted act and, therefore, the Government and the law have an obligation to restrict such practices."

I do not believe that, and I am not prepared to argue that way. I am not prepared to say that people are wrong in what they do. It is certainly not my value judgment. It is not what I could live with. However, I am not saying that people are wrong to think that way. I am saying that I would be wrong as a leader in the community to say to those people, "Go ahead and do it." As a leader, I would be wrong if I did not say, "We do not believe that our society should exist that way."

On the issue of moral and ethical values, the report of the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice states—

"Where the moral issue is one upon which there is room for serious divergent opinions, the legislature should interfere only to the extent necessary to protect the community, or any individuals with special needs. Generally, those who take part voluntarily in activities some consider morally repugnant should not be the concern of the Legislature, unless they are so young or defenceless that their involvement is not truly voluntary."

Any honourable member who accepts that statement should go to the botanic gardens and talk to the 100 people who live there. Everyone would agree that those people could

go to St Vincent de Paul. But they do not want to do that. They just want to sit in the gardens. The people in Australia's prisons do not have the type of mentality of the average person; they are not the types of people who study and read books in gaol. They just sit on a concrete floor, and they need strict discipline and control. I say to the Government: many people who will be affected by the legislation cannot think clearly or make their own value judgments as to whether it is right or wrong; they are the types of people who do things without thinking and who have no control over themselves. Unless society imposes strict discipline and control, such people will continue to do those things. That is wrong.

I criticise the attitude that, unless something is done for homosexuals, they will not be productive members of society. In a presentation to the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations in 1989, B. Loff put forward the argument that the most urgent reason for reform is that a more lasting benefit to be gained will be a more complete realisation of the potential of homosexuals as productive members of the society. Again, no sensible person would say that B. Loff was wrong; B. Loff has made a value judgment. However, it is my value judgment that, if a homosexual is stopped from continuing his sexual activities, he will not become an unproductive member of society. Could it be suggested that unmarried men and women or people who live in religious orders and do not practise sexual activities are unproductive members of society? Why would B. Loff write that, unless they have a more complete realisation of their potential as homosexuals, they will not be productive members of society? To me, that is absolute rubbish. It is a value judgment. I do not think that anyone could be absolutely sure of that statement.

I do not wish to make a considered judgment about whether people are born with the attributes which turn them to homosexuality. This is in the CJC report. It has been very influential on some honourable members to be told medically that a person is born with a homosexual tendency. I cannot believe that. My value judgment is that it could not possibly be true. If it is true, I have to accept it. But that does not mean that I have to accept what they do. There must be many people who have sexual differences—whether it be with people, animals or whatever—but that does not mean to say I have to accept that. It does not mean that I have to turn my head and now allow decriminalised homosexuality. I certainly believe in an ordered society. I believe in rules for the benefit of the society as a whole.

The Opposition is against this Bill completely and utterly. It is against the concept of decriminalising homosexuality. It believes, for the sake of our society, that we should be prepared to make a definite statement and, in this case, say that the whims and fancies of a small minority should not be allowed to impose upon the needs of society as a whole.

Mr FOLEY (Yeronga) (8.54 p.m.): There are moments in human history when tolerance triumphs over bigotry. This is one such moment. This Bill removes from the Criminal Code an archaic law, an unenforceable law. The principle involved is a simple one. It is a principle now accepted throughout the civilised world. The criminal law has no place in relation to acts between consenting adults in private. This Bill is one important step to end an era of victimisation of and discrimination against a vulnerable minority. This Bill is one important step in ensuring that the Criminal Code achieves the true purpose of the criminal law—to deter crime and to protect life, limb and property and good order.

In modern times, there has been much work done in Britain and throughout the British Commonwealth to address this problem. On 24 August 1954, a most influential committee was established in Britain to examine the function of the law in this area. I refer in particular to the committee headed by Sir John Wolfenden. It was appointed by the British Government through the Home Office of the Scottish Home Department. It reported in September 1957. That report has been a watershed for the development of jurisprudence in this area. The committee canvassed the function of the criminal law in relation to

matters concerning homosexual acts and its report led to the subsequent reform of the criminal law in Britain along the lines recommended by the committee.

It goes to the heart of one of the initial issues raised by the honourable member for Fassifern. In the list of his statement of beliefs, he asserted the proposition that it was the role of the criminal law to regulate the acts of consenting adults in private. This really is at the centre of the debate. It is not a debate about whether a homosexual life-style is moral or immoral; it is a debate about the function of the criminal law and it is a debate in relation to the fundamental questions proposed by Sir John Wolfenden and his committee in the 1950s and which have now been addressed in civilised jurisdictions throughout the world.

I refer to paragraph 12 of the Wolfenden committee report. The committee observed—

"We clearly recognise that the laws of any society must be acceptable to the general moral sense of the community if they are to be respected and enforced. But we are not charged to enter into matters of private moral conduct except in so far as they directly affect the public good;"

In paragraph 13, the committee tried to arrive at a definition of what constitutes or ought to constitute a crime and it observed—

"To define it as 'an act which is punished by the State' does not answer the question: What acts ought to be punished by the State."

The committee therefore worked within its own formulation of the function of the criminal law insofar as it concerns the subject of this inquiry. Again in paragraph 13, the committee observed—

"In this field, its function, as we see it, is to preserve public order and decency, to protect the citizen from what is offensive or injurious, and to provide sufficient safeguards against sex exploitation and corruption of others, particularly those who are specially vulnerable because they are young, weak in body or mind, inexperienced, or in a state of special physical, official or economic dependence."

The essence of the view put by the Wolfenden committee appears in paragraph 14, where it observed—

"It is not, in our view, the function of the law to intervene in the private lives of citizens, or to seek to enforce any particular pattern of behaviour, further than is necessary to carry out the purposes we have outlined. It follows that we do not believe it to be a function of the law to attempt to cover all the fields of sexual behaviour. Certain forms of sexual behaviour are regarded by many as sinful, morally wrong, or objectionable for reasons of conscience, or of religious or cultural tradition; and such actions may be reprobated on these grounds. But the criminal law does not cover all such actions at the present time; for instance, adultery and fornication are not offences for which a person can be punished by the criminal law . . ."

That report leads to a very serious debate in English jurisprudence as to the extent to which it is the function of the criminal law to enforce morals. Lord Devlin argued eloquently and ably for a conservative position. He argued that it was the function of the law to be involved in the enforcement of morals. By contrast, Professor Hart narrowed the focus of the function of the criminal law to that which is necessary to prevent harm. That debate has raged throughout the Commonwealth and in particular throughout the other jurisdictions of Australia. It is true to say that Queensland and Tasmania have been the last jurisdictions of our continent to come to terms in a serious way with this debate. Following the passage of the Wolfenden report in 1958, the British Parliament moved in 1967 to pass the Sexual Offences Act, which decriminalised acts between consenting adults in private. In 1972, the South Australian Parliament, in the Criminal Law Consolidation Amendment Act, moved in like fashion. In 1976, the Australian Capital Territory passed the Law Reform (Sexual Behaviour) Ordinance to the same effect. In 1980, the Victorian Parliament passed the Crime (Sexual Offences) Act. In 1983, the Northern Territory passed its Criminal Code. In 1984, the New South Wales

Parliament passed the Crimes Act (Amendment Act). In 1986, the Parliament of New Zealand passed the Homosexual Law Reform Act. In 1989, the Western Australian Parliament passed a controversial piece of legislation in the form of the Law Reform (Decriminalisation of Sodomy) Act, which included a preamble widely regarded as offensive to the homosexual community.

The Legislature in Queensland has considered this matter. It was prompted to do so as a result of an inquiry established by the previous Government which was the subject of a report by Mr Des Sturgess, QC, in 1985, that is, a report of an inquiry into sexual offences involving children and related matters. At paragraph 28 of Mr Sturgess' report he dealt with the issue of laws that were forbidding homosexual acts. He made this observation—

"Some of the language is old, dating at least from Lord Coke, and the proscription applies to females as well as males. Whatever one's view of the practice might be, the plain fact is that no act of Parliament is going to eradicate sodomy."

Mr Sturgess went on to recommend in paragraph 40 of his report an amendment to the Criminal Code to lessen the penalties attaching to sodomy. That recommendation of the Sturgess report in 1985 prompted the amendment to section 208 of the Criminal Code, that is, the law relating to homosexual acts; an amendment introduced by the previous Government and passed by this Parliament in 1989. That had the effect of reducing the penalty in respect of consensual acts from 14 years to 7 years. It was a step which lacked logic. It was a step in some recognition of the increasing public tolerance and recognition that this is not an area in which it is a proper function of the criminal law to engage.

It is true to say that the courts and juries of this State have for a long time been reluctant to convict or administer penalty in view of the widespread public concern about the state of the law. In the second-reading speech of the Honourable Brian Austin, Leader of the House, on 24 November 1988, the Minister set out the arguments on the part of the Government of the day in favour of reducing the level of penalty associated with such conduct. The debate with relation to Australian jurisprudence was taken up by Professor Enid Campbell and Professor Harry Whitmore, eminent professors of constitutional law. They set out in their classic work titled *Freedom in Australia* a synopsis of that debate which had occurred previously between Lord Devlin and Professor Hart in relation to the proper function of the criminal law. Having considered the matter, they arrived at the following conclusion at page 18—

"We are not concerned with the moral rightness or wrongness of homosexuality . . . We are concerned with the legitimacy of using legal restraints to coerce moral conformity; it is our view that legal enforcement of moral precepts is justified only to prevent harm to others."

That is really the nub of the legislation that is before the House. The legislation advances this simple principle. In its preamble, it notes that "democracy requires proper limits be placed on the right of any State to interfere in the lives of its citizens". The principle involved was stated eloquently by the philosopher John Stuart Mill in his work *On Liberty*, when he stated—

"The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited: he must not make himself a nuisance to other people."

This legislation addresses the issue having regard to that principle, because it plainly reaffirms the determination of this Parliament to enforce its laws prohibiting sexual interference with children, intellectually impaired people and non-consenting adults. However, it does not trespass into that area of homosexual acts between consenting adults in private.

Whatever the letter of the law may be as we move into this decade, it is profoundly important that the spirit of the law and that a spirit of tolerance should be encouraged in our community because the Legislature is dealing with a group of people who have engaged in homosexual acts—a group of people who have, for many years, been the subject of

victimisation, discrimination and, in some cases, persecution. In order to arrive at a tolerant society—one in which citizens have respect for each other—it is important that the issues of this debate be conducted with temperance and with attention to the detail of the legislation before the House. It is true to say that this area of the criminal law was enforced very little, but it is equally true to say that in making laws "for the peace welfare and good government" of this State—as, indeed, Queen Victoria charged the colony and its Legislature to do back in 1859—the example set by the Legislature is only one part of the change necessary in order to ensure that we arrive at a tolerant society in which there is due respect for the rights of others.

In that respect, it is relevant to note the approach adopted by the churches. I note the media release of the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane, in which the Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane, the Most Reverend Peter Hollingworth, gave careful support to the announcement of the proposed amendment of the Criminal Code and Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act for the decriminalisation of homosexual acts in private by consenting adults. I note also the statement by Bishop Gerry, the Vicar for Social Welfare of the Catholic Church, which includes the following proposition—

"The Catholic Church has consistently taught the need for compassion and reconciliation towards people with a homosexual orientation while insisting on the immorality of homosexual activity."

The media release from the Moderator of the Uniting Church in Australia (Queensland Synod), Dr John Roulston, gave careful support to the announcement by the Queensland Attorney-General of the proposed amendment of the Criminal Code and the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act for the decriminalisation of homosexual acts in private by consenting adults. I table those media releases because they indicate the tolerance with which the churches have approached this important debate.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents on the table.

Mr FOLEY: It is important that the Legislature amend the law in the form proposed and it is equally important that the principles governing the functions of the criminal law should be understood. It is also important that Queensland's criminal law should be a criminal law capable of being firmly enforced, because its proper function is to ensure that life, liberty and the protection of good order and property are properly observed. This Bill represents a moment of great progress for Queensland because it is a part of the process whereby Queensland rejoins the civilised community of Australia.

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong—Leader of the Liberal Party) (9.14 p.m.): This Bill has been the subject of lengthy and heated debate, both within this Parliament and throughout the community. Most of the arguments have been canvassed in one form or another. I enter this debate to speak from two perspectives: firstly, as the Leader of the parliamentary Liberal Party; and, secondly, as the member for Toowong.

The Liberal Party has long maintained the tradition that, on moral issues, individuals should maintain the right to hold, express and vote in accordance with their individual views. They should not have to subordinate their personal opinions simply to conform with the views of the majority. Approximately 10 years ago in this Parliament, members of the Liberal Party, the National Party and the Labor Party voted together to defeat amendments to strength the State's laws on abortion. On the other side of the House, they were opposed by members of their own parties. It was one of those occasions when the Parliament functioned as it was originally intended to function—without the constraints of party discipline.

I do not propose that the extension of that practice to all legislation would necessarily be in the best interests of Queenslanders; however, in 1973, all parties extended this opportunity to members of the House of Representatives in respect to a motion moved by John Gorton, which stated—

"That in the opinion of this House homosexual acts between consenting adults in private should not be subject to criminal law."

That motion was passed by a margin of 64 votes to 40. It was supported by 18 Liberals, 40 members of the ALP Government and 6 Country Party members. Its opponents included 13 Liberals, 18 Labor members and 9 members of the Country Party. That was one of the few occasions on which that was done.

On matters of individual morality, I believe it is important that members of Parliament should enjoy the same rights as do other members of the community. If members of Parliament are to interpret community morality and translate that into legislation, they should do that unfettered by the demands of a party majority. The Liberal Party does not believe that those demands should be pre-eminent in this instance. For that reason, the members of the parliamentary Liberal Party will be voting on this Bill according to their conscience. I have made that position clear to people who have sought the party's views of this legislation. I regard that as one of the party's strengths—and one which I am proud to defend as parliamentary Leader. At the same time, I have a responsibility to my electorate and as a member of the Queensland Parliament to ensure that this House passes legislation which most effectively serves the interests of the community. It is in the light of that need that I will be voting for this legislation.

The Bill before the House, though comparatively short, raises one fundamental issue to which all members of this House should give consideration. It is not a party-political issue; it should not be approached in a partisan manner. The issue was defined this way by Sir John Gorton in Federal Parliament in 1973—

"Should homosexual individuals who are adults, who both wish a homosexual relationship with each other, who do not flaunt it but who act in private, withdrawn from the public gaze, be dubbed criminals and be subject to punishment by the criminal law?"

I regret that some protagonists in this debate have sought to cloud this fundamental issue. They have indulged in intellectually dishonest scaremongering simply because they have been unable to rely on sound arguments to support their case.

I reject the argument that legislation outlawing homosexual acts is not there to be enforced but simply as an expression of the moral stance of the Parliament. If the Parliament is prepared to support a law, it should be prepared to provide the police force with the resources to enforce the law. It should also be prepared to accept all the consequences that flow from that enforcement. I have yet to see anyone with authority indicate in this House—or in the community—that that is what they are seeking. No amount of verbal gymnastics or pious words can exempt individual legislators from this duty. We should all have the courage of our convictions. Legislation must be more than wishful thinking; it must be backed up by the resources of the State to be enforced. Any law which is not so supported falls into disrepute, and that brings the Parliament into disrepute. I do not believe that we can afford that luxury in this instance.

Unless laws reflect the views of the bulk of society, there is no prospect that those laws will be respected. In this instance, that does not mean that the majority have even to condone homosexual activity; it merely means that they recognise the rights of a minority within the community. That argument was supported in the editorial column of the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, which stated in relation to this Act—

"In doing so the Government is stressing that Parliament is not required to condemn or condone homosexuality. Rather the Government is asking that the law treats homosexual behaviour in the same way as heterosexual behaviour."

I return to John Gorton's proposition that homosexual acts in private between consenting adults ought not to be subject to prosecution and long terms of imprisonment. I was pleased to hear the Attorney-General quote at length from John Stuart Mill in his second-reading speech. Whatever our political opponents might claim, Mill's prescription of liberty is a very precise indication of the essential elements of liberalism. It is that prescription upon which I base my support for this Bill. I do not regard the State as an arbiter of individual morality. I believe it is the role of the State simply to set parameters in which individuals are free to make decisions about their personal behaviour. Unfortunately, the law as it stands today does not meet those criteria.

The existing law seeks to regulate personal behaviour in one particular instance: homosexual behaviour between consenting adults. I am unaware of any other area of human activity where personal behaviour is so regulated. Unfortunately, the present law owes more to the influences of a State-based, nineteenth century morality than it does to the demands of a society about to enter the twenty-first century. Those who seek to draw a parallel between this Bill and the proposition that rape should be legalised do their argument no service. They deliberately ignore the issue of consent—an important element of this legislation. They seek to do through emotion that which they are unable to achieve through rational argument. I have no respect for these arguments; I have less respect for those who propound them. Arguments on this subject have been canvassed widely in this Parliament and in the community.

Penalties remain—as they should—in relation to the sexual exploitation of children or the intellectually impaired and in relation to sexually explicit behaviour in public places. I believe that the majority of thinking Queenslanders would have any fears that this legislation might engender allayed by an understanding of these provisions. This majority is not swayed by some of the emotive arguments that this debate has generated. However, they are concerned that the law should protect the innocent from criminal behaviour. This legislation will maintain the provisions that seek to do this.

This legislation has generated widespread community interest. Some claim that it goes too far; others maintain that it is inadequate. I do not believe that it is possible to satisfy both sides of this argument. However, I regard the Bill as a genuine step on the road to reform. It is contemporary in that it reflects the views of the community in general. For these reasons, I support the legislation.

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central) (9.23 p.m.): I waited to hear the spokespersons for both the National Party and the Liberal Party, and I must say that I am glad I did. I congratulate the member for Toowong for what was an excellent address to the House.

In the limited time that I have available to me, I want to deal with some of the issues. At the outset, let me say that I speak tonight with the support of my church. As a practising Anglican, I am delighted that my church agrees with the views that I am about to put forward. I should say that in this debate I want to deal with three matters. One is the positions taken in relation to this issue by the various churches, and the other two issues relate to AIDS and the inability of the Government to enforce the present law. I should also say at the outset that I fully support the recommendations of the Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee which, as all honourable members are aware, I chair. I stand by the recommendations of that committee.

I will examine what the mainstream churches are saying on this issue—the churches that have considered this in an intelligent way. The Anglican Church says as follows—

"The Committee recommends that the present law be repealed and that private homosexual acts between consenting adults cease to be a criminal offence."

I want to identify with those remarks. It goes on to say—

"However, it is not the task of the criminal law to intrude into those private activities, freely and voluntarily entered into by consenting adults, provided those acts neither deny the liberties of other, nor harm them in a demonstrable way."

What honourable members are talking about in this debate is private acts, in private, involving adults. The church goes on to say—

"The individual is thus free under the law to live the kind of life he or she chooses, so long as it does not directly impinge upon the free choice and liberty of other people. This is an important qualification to the right of freedom and would need to be taken into consideration by those Christian groups seeking to use the law to impose their moral judgement upon those who engage in homosexual acts."

That is a very forceful and relevant point. The Anglican Church goes on to say—

"The churches, as institutions vitally concerned with morality and values have a role and a responsibility in promoting a decent and well ordered society which

is based upon mutual respect, compassion and justice. They must ensure that their members are helped to relate their personal faith (which is outside of the law) to general ethical principles and then to translate these into daily conduct. The churches do not need, nor should they seek the compulsion of the law in order to uphold their moral position."

That is what this debate is all about. I endorse totally the view expressed by the Anglican Church that churches do not need, nor should they seek, the compulsion of the law in order to uphold their moral position. That is a matter for the churches. The church goes on—

"The decriminalisation of homosexual acts does not imply moral approval of such behaviour which many may regard as immoral in terms of traditional Christian teachings. The central point is that private, voluntary and consenting homosexual acts should be viewed as being legally neutral in the same way as heterosexual acts of intercourse are presently regarded."

That is the view of the Anglican Church.

I turn now to the view of the Catholic Church, which had this to say—

"The law is no longer a teacher of Christian values. Its primary role is to regulate those issues that society decides are required for its own well-being, those external acts and values that affect the common good, understood here as public peace, the essential protection of human rights, the commonly accepted standards of moral behaviour in a community and the protection of those adjudged to need protection."

The Catholic Church goes on to say—

"On the question of privacy, our society now seems to accept that law need not concern itself with behaviour in private that does not conflict with human rights."

It goes on—

"The Church would never approve of legislation that would authorise the unjust violation of privacy. We would not want to keep on the statute books repressive legislation which even theoretically could be used to authorise the invasion of the privacy of individuals."

The church goes on—

"People of homosexual conditions should enjoy the same basic human rights as other people in the community. In particular, they have the right"——

Mr BOOTH: I rise to a point of order. I am a Catholic and I find particularly objectionable those remarks with which the honourable member is labelling the Catholic Church. I do not believe that he should be allowed to make them.

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

Mr BEATTIE: I understand the sensitivity of the honourable member. I should reiterate that these were the submissions that were made by the various churches ——

Mr Stephan: Who wrote that?

Mr BEATTIE: Bishop Gerry, and if the honourable member will be patient, I will come to that. The submissions were made to the Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee. As I say, I can understand the honourable member's sensitivity, but this is fact and truth. The honourable member had better accept it, because it is what the church is saying. The Catholic Church goes on to say—

"People of homosexual conditions should enjoy the same basic human rights as other people in the community. In particular, they have the right to be protected from harassment and discrimination."

Its submission goes on to say—

". . . we endorse the current understanding that laws are not required to regulate private behaviour that does not infringe any persons rights, and hence we would see reason for the decriminalisation of sexual acts between consenting adults in private."

That is something that this legislation is doing. The Catholic Church goes on to say—

"Any proposed legislation should provide for a limited defence for a homosexual person honestly and reasonably mistaking the partner's age or capacity for responsibility."

That is also incorporated in the legislation.

Mr JOHNSON: I rise to a point of order. I object to those remarks by the honourable member for Brisbane Central about the Catholic Church. Like my colleague from Warwick—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. Can I suggest to some members that the member for Brisbane Central is quite at liberty to quote from reports and submissions and that no honourable member, whether he or she is Catholic or any other religion, can take a point of order on that basis. I will not accept such points of order because I consider them to be frivolous.

Mr BEATTIE: I now move on to the submission from the Lutheran Church—

Mr JOHNSON: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Brisbane Central will resume his seat.

Mr JOHNSON: I find the remarks about the Catholic Church objectionable, and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gregory will resume his seat. I will take this nice and quietly. Standing Order 119 does not allow the member to ask for a withdrawal because he finds those remarks offensive. They are statements from the Catholic Church. The member may be a Catholic, but it is not relevant for him to say that he finds those remarks objectionable. He cannot seek their withdrawal under the Standing Orders.

Mr BOOTH: I rise to a point of order. You, Mr Speaker, have ruled under Standing Order 119; but Standing Order 120 states that any imputations or any inferences against members are objectionable and yet you have allowed the member for Brisbane Central to proceed.

Mr SPEAKER: Absolutely. If the member for Warwick understood Standing Order 120, he would realise that it has no relevance whatsoever to the point that he made. I will not accept any more points of order. Opposition members are cutting into the time allowed to the member for Brisbane Central to make his speech. If honourable members continue to take points of order, I will deal with them under the Standing Orders. That is very clear.

Mr BEATTIE: These are direct quotes from submissions that were made to the parliamentary committee by the various churches, all of which are contained in the report by the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice tabled in this House.

I move on to the submission from the Lutheran Church of Australia, which states—

". . . the Church also realises that there is a difference between sin and crime. Homosexual behaviour is always sinful. It does not imply that it is always criminal."

The Lutheran Church submission referred to—

"The protection of the homosexual man and woman from negative discrimination, harassment and persecution."

That is an important consideration for the Church. The submission further stated—

"Homosexual acts between consenting male or female adults 'in private' should not constitute criminal behaviour as defined by law."

That is the view of the Lutheran Church.

I will move on and quote the submission from the Uniting Church. Its submission to the parliamentary committee stated—

"The laws should not discriminate against consenting male adults (that is of 18 years of age and above) who engage in homosexual acts in private."

The Uniting Church's submission further states—

"The Committee would also like to draw society's considered attention to those people working in the areas of AIDS education and prevention who have stated their belief that current legislation in Queensland discourages homosexuals from coming forward for AIDS testing due to fear of prosecution."

I identify myself with those submissions that were made to the parliamentary committee by the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church, the Lutheran Church and the Uniting Church. I agree with the submissions of each one of those four churches.

I will now deal with some other issues. There are a number of people in the churches who have opposed this legislation, the first of whom is the Reverend Fred Nile. In submissions that he has made, in a public sense, I believe that he has sought to denigrate a significant percentage of the community. Fred Nile could best be described as the best organiser that the Sydney gay Mardi gras could possibly ever have. He has sought to use his position on these issues for his short-term political gain, and it is about winning seats in the Upper House. If it was not for his attacks on the gay Mardi gras, it would not have been anywhere near as successful as it has been in Sydney.

I will deal with the National Party's opposition on this issue.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Randell: Do I have to put up with this?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mirani asked if he has to put up with this. He really does have to put up with it. I will have quiet. The member for Brisbane Central has every right to be heard, and I suggest that he be heard in silence. Honourable members can interject, but one at a time. I am not going to put up with screaming from either side of the Chamber.

Mr BEATTIE: There seems to be a fairly deliberate attempt by honourable members on the other side of the House to waste my time this evening. I will deal with the members of the National Party. They were the people who presided over the moral decay in Queensland. They were the people who saw the evidence from the Fitzgerald inquiry. They were the people who saw male prostitution and female prostitution. They were the people who presided over that moral decay, and they do not like this legislation.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks personally offensive. Because they are referring to me personally, I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: A general statement about a political party cannot be taken by an individual member as personally offensive. There is no point of order.

Mr BEATTIE: I make the point again. The members of the National Party saw, through the process of the Fitzgerald inquiry, exactly what happened under their administration. What a mob of humbugs and frauds to come into this House and have the audacity to oppose homosexual law reform.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: They are a mob of frauds, and they know it. They have not got the morale courage to stand up and protect a significant group of people in the community.

They are humbugs and frauds. Prostitution, police corruption and political corruption grew under the National Party's administration, and that has been the consequence of their moral humbuggery.

I will deal with some people from the so-called churches who appeared before the parliamentary committee. Who supports them? The Logos Foundation supports them; the Jimmy Swaggarts support them. Where is Howard Carter from the Logos Foundation? He admitted adultery! Wonderful! They are the sort of people who support the National Party. They are the sort of people who said, "We encouraged Sir Joh and promised we would ask our readers to pray for him as a Christian man." They are the sort of people who support the members opposite, but it is worse than that. Reg Klimionok supported the previous Government. \$30,000 went missing! They are the sort of people who supported the National Party. There is more. Clark Taylor—adultery! They are the sort of people who supported Opposition members. I find that morally offensive. I do not agree with that sort of morality. I believe it is offensive. As a Christian, I believe that sort of immorality is unacceptable. They are the people who support the Opposition.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The members for Southport, Mirani and Somerset will cease interjecting. That will do for the time being. I ask them to cease interjecting.

Mr RANDELL: Mr Speaker, I was not saying a word when you warned me then. I was sitting here, not saying a word. Now, that man over there is being provocative. What about pulling him into gear and making him speak through the Chair.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Brisbane Central.

Mr BEATTIE: I simply make the point that, in terms of the church position on this issue, I am quite happy to identify with the four churches I referred to before, and I do not have any moral compunction whatsoever to dissociate myself from those adulterers and those people who support the Opposition's position. As far as I am concerned, fornication is a moral sin.

Let me deal now with other issues. I believe that, unfortunately, during this debate, acts of cowardice have been demonstrated by the National Party on this issue. It is important that the real issue is dealt with. Members opposite support the spread of AIDS—the whole lot of them do.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: They do not like to hear that. They squirm and carry on like the worms they are. They do not like it, but it is the truth. All the logical evidence that has been put forward on this issue clearly indicates that, because of the existing law, those people who are at risk in this area are less likely to be tested for AIDS. It is very clear. It is not just the gay organisations which say that but also the medical professionals. Dr Tucker, the Deputy Director of the Queensland Department of Health said—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: Members opposite should listen, read and understand instead of being the morons that they are. Dr Tucker said—

"It is important to note that the spread of HIV/AIDS results from certain risk behaviours (eg. anal intercourse, needle sharing, vaginal intercourse) which are not confined to homosexual populations. There is little doubt that the illegality of male homosexual activity . . . has impeded some of the public health efforts to monitor, prevent and manage the HIV/AIDS epidemic . . ."

That is what members opposite want to ignore. That guy has nothing to do with politics. He is the Deputy Director of the Queensland Department of Health. The World Health Organisation analysis shows that 60 per cent of those in the world currently with AIDS

obtained the disease from vaginal intercourse. Members opposite want to lie about that; but that is the fact—60 per cent of them. As well as that, 15 per cent obtained it through anal intercourse, both men and women, and of the 8 million people infected with AIDS, 5 million were men and 3 million were women. Members opposite want to ignore the reality. They want to ignore the circumstances which are confronting us, namely, one of the worst health risks to have confronted civilisation in recent times. They want to ignore that and they want to be guilty of spreading AIDS. That is what will be on their consciences. Members opposite can come into this place and be pious and support the Logos Foundation, but let what happens be on their consciences.

The other issue that needs to be canvassed is that the law, as it stands prior to the passage of this Bill, is unenforceable. It is a nonsense to suggest that bedrooms can be invaded and that the law as it stands can be enforced. The reality is that it is impossible. The only way in which people in this category are persecuted, victimised and attacked is when police investigate other matters or when some spiteful relative dobs someone in. It is impossible to enforce the existing law. The nonsense and the dishonesty of the National Party position is that even if this law was not changed, homosexual acts would still occur in private. This law encourages people who engage in such acts to be AIDS tested; it encourages them to practise safe sex and it stops the spread of AIDS. Those people opposite who want to support Fred Nile and who want to support the adulterers to whom I referred before want to ignore their social responsibility. Let us not ignore the fact that as at 18 May 1990, South Australia, which decriminalised homosexuality in 1975, had some 394 notifications of persons testing HIV antibody positive. On the same date, Queensland had 892 persons registered as testing HIV antibody positive. I have heard the dishonesty and lies that have been perpetrated by the National Party argument. The most logical State to compare Queensland with is South Australia. For all sorts of reasons, it is the most logical State with which a comparison should be made. The comparison should not be made with Sydney but with Adelaide. On a per capita comparison, South Australia has a 0.28 per cent infection rate while Queensland has a higher infection rate of 0.32 per cent. That is the National Party's legacy of the old law. National Party members ought to hang their heads in shame. It is obvious that the decriminalisation of homosexuality has not increased the spread of AIDS in South Australia. Those people who argue otherwise are being dishonest and deliberately misleading the people of Queensland.

Unfortunately, the time allotted for my speech has almost finished. However, I want to conclude by saying that I think the National Party engaged in a very dishonest tactic of wasting my time tonight. But I think I have made the point that its dishonest humbuggery was responsible for the prostitution and the consequences of the Fitzgerald inquiry. Let us turn a new page in Queensland's history. Let us have some decent law and let us look after the minority, those people who have been persecuted under the National Party Government, and let us get back to what is important not only from a civil libertarian position but also from the public health position. My conscience is clear, both from a church point of view and morally. My conscience is clear in the knowledge that when my kids reach teenage years I will have done everything possible to get rid of AIDS. Members opposite have not. They are responsible for spreading AIDS, and they will continue to be responsible for spreading AIDS.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: They do not like to hear that, but it is true.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before calling the member for Somerset, may I suggest that, as this will be a long debate and a long night, members on my left in particular, most of whom are on the list of speakers, will have an opportunity to express their views. If they disagree with what has been said, I suggest that they do that in their own time and quietly. Let us have a debate in which people allow each other to be heard. I know that for some this is an emotional issue; but let us see if we can try to debate it quietly.

Hon. W. A. M. GUNN (Somerset) (9.44 p.m.): Yes, Mr Speaker, let us get back to some calm, factual debate. I think everybody would welcome that. The hysteria is over now.

The Bill before the House is the most important Bill that has been debated this year. It has great repercussions for generations to come. With this in mind, members of the Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee, of which the honourable member who has just resumed his seat is a member, have taken this matter very, very seriously. We have travelled extensively throughout Australia to hear points of view. Although during those times the committee members might have had differences of opinion about the decriminalisation of homosexuality, it has worked extremely well together.

However, I want to refer to a recent editorial in the *Courier-Mail* that stated that all members were in agreement on this Bill, a statement that I resented. Mr Speaker, I thank you for allowing me to remind the people of Queensland that Mr Harper, Mr Santoro and I opposed all the recommendations of the CJC parliamentary committee and submitted a dissenting report. The *Courier-Mail* has failed to acknowledge that it made a mistake and does not appear to be prepared to correct it. That is not surprising. I have been a member of this House for about 18 and a half years. During that time I have never asked the *Courier-Mail* for anything, because I know many of the people who are involved in the production of that newspaper and the type of journalism that one can expect from it. However, I am disappointed by its lack of action. I assure that newspaper that it has a falling circulation in my electorate.

I am extremely disappointed with the proposed amendments to the Act. The preamble, which is the weakest that I have seen in my 18 years in this House, states that the Government "neither condones nor condemns" the act of homosexuality. There is no doubt that this Government really does condone homosexual acts. Its motto should be: "All the way with a gay". The Government is fooling nobody. Even the gay movement is not satisfied with the Government's efforts. The gay movement did not want a preamble—weak though it is. It wanted to draft the legislation. After reading this Bill, one could be excused for believing that the gay movement did draft it. Even though the Bill has not yet passed through the House, the gays are already coming out of the woodwork. A classic example is the action of the Gold Coast gay movement, which has distributed pamphlets inviting young schoolchildren to a function for homosexuals. I am absolutely convinced that homosexual behaviour will become more prevalent. Once the gays realise that they have the support of this Government, they will pluck up a lot of courage. I refer to press reports about, and photographs of, homosexuals seeking business for quite some time in various areas of this city.

I turn now to evidence given to the CJC parliamentary committee relating to homosexual law reform. On 6 and 7 August this year, representatives from churches and other interested bodies gave evidence to that hearing. It is strange that, when some of those people were questioned, they admitted that they did not represent the church, that they represented particular bodies within the church. I believe that the Uniting Church, of which I am a member, was mentioned as representing a youth movement from the university. After that group gave evidence and I returned to my office, I received a telephone call from my local minister, who said, "Don't count me in on that, and don't count in a lot of other ministers of religion. We do not know what that guy was saying. He was representing a few kids at the university." I do not intend to mention everybody who gave evidence to that committee. However, I found it interesting to listen to the points of view, particularly those of the principal churches. I can understand that, because representatives of those churches have worked with and counselled many people who have contracted AIDS, it would be natural for them to want to assist those unfortunate people as much as possible. However, Bishop Gerry from the Catholic Church made his stand quite clear. He said quite clearly that homosexual activity is objectively immoral. I asked Bishop Gerry if he considered that decriminalisation of homosexuality would make the public feel that it is an acceptable preference, and he said that he feared that that might be the case. The AIDS virus is a real danger because it can lead to one of the most insidious diseases known to mankind, one about which

very little is known. Unfortunately, AIDS is pandemic. In other words, it is found throughout the world and its prevalence is increasing. In fact, it will wipe out whole communities in some countries. It has already done that in America, including some parts of Texas, and South Africa. The prevalence of AIDS is increasing in Australia. No matter what we do, our only hope is to minimise it.

Time and time again, I have said that bisexuals are the great danger in the community. When the committee visited Perth and questioned some representatives of the gay community, I asked, "How many bisexuals are there in Western Australia?" I was told that there were many of them. When I questioned people in Brisbane, they said that there were a lot of bisexuals here. I realise that we cannot be precise about the number of bisexuals in this country because it is an unknown number. Dr Tucker from the Department of Health recognised that bisexuals are a great danger to the community. He said that bisexuals are the grey area—the area of great concern. Bisexuality is already present in the heterosexual community. I believe that Ms Reid, who is an expert in that field, said that bisexuality already exists in the heterosexual community and there is a great danger that it will spread even further. Who are bisexual people? They are not coming out of the woodwork. They have even kept their sexuality secret from their families. Recently, a lady came into my office and said, "I never knew that he spent the week with me and the weekends with some boys at the coast." There is no doubt that bisexuality is the danger zone. I believe that Ms Reid said that one of the dangers is that many bisexuals travel extensively throughout the world. The AIDS virus is continually changing. It is more virulent in particular parts of the world.

To claim that more people would come forward for testing if homosexuality were decriminalised is only wishful thinking. There is no indication whatsoever that people would come forward. I have spoken to many people from the medical field, including several members of my family, who have informed me that most people come forward for testing only when they are desperate. Recent surveys have revealed that over 90 per cent of AIDS cases in Australia involve homosexuals. In the United States, 98 per cent of AIDS cases involve homosexuals. To 10 August this year, Queensland had 919 cases of AIDS; New South Wales—where homosexuality has been decriminalised—had 8 309 cases; and Victoria had 2 416 cases. The gaols are full of HIV-positive prisoners who, for the protection of prison officers and other prisoners, should be segregated immediately. The wearing of condoms is said to assist in prevention of the spread of the disease, but that is not the answer. The failure rate of condoms is high. There is no such thing as safe sex, as has been preached from time immemorial. South Australia has 360 HIV-positive cases. A survey was taken of 172 homosexuals who regularly have sex with another male and, after all the preaching, it was found that only 28 per cent wear condoms.

It could be a very long time before a cure for AIDS is found. Time is not on our side. Although much research has been carried out, the likelihood of finding a cure is remote. Scientists have not yet found a cure for the common cold. A cure has never been found for viral diseases. What work and research has been done on viruses? Sir Macfarlane Burnet was the first Australian to discover a vaccine for the common cold. But that vaccine has failed, because viruses change dramatically. There is only one way to minimise the spread of AIDS and to stop the obnoxious habit of those people, and it should be done immediately. Decriminalisation of homosexual acts between consenting parties is not the answer. Because the AIDS virus is extremely tough and changes continually, it is absolutely impossible to manufacture a vaccine to counteract it.

I turn to some of the tests that are carried out today. The glutination test, which is used to identify the virus, is not 100 per cent reliable. In answer to my question on the many false alarms resulting from the test, Professor Raphael agreed that the nature of the tests is one of the problems associated with the testing. False positives and false negatives can result. People who present themselves for testing understand the meaning of the findings and know that they will have to undertake further tests. I highlight the fact that a person can get a false negative result from a test, think he is free from AIDS and then infect several others. As I said, many members of the travelling public are

involved in homosexual acts. They spread that virus. It will require all of our endeavours to face the problem of AIDS.

I was intrigued by the evidence given on 6 and 7 August by representatives of churches. The representatives of the Uniting Church were in favour of decriminalisation. However, I found out that the grassroots of that church are dead against it. When I returned to my electorate, I received many phone calls. The same applied to the Anglican Church and many other churches. Parishioners, particularly in my electorate, do not agree whatsoever with decriminalisation. I do not think that the representatives of the Lutheran Church understood the bisexual angle as I put it to them. I admired the work done by the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches. They were solidly against the decriminalisation of homosexuality and their submissions were excellent. The people of Queensland are dead against the decriminalisation of homosexuality. Queensland has established standards of which we can be very proud. Any lowering of those standards will have wide repercussions for generations to come. It is all right to say that the issue will not affect society in general and that gay mardi gras, gay olympics, etc. will not be held in Queensland. However, people who say that are kidding themselves. The other States are already in a mess in that respect and the situation is worsening in the States that have decriminalised homosexuality. As I said, one should consider the number of people in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia who have AIDS.

I have made my position clear. Members of my family, who are highly skilled in the medical, biochemistry and microbiology fields, have expressed great concern about the dangers of the spread of this insidious disease for which there is no cure. It can cause only heartbreak in the family circle. The disease is spread by homosexual activity, which is being decriminalised tonight. I hope that all Christian people will speak out strongly against the legislation. It is a step in the wrong direction. I have listened intently to many people and I am absolutely convinced that the legislation is a step backwards for Queensland, a State that has been admired for so long for its Christian standards.

Mr HEATH (Nundah) (9.59 p.m.): In the future, this small and simple piece of legislation will be regarded as being of historical significance to Queensland. That significance is contained in the recognition—which is belated in Queensland, but nevertheless it is recognition—that the sections of the Criminal Code that are proposed to be amended have perpetuated a criminal classification of a victimless offence that is perpetrated by or carried on between consenting adults and that continuation of such a classification is unjust and inappropriate. I do not say that it is inappropriate in this day and age; I say simply that it is inappropriate.

It is immaterial whether the change proposed in the Bill was recommended by the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice or by the Criminal Justice Commission or is an outcome of the entire Fitzgerald process, which has been immensely beneficial for Queensland in recent years. It is immaterial also whether the legislation is introduced by the ALP Government, by the Attorney-General or whoever else has had the responsibility for its preparation. However, it is important that Queensland is now mature enough to show the support for the change that it has shown. It is important also that, at a time when that social maturity is emerging, Queensland has a Government that is prepared to acknowledge the need for changes and to legislate for those changes. Queensland is equally fortunate to have an Attorney-General who has a genuine commitment to social reform. The interaction between society and the Governments it elects, and the reflection by a progressive or responsive Government of the changing dynamics of society, mean that society and its Governments cannot and must not remain static when change is required.

Support for this Bill has come from many sectors of the community, including the large churches. Those churches have recognised, as has the Government, that there is and must be a necessary division between the community's perception of moral issues and its recognition of issues of law. Nevertheless, society's perception of moral issues controls Governments and it does permit Government intervention into areas which

could be regarded as moral issues by the concerted or unanimous wish of society itself, for example, in areas such as the sexual abuse of children.

The distinction between areas into which society allows or disallows Government intervention is perhaps specified in the legal principles of *malum in se*—that which is wrong or bad in itself—and *malum prohibitum*—that which is wrong by its prohibition or illegality. These principles quite accurately outline how the control which society exercises over its Governments operates and how it can be delineated. That influence also certainly extends into a wish that Governments should not enter into judgmental areas of morality except as specified a moment ago in areas regarded as *malum in se*, and those areas exclude the provisions of the Criminal Code that are being amended by this Bill. Such moral issues are issues for individuals to determine for themselves. Should an individual join or follow a church or some other organisation which encompasses or espouses a moral code, that person may and probably will choose to adhere to that code although, even in that decision, an individual determination has been made. Governments make and should make no compulsion regarding an individual's ability or right to choose whether or not to follow such a code. Similarly, followers of such moral beliefs should propose no compulsion on other individuals which requires adherence to an arbitrarily and personally chosen ethical system.

Opposition to this Bill which has been communicated to me has been largely based on religious grounds, despite the support from major churches, to which I alluded earlier. There has been consistent reference to the Third Book of Moses, called Leviticus, in particular chapter 18 verse 22, which reads, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind." If, however, one believes in the words of the Bible and adheres to its meanings, those persons who oppose this Bill on biblical grounds could also observe another of the long list of dos and don'ts in Leviticus, such as chapter 19 verse 27, which reads, "Ye shalt not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard", which appears to prohibit haircuts and shaving. A little further on in chapter 21 of Leviticus, verses 17, 18, 19, 20 and 23 read—

"Speak unto Aaron, saying, whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish, let him not approach his God. For whatsoever man he be that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or anything superfluous, or a man that is brokenfooted, or brokenhanded, or crook backed, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy or scabbed, only he shall not go into the vail, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish, that he profane not my sanctuaries."

Why do not the moral crusaders extend their activities and their opposition to those "blemished" persons who are branded as much in Leviticus as any other which is mentioned there or, more logically and more compassionately, why do they not accept homosexuals as they already accept those with flat noses, broken hands, dwarfism or even those who shave and have haircuts? The inconsistency of biblical opposition to this Bill is profound, and opposition on biblical grounds is unable to be sustained, as indeed is the imposition of some other biblical standards on a sectarian and largely unbelieving society. Similarly, the imposition of laws on certain moral areas likewise cannot be sustained for the reasons that I outlined earlier.

I wished to speak only briefly in this debate simply to delineate these points which I have made. This Bill will remove a piece of legislation which deserves to be excised from the Criminal Code. I support the passing of both this Bill and an era.

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn) (10.07 p.m.): Mr Speaker, in the spirit of the suggestion you have made to honourable members, let me deal, in a reasonable manner, with the wildly provocative statements of the honourable member for Brisbane Central.

Opposition members: Unbelievable.

Mr HARPER: They were unbelievable, as honourable members say. You will recall, Mr Speaker, that those provocative statements aroused the ire of the Catholic members

of the Opposition, who claimed that they were being personally offended—affronted—by the statements that were being made by the honourable member for Brisbane Central.

I turn to a letter that arrived on my desk yesterday from the Association of Catholic Parents. I expect other members of Parliament have received a similar letter. The address of that association is GPO Box 2040, Brisbane. The letter is signed by M. G. O'Dowd, secretary and it appears to be a personal signature. The letter states—

"If the people of Queensland think they've seen Democracy working in Queensland with regards to the formation of the Criminal Justice Committee, its hearing and its eventual recommendations to Parliament, well they haven't.

For all gullible people the Committee was said to have been formed along party lines, i.e. the largest Party in Parliament has the majority of members on the Committee including the Chairman e.g. ALP members 4, Nationals 2 and Liberals 1."

The pertinent feature of the letter is as follows—

"The four members of the ALP party had previously pledged the following as shown on the current Queensland ALP Branch policy document . . ."

That is the ALP manifesto and the quote from that document that is contained in the letter is as follows—

" 'Legislate to remove Criminal Sanctions against homosexual acts between consenting adults in private in line with Australian Labor Party philosophy that it is improper for the State to intrude in to the privacy of the individual.' "

The letter continues—

"The three non-ALP members arrived at the conclusion that the existing laws should stand."

On the second page of the letter appears a point that the Premier and Government members should be prepared to answer. The Association of Catholic Parents states—

"Mr. Goss is suggesting a referendum in March for approval for parliamentary terms of 4 years. As the Party's Constitution states"—

and he is referring to the Australian Labor Party—

"that the Party wishes to ensure that decisions reflect the will of the majority of Australian citizens, we as an Association of Parents challenge Mr. Goss to go to the people on four Referendum issues."

It would not cost more or be any more difficult. The Association of Catholic Parents goes on to say that the issues should be as follows—

- "1. Re Parliamentary 4 year terms
2. Re Decriminalisation of homosexual acts between consenting adults in private.
3. Re Legalisation of Prostitution
4. Re Amending the Law so that all legal distinctions between termination of pregnancy and other medical procedures are abolished by repealing sections 224, 225 and 226 of the Queensland Criminal Code"—

Mr McGrady: How many referendums did you have in 32 years?

Mr HARPER: For the benefit of the honourable member for Mount Isa who interjected, the letter goes on to say—

" . . . as stated on page 49, section 11 of the current Queensland ALP Policy Document and Branch Members' Handbook."

The member for Mount Isa seems to think that is drawing a longbow, but I suggest that he turns to the Labor Party manifesto and has a look at page 49 section 11, where apparently it says that the Labor Party is committed to amending the law.

I turn now to another point made by the member for Brisbane Central. A copy of a letter written to Mr Beattie by the Australian Family Association was forwarded to

me. The letter was written by Patti Smith, who gave evidence to the Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee. In this letter Mrs Smith points out that during her oral evidence Mr Beattie questioned her at some length about the research on the increase in AIDS figures. She undertook to research the issue further. In the letter she states—

"From the figures available to me and as indicated above there is no validity in the argument which you put personally in the report that decriminalisation would result in a drop in the AIDS virus. It could just as easily be argued that the Queensland law has not deterred homosexuals from being HIV tested as there are more reported cases in Queensland. Selective use of statistics can be made to mean whatever those quoting such statistics want them to mean."

Over the years there has been a change in attitudes towards homosexuality. The term for those practising homosexuality today is somewhat different to the term I knew when I was young. Today the term is "gay", which gives a vague suggestion of respectability. That term was not in vogue when I was at school. That is no reason for the Government to now give credibility to sodomy, and sodomy is what this House is debating tonight. The Western Australian Labor Government—albeit through a private member's Bill—was honest enough to refer to sodomy in the title of its legislation. This Bill is structured to give Labor Government recognition to an alternative life-style. Even before Parliament has had an opportunity to debate the issues, we have already seen the results of the Labor Government's action on the Gold Coast where schoolchildren are being canvassed by means of brochures to attend what are termed in today's parlance as "gay parties". There can be no denying the fact that this will lead to male prostitutes, male prostitution and male brothels. It is no good any Government member saying that this will not happen, because it has happened with females and it will happen with males.

Let all those Government members who do not have the courage to stand up and cast a conscience vote—those who really do not agree with what the Labor manifesto requires them to do—understand that they are leading to the instituting of male brothels in Queensland. If they want to have a look at some male brothels, I suggest that they travel to the southern States—to Kings Cross—and have a look at some of the conditions that have been reported. Certainly I have not done that, but I have received first-hand reports from public servants who have investigated the matter—those who did see—and reported on the conditions under which those brothels operated under a New South Wales Labor Government. It is shocking.

Honourable members should not hide their heads in the sand and say that it will not happen here. It has happened elsewhere and there is no reason to believe that it will not happen in Queensland. Why should any Government promote this alternative life-style through Queensland's schools where students are at a vulnerable age? I have listened to expert witnesses say that it is a genetic feature and that it is something that people are born with, but they also indicate that a percentage of homosexuals really are not committed. It may be that there is evidence to suggest that some are virtually committed at birth, but there are certainly some who are not. In those circumstances, why should the Government encourage those people to believe that homosexuality is an acceptable alternative life-style?

I have made clear my view, in regard to the proposals now being considered, in the minority report of the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice. In that report, my colleagues the honourable member for Somerset and the honourable member for Merthyr and I came to a conclusion. For the sake of the record, I will read our conclusions as tabled in this Parliament in the report, which are—

"We are convinced that the health risks (ie the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including the AIDS virus) to the community generally should be reduced by amendment to the Criminal Code to 'decriminalise' the act of sodomy when that act takes place in private, without any third party being present, between consenting adults.

However, it should be appreciated that medical evidence appears to indicate that the AIDS virus is transmitted predominantly by anal intercourse, so that any decision by society either through the Parliament or otherwise which is seen to condone sodomy must be detrimental to the health of the community generally.

In our opinion the other major consideration is the ability to enforce the law as it presently stands. We are convinced that it is not possible to effectively enforce this law.

Overall, and as a result of these considerations, argument is advanced that the Criminal Code should be amended to remove as an offence the act of sodomy when practised in private between consenting adults.

In our opinion any such amendment should only be countenanced if a preamble to the legislation clearly indicated that the act of sodomy was neither encouraged nor condoned by the Parliament through any such amendment.

It has become patently clear during the course of the committee's deliberations and inquiries that, by and large, those within the so-called 'gay' group within the Queensland community would reject any such preamble as negating any amendment to the Criminal Code intending to 'decriminalise' sodomy when practised in private between consenting adults.

Accordingly, whilst it may be argued that such an amendment should lessen the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases, particularly the AIDS virus, in practice that would probably not be the case. Subsequently the substantial argument for amendment to the Criminal Code becomes void."

That is the conclusion that I reached, and it is the conclusion reached by Mr Gunn and Mr Santoro.

Honourable members should insist on a meaningful preamble. Might I say that, out of the seven members of the committee, five members—consisting of two National Party members, one Liberal Party member and two Labor members, as indicated in the report which was tabled in the Parliament—agreed that, if this Bill is to proceed, a preamble must form part of it. Firstly, might I say that the preamble has validity. However, let me examine the preamble and note that this Labor Government has conceded the merits and the appropriateness of a preamble that lies in sharp contrast to the views expressed by the member for Brisbane Central. I regret that he is not in the House to participate further in the debate.

Mr Johnson: He knows he is wrong.

Mr HARPER: It proves that he is wrong, of course. He is quite wrong. His own Premier, who is a lawyer—as is the honourable member for Brisbane Central—has conceded, as leader of the Government—and contrary to the views expressed by the member for Brisbane Central—that a preamble has merit and is appropriate. Simply because it sets out to have two bob each way, Labor's preamble is a weak compromise that will achieve nothing.

Mrs McCauley: Like Denver.

Mr HARPER: As the member for Callide says, like the member for Toowong.

An Opposition member: Who?

Mr HARPER: Well might the honourable member ask, "Who?"

Let us now turn to the preamble recommended by three of the seven members of the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice. Firstly, the preamble that is supported by the Opposition makes it quite clear that this Parliament believes that homosexual activity, whether consisting in sodomy or otherwise, between adults is morally reprehensible. Let us hear anyone on the Government side contradict that statement.

Mr FitzGerald: And they deleted it.

Mr Booth: Yes, they deleted it.

Mr HARPER: Well, they simply put up a weak substitute for a meaningful preamble. As Opposition members have said, they deleted this statement by the Parliament that it believes that homosexual activity, whether consisting in sodomy or otherwise, between adults is morally reprehensible.

The next point that the Opposition claims must be made clear through this Parliament is that it does not believe that it is the role of the criminal law to regulate consensual behaviour between adults in private. The Opposition agrees with that point and sets it out in the preamble that it has recommended and that it supports. It goes on to say further that this Parliament does not in any way condone or encourage homosexual activity, whether consisting in sodomy or otherwise, or a homosexual life-style. That is an important point that the Labor Government is not prepared to acknowledge. Members on this side of the Chamber do not want to see the flow-on effects of homosexual couples seeking to adopt children and living in a life-style, which is condoned by the Labor Government, of rearing children along the lines of their own life-style. We want this Parliament to state quite clearly where it stands on the issue. If Government members believe that that is wrong, let them have the intestinal fortitude to say so. At least half of the Labor Government members would agree with that. We say that it must be made quite clear that in no way can a homosexual relationship be regarded as the equivalent of marriage. We contend, also, that this Parliament does not believe that homosexual couples should be given any recognition in law. We want it made quite clear that any homosexual relationship between adults, whether male or female, and children must be punished by the strongest possible criminal sanctions. All of those matters are in the preamble which we recommended to this Parliament. I challenge the members on the Government benches to contradict the views that are put forward in the preamble that we have tabled. On balance, this Bill is not worthy of the support of this Parliament and it must be opposed.

Mrs WOODGATE (Pine Rivers) (10.27 p.m.): Mr Speaker—

Mr Booth: Stand up and be counted now.

Mrs WOODGATE: I am standing up and I am proud to be counted. In rising to speak in support of this Bill before the House, let me first say that in all the years—there have been many—that I have read and followed with interest parliamentary debates both in the State and Federal Parliaments, I cannot recall any Bill that has been the subject of and has attracted so much ill-informed, ill-founded, ill-advised, illogical, illicit, mistaken, misleading, mischief-making, misinformed, misconceived and mischievous innuendo and, quite frankly, incorrect argument, comment and debate as has this Bill that we are debating tonight. One important misunderstanding which needs to be corrected right at the outset is the mistaken belief by certain sections of the community that this Government, with this Bill, is legalising homosexuality.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear the member for Pine Rivers. I would like to. Would members on my left please allow me to do so?

Mrs WOODGATE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am sure that you are interested in what I have to say.

Mr SPEAKER: I certainly am.

Mrs WOODGATE: My office and, I am sure, the offices of other honourable members are receiving calls and letters from misinformed people protesting at this "legalisation". Let me state quite clearly that this is not the case. What this Bill sets out to do is to decriminalise homosexual acts in private between consenting adults. There is a difference between legalising and decriminalising, as those who have read the Fitzgerald report could attest. Allow me to refresh the memory of honourable members opposite

as to what the best-selling report of Tony Fitzgerald, QC, had to say on this difference at page 188. It stated—

"Legalisation and decriminalisation are not the same. Legalisation means that the activities are made legal and are no longer regulated in any way. Decriminalisation means the activities are no longer crimes, and the participants are no longer liable to criminal penalties, but their activities are regulated by law and transgressors can still be penalised."

That is at page 188—play it again, Sam!

One other misconception which needs to be corrected is that this Government is approving a Bill which supports homosexual acts between males. One instance of that misconception is in the text of a letter which I received this week from the Australian Family Association wherein it is stated that the association deplores the Government's approving a Bill supporting acts which erode the family, consequently harming the basis of national life. What utter rot! The letter goes on to say that the public perception of legality—that word again—of homosexuality is that such conduct is therefore morally acceptable. I have already pointed out that the Bill does not legalise homosexual acts but decriminalises homosexual acts between consenting adults in private. Further, if the Australian Family Association had bothered to read the preamble to the Bill, it would know that it is clearly stated that this Goss Labor Government neither condemns nor condones such behaviour. For the life of me, I cannot see how it therefore follows that by introducing this Bill the Government is supporting such acts. Unlike George Bush, I do not say to these people, "Read my lips", but rather, "Read the preamble to the Bill".

Mr Speaker, you would be aware that I am a member of the all-party Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice and that, as such, it was necessary that I attend public hearings earlier this year to receive submissions from community groups, church groups, individuals and members of the legal and medical professions. In addition, it was necessary for the members of the committee to read the 2 000-odd written submissions received by the committee on the matter of homosexual law reform. The evidence presented was mind-boggling and, like all members of the parliamentary committee, I took on board the opinions and findings of the experts and the not-so-experts, of whom there were a few. It is no secret that the mainstream churches—the Uniting Church, the Anglican Church, the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church and others—supported the decriminalisation of homosexual acts in private between consenting adults, with the proviso that the Bill contain a preamble to the effect that Parliament does not either condone or condemn such acts.

In his submission, my good friend Bishop John Gerry, the Catholic vicar for social welfare, said—

"For many people, the law is the teacher of what is socially acceptable, even of what is right and wrong. For them, the decriminalising of homosexuality would suggest that Society sees nothing wrong with it and therefore it is morally alright."

I will now point out how Bishop Gerry has been quoted out of context. He went on to say—

". . . the law is no longer a teacher of Christian values. Its primary role is to regulate those issues that society decides are required for its own well-being, those external acts and values that affect the common good, understood here as public peace, the essential protection of human rights, the commonly accepted standards of moral behaviour in a community and the protection of those adjudged to need protection."

I agree with his statement that, in the general community, there are different understandings of the role of the law in this regard. Perhaps the time is opportune to educate people about the limited function of the law. Does this responsibility rest on the shoulders of all in the community who have the responsibility for education in general, that is, Governments, universities, schools and churches?

This Bill has made provision for the protection of those who most need protecting in our society, that is, children and the intellectually impaired. Heavy penalties will remain for those who sexually exploit such people. In his second-reading speech, the Minister said—

"On that point, the Government is immovable. Further, the Government is maintaining the same offences and penalties for sexually explicit behaviour in public places."

It is hoped that the removal of criminal penalties for homosexual acts in private between consenting adults will remove the disincentive for such people to present themselves to be tested for AIDS. One could understand the reluctance of people to do so with the threat of a criminal offence hanging over their head, as is the case in Queensland at present. It is hoped that such people will recognise the need to become educated and informed and be aware that they are in a high-risk group and that, when this Bill becomes law, that threat will be removed.

The legislation being debated tonight is not new to Australian Parliaments. For the benefit of honourable members, I will cite some examples. On 18 October 1973, in the House of Representatives, John Gorton moved as follows—

"That in the opinion of this House homosexual acts between consenting adults in private should not be subject to the criminal law."

That motion was carried by 64 votes to 40. Sixteen Liberal MPs and six Country Party MPs voted in favour of the motion, including Doug Anthony, the then Leader of the Country Party, Ian Sinclair, the then Deputy Leader of the Country Party, John Burchier, L. Bury, Don Cameron and Don Chipp. I could go on, but honourable members probably are aware of it.

On 11 December 1980, in the Victorian House of Assembly, the legislation was unique in that it was introduced by a Liberal Party Government under the Hamer premiership. It was carried 72 votes to 7, with only the Country Party opposing it. On 27 August 1975, in the South Australian House of Assembly, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Amendment Bill was carried 31 votes to 12. Seven Liberal Party MPs voted with the Government.

I want to say a few words for the benefit of members of the Liberal Party, which is allowing a conscience vote on this Bill. It is my understanding that the decriminalisation of homosexual acts between consenting adults in private was Liberal Party policy. Perhaps that was yesterday. Why then is there no unqualified support from the two-bob-each-way corner of the Chamber? I draw the attention of members of the Liberal Party to a letter written to the Honourable the Attorney-General by Liberal New South Wales Senator Peter Baume, a copy of which I understand the senator forwarded to their leader, Mr Denver Beanland, on 14 November. In that letter, Senator Baume expressed his support for the reforms of the Queensland Criminal Code in respect to those sections relating to homosexuals. As honourable members would be aware, Senator Baume is a Liberal senator. In his letter, he says—

"My only hope is that the debate on this area of reform does not degenerate into a cheap political football match. It is time for us, irrespective of state boundaries and political affiliations, to rectify the injustices that have been inflicted on homosexual members of our community."

As Senator Baume states, law reform in this area of the Criminal Code has been introduced by Governments of all political persuasions, and when there has been a change of Government, these changes to the law have still remained in place.

Members of the Government recognise that it is time to rectify the injustices that have been inflicted on homosexual members of the community and, with this Bill, those wrongs will be righted. History will remember that members on the Opposition side thought more of shoring up a few votes than of righting the injustices of the past. I might add that I do not deny that they probably need to shore up a few votes at present and that, with an eye to the main chance, it is any port in a storm. The law as it now

stands is unenforceable. I, for one, do not welcome the scenario of police officers sneaking around, peering through the louvres and venetian blinds of bedrooms to obtain evidence of another victimless crime when the streets and shopping malls in Strathpine are crying out for a greater police presence. I am equally sure that police officers would prefer to be doing what they do best, that is, policing the towns and the suburbs, endeavouring to reduce the rate of real crime such as breaking and entering, robbery and attacks on young women late at night. I know where I would rather see Queensland's police—on the job. I repeat: the present law is unenforceable and, as the Honourable the Attorney-General has said, unsatisfactory.

The Queensland Director of Prosecutions, Mr Royce Miller, during his appearance at the public hearings of the parliamentary committee, stated—

"Any law which cannot be enforced should be removed from the statute books."

The Government is doing that in this House tonight. I reiterate: this Bill does not legalise, it decriminalises. In the preamble to the Bill, the Government makes the statement that it neither condones nor condemns such acts. Therefore, as a recent *Courier-Mail* editorial stated, it does not propose to encourage such actions.

Last, but not least, may I put to rest the worry of a few gentlemen who recently visited my office. I will just say that this Government is not making the act compulsory. I am only joking, Mr Speaker.

Finally, I congratulate publicly the Honourable the Attorney-General, Mr Dean Wells, on the introduction of this reform, which will reflect those basic tenets of a democratic society. I am more than happy to support this Bill.

Mr PERRETT (Barambah) (10.39 p.m.): Firstly, I believe that the member for Pine Rivers should have a discussion with her leader regarding the definition of "decriminalisation" and "legalisation". Their interpretations seem to differ in this House. It was only yesterday when the Premier spoke about the issue of marijuana.

If ever there was a crying need for a referendum on a public issue, it is the issue of the decriminalisation of the perversion of homosexuality. However, while the Government is quite prepared to grab another year in office, and thereby further debase democracy by at least 25 per cent, I doubt that it is about to allow the people of Queensland the right to speak out on this issue. The people should remember that it was this issue on which the Labor Party literally muzzled its candidates at the last State election so that it could hide deliberately behind its hidden agenda for Queensland. This Bill would be soundly defeated if put to the people in a referendum, but the Government will not allow that because its faceless men in the faceless party hierarchy demand that this Parliament bow down to those whom a well-known Federal Labor Minister once described as "the dregs of the middle class" and stated were the dominant force within the Labor Party today.

This Bill is simply another gesture to Labor's faceless men, who are pushing for a host of anti-social changes that are now the curse and the blight of the Labor-controlled southern States. The guts of the Beattie committee report is simply a Labor Party report, pure and simple. There is no mandate for this legislation in Queensland. My impression, based on substantial correspondence and public representations from interest groups, indicates that any legislation that gives the green light to perversion, such as homosexuality, buggery and all the grab-bag of the extremist Left, would be soundly rejected by the people and by the electorate that can have only utter contempt for those pushing such degenerate changes.

Only recently, two large rallies were held not far from this House. The common theme of both of them was total opposition to homosexuality and all other perversions being pushed by Labor and its cronies. They were conveniently ignored by the Goss Government, even though they were probably the biggest rallies since the Vietnam war and were a direct rejection of the legislation that this Government is trying to push through this House. I believe it is opportune to remind the Premier and the members of this House that the major speaker at that rally was the Reverend Fred Nile, the same

Fred Nile who, many years ago, warned both the State and Federal Governments that, if they did not move quickly against AIDS and the unnatural interaction of the New South Wales and Californian homosexual lobbies, they would be responsible directly for the entry into Australia of the killer disease AIDS. The rest is history, the history of dead and dying people, a history of pain and suffering and a rising cost against the health of this nation.

Labor and its ratbag Left laughed at the Reverend Nile, but in doing so the last laugh is on Labor, since it must now be seen as primarily responsible for the importation of AIDS into this country and, by deduction, into Queensland. Labor had its chance to stop AIDS when it could have been stopped, but it muffed that opportunity because it has more concern for the perverts than it had, or has, for the health and lives of Australians generally. In fact, the Federal Labor Government cares more about the protection of animals from infectious diseases than it does about the health of humans. This Labor Government must carry a big proportion of the blame because it has shown that it has learnt nothing and is about to learn nothing from present events. The reason is that this Government just does not listen to the mainstream of society, which it seeks to con, but has its ears cocked for the pervert lobbies and all the sleaze of the middle-class controllers who have taken over from the "cream of the working class"—and that is another quotation from Labor's outspoken Federal Minister.

The member for Brisbane Central, Mr Beattie, has claimed, falsely I believe, that this legislation will help fight AIDS. That is like decriminalising the crimes of Jack the Ripper in order to fight the mass murder of prostitutes, or recruiting Don Juan to help save virginity. What a laugh—what a perverted sense of humour Mr Beattie seems to have to even suggest such a foolish thing. What utter humbug when all the known evidence flies in the face of such shallow and twisted reasoning. The Reverend Nile has warned Mr Beattie and his mates that this legislation will only increase the threat of AIDS. However, Labor prefers to listen to the militant homosexuals, who never cease trying to con us with the lie that AIDS is a heterosexual disease when all the facts indicate that it is a homosexual disease and that it is mainly homosexuals who are dying from AIDS.

Senator Richardson, Bob Hawke's so-called numbers man, recently informed television viewers that Labor was now founded on a coalition of factions—the arts crowd, the greenies and the media. I would now add to that list the perverts.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! I think it is inappropriate to make that comment.

Mr PERRETT: So much for the independent balance of some media people, too! I would suggest to the Premier that this legislation represents the pervert faction of the Labor Party and that it is the perfect example of the tail wagging the Labor dog.

It would seem that whenever the Labor Party cannot stop a perversion, it decriminalises it or sets up a committee. Of course, there are those who suggest that this legislation is just a fantasy of Labor Lawyers, which is to say that it is the fantasy of all those homosexuals who infest the Fabian Society and perch in their ivory castles plotting the downfall of capitalism. I would refer both the Premier and Mr Beattie to Zygmund Dobbs' book titled *Keynes at Harvard*, which in some detail tells of the pervert activities and preferences of the big wheels of Fabianism.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr PERRETT: I inform the honourable member that I have read the book and I think it would do him good to read it, too. The chapter titled *Social Depravity* is particularly rewarding, especially pages 117 to 136 and the paragraphs which describe the Bloomsbury Socialist Society's preferences for little boys, and how their preferences were so perverted that Sodom and Gomorrah would have blushed at their antics. Homosexual activity within the socialist movement and by association within the Labor

Party is of longstanding documentation. It is not surprising that it is the Labor Party and its faceless men who are pushing this Bill. Therefore, I lay down a challenge to both the Premier and Mr Beattie. Firstly, if they truly believe that this legislation will actually stop AIDS, I challenge them to a binding legal contract to resign and pick up all damages if in fact this wild claim does not eventuate.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr PERRETT: Mr Beattie might laugh, but I think he will find that AIDS will not be stopped.

Secondly, since this legislation has all the hallmarks of a general conspiracy by the Labor Party's faceless few against the greater interests of the many, and is being pushed in such a way as to subvert the laws of Queensland, I would further challenge the Premier to direct all those with homosexual tendencies within his Government and his party to step back from this debate, acknowledge their perversion, and in doing so prevent a conflict of interest on their part. The same principle as the Premier has applied to Cabinet conflict of interest might well apply to this debate and the issues being canvassed. Lastly, if the Premier believes he has community support—and I do not believe he has—he should immediately indicate his intention to put this issue to the people alongside his referendum for a four-year term next year.

It is no secret that there are those within Labor who are disturbed at this legislation, and rightly so, too, because this Bill has long-term consequences which can only harm Queensland. The Premier should immediately declare this issue an open and free vote for all members and allow each and every member to cast a conscience vote on this issue. The immediate consequences for the Labor Party would be that this pet Bill of the faceless men would be severely defeated. Nevertheless, it is the duty of a Premier to rise above the crass duplicity of party politics and to place the greater interests of Queensland ahead of his petty and sectarian party politics.

It is now opportune for this House to examine some of the facts which Mr Beattie overlooked in addressing this issue. The facts really speak for themselves. AIDS is flourishing in those States which have decriminalised homosexuality. In fact, it appears to be three times as high as it is in the States of Queensland and Tasmania, which have not decriminalised homosexuality. It should also be noted that it is eight times higher in New South Wales—a lasting legacy of the Wran Labor Government and its decriminalisation of perversion. These facts scuttle Mr Beattie's suggestion that decriminalisation will stop AIDS. The reverse is the truth.

Let us face the obvious, which Labor refuses to do. If the law permits in private what is now criminal activity, it will be seen by the greater percentage of people as the Government approving of such perverted activity and behaviour. Rather than assisting in reducing AIDS, it could well assist in discouraging homosexuals to seek treatment for their vile and evil condition. Research in Britain, the USA and Canada has now revealed that upwards of half of all homosexuals are treatable. Yes, they know the causes and they are capable of treating the sickness. The obvious conclusion is that AIDS, hepatitis and the number of practising perverts could increase dramatically in the coming years, because perversion is a learned practice and Labor is blessing it.

The cost to the community would be substantial. There are the obvious moral and social consequences. There is also the huge cost burden that the community must carry because of the preference of a few homosexuals for buggery and the preference of the Labor Party for homosexuals. There are few people who would not see homosexual activity as unnatural. Even many of those supporting decriminalisation would not have a bar of the practice. The very nature of homosexuality is subversive to family life generally, and who has not heard of the ghastly stories of the homosexual perverts who prey upon the children of others.

The repeal of sections 208 and 211 of the Criminal Code—the sections which outlaw anal intercourse and gross indecency—would most certainly be seen as legitimising homosexuality. Those who must now teach moral values would be faced with added

difficulties, but that has never worried Labor very much in the past, has it? After all, it was the Labor Party that abolished the censorship bodies in Queensland which kept an eye on obscene material. I note with interest that it was the Fabian Society's big-name gurus who went in to bat for pornographers and pedlars of filthy pictures earlier this century. Nothing much has changed over the years except that the Fabians punched up the Old Guard within Labor and hit them for six. That is why this Bill is before us today.

The real Labor men of the past would turn over in their graves at the very thought of a Bill such as this. But the Labor Party is no longer run by "the cream of the working class", it is run by "the slime of the middle class". Again, that is a quote from a famous Federal Labor Party Cabinet member. Any Labor man knows that if a bully is given an inch he will take a mile, and that is the case here. Despite the fact that homosexuals are few in number, they are more and more militant. They are strongly supported by some of the more socialist street factions which seem to go in to bat for all the perverts they can find. If this Bill is passed, it will throw open the legislative doors for them to make further demands, and most certainly the Labor Party will again capitulate to them. They will demand the lowering of the age of consent; the right to take their perversions into the schools of all the people—we have seen evidence of that during the past couple of days on the Gold Coast—thereby further eroding the respect of parents for the system; the right to homosexual bathhouses, which are already identified as a prime centre for the spread of AIDS; and a whole host of claims too numerous to mention here.

All of this is for the sake of a perversion which, from the earliest history of mankind, has been held to be a perversion by all major religious streams. And why not? The actions of homosexuals are both filthy and a threat to the health of the community. AIDS itself is a disease of unhygienic body activity. The American Institute for the Scientific Investigation of Sexuality warns that "gays are an octopus of infection stretching across the world". It adds further these telling words: "Most gays are veritable Typhoid Marys, pursuing and being pursued by others as biologically lethal as themselves for stupidity and squalor." There is a disproportionate impact on the homosexual of sexually-transmitted diseases. In their book *Gay Time and Diseases*, Buchanan and Muir cite statistics in the USA that show that homosexuals comprise only about 5 per cent of the population but carry over 44 per cent of the nation's cases of syphilis, 51 per cent of cases of gonorrhoea of the throat and 53 per cent of cases of intestinal gonorrhoea infection. Those authors report that homosexuals have a rate of infectious hepatitis B that is 20 to 50 times greater than in heterosexual men. The authors complain that, in San Francisco and Minneapolis, diseased homosexual food-handlers in public restaurants have been blamed for major outbreaks of amoebiasis and hepatitis A infections. What this Government is endorsing by giving the green light to buggery is clearly shown in medical descriptions of homosexual actions.

In their book titled *Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women*, Bell and Weinberg describe some of the revolting practices that give rise to those health hazards. Most of the practices mentioned are too revolting to mention in this House, so I will not mention them. However, extensive research by those authors reveals that the majority of homosexuals engage in some weird and sickening practices. Bell and Weinberg attack those practices as "unsanitary insanity". The ability of AIDS to spread through the homosexual community is illustrated by the permissiveness of homosexuals who have contracted AIDS. The United States Centre for Disease Control reports that interviewed homosexuals admitted to as many as 550 partners and that AIDS victims as a group by themselves averaged 1 100 different partners, and some reported more than that. The Federal Government's so-called safe-sex campaign is foundering on the permissiveness of homosexuals, their essential irresponsibility and their failure to respond as a group to Government demands for responsibility. The Goss Labor Government's Bill for decriminalisation is simply compounding the failures of its Federal counterparts and adding to the disasters now confronting society in general.

It has oft been said that homosexuality is biological absurdity. For a Government to give a green light to such absurdity is, in itself, an absurdity that will be remembered

at the next election. It has oft been claimed that homosexual acts are harmless acts, but that is another twisting of the truth to suit the end. This Government already knows that 90 per cent of those who have acquired AIDS are homosexual or bisexual men. Such statistics do not take into account the many people who have contracted the killer disease from homosexuals. Haemophiliacs are a victimised group within Australia. Many of them have died because of infection caused by homosexual irresponsibility in contaminating the blood supply. Is such activity harmless? It certainly is not! Homosexuals have the choice of whether or not to engage in lethal practices. The three Queensland babies who died in 1984 from contaminated blood donations had no such choice. They were victims—again proving that homosexuality is not a harmless practice but a deadly one. This legislation should be defeated or thrown into the trash can. Because homosexuals cannot produce children, who are literally our future, homosexuals make no investment in the future of this nation. A vote against legalising homosexual acts and all the implications attached to those acts is a vote for our families, our society, our State and the future. In respect of decency and sanity, I ask all honourable members to reject this Bill.

Mrs EDMOND (Mount Coot-tha) (10.59 p.m.): I rise to support the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code, not as one of the faceless men of Labor but as one of the women of Labor who has a face, a voice and a social conscience.

Mr Elliott: Are you saying your male colleagues are faceless men? I thought that was a little harsh.

Mrs EDMOND: Approximately 26 members of the opposition parties are listed to speak during this debate. They do not need to waste my time.

I rise in the knowledge that these amendments have the widespread support of the general community and the mainstream churches, as detailed earlier tonight. While the National Party last year tried desperately to beat up anti-homosexual feeling in a desperate pre-election ploy, the Morgan Gallup poll showed around 60 per cent approval for this law reform. That the National Party failed miserably at its attempts and common sense prevailed is now history.

Mr Harper: Do you support the preamble?

Mrs EDMOND: I do not support the preamble that Mr Harper wanted. No rational person could support such a preamble.

Detailed comments have been made by various members on the legal aspects of this Bill, so I do not intend to comment further on that aspect. Rather, from my own understanding gained as a member of the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice, as a mother and as a health worker, I intend to comment on some of the issues raised. It has been claimed repeatedly that amending these laws will create a massive increase in homosexuality. Emotive terms such as "opening the floodgates" have been used.

It surprises me that every recorded society since time began has contained a fairly constant, small percentage of homosexuals. Although minority groups have fared differently in some societies, in our Judaeo-Christian community, they have been generally discriminated against, or worse. Our society has a history of discrimination and attempts to change the sexual orientation of those people by methods ranging from prayers and burning to, in recent times, horrific aversion therapy that is akin to the torture that is used in some countries whose lack of human rights we deplore publicly. Yet, people continue to call for homosexuals to be treated and converted to heterosexuality by any means in the name of Christianity.

I refer interested members to two detailed reports—the Kinsey report in the forties and the Wolfenden report in the sixties—which produced very similar figures. Today, those figures seem to be the same. Between 4 per cent and 7 per cent of the male population is homosexual. Since the early nineteenth century in Belgium, no distinction has been drawn between heterosexual and homosexual offences. France has similar legal provisions. Neither country has experienced any increase in homosexual incidents above

those figures. In South Australia, the first Australian State to decriminalise homosexual acts, the incidence of homosexuality has not increased, nor has a gay mardi gras been held. The gay mardi gras about which members opposite will be so disappointed relates primarily to the extroverted nature of its participants. Generally, Queensland is regarded as being prudish and neither extroverted nor exhibitionist. Personally, I find displays of overt sexual behaviour in any form distasteful. I could never understand the attractions of the heterosexual mardi gras. The Carnival del Rio de Janeiro, the first of those mardi gras, is a heterosexual event. Such events rely on very extroverted participants, who mostly congregate in Sydney. I do not accept that any obvious changes to life-style in Queensland will occur, except the giving of self-esteem back to homosexual men.

Mr Elliott: We will remind you of your words later on.

Mrs EDMOND: The honourable member may. There may be an apparent increase in the number of homosexual men, as those who were too frightened to admit publicly their sexual orientation prior to the amendments will now feel free to do so. However, that would be only an apparent increase, not a real increase, in the number of homosexual men. We must accept that some men have attempted to live lies, as their fears forced them into unhappy marriages as a cover for their sexual orientation. As they are in defiance of the present law, those men have been under more pressure, more threat of blackmail and more physical threat, and they have been able to do little about their unfortunate position. Homosexuals will not—indeed, cannot—come forward to seek help when they face any risk of prosecution, exposure and punishment.

Fears have been expressed of the mass seduction of young men if the laws are amended. I find those fears amazing. Almost every influence on our children's lives is heterosexual. From the earliest days, they are told that they will grow up and marry. Every commercial uses heterosexual sex to sell products that range from cars to cleaners. Television advertisements almost invariably feature beautiful young things, lots of long legs, big bosoms and much bouncing up and down to sell even real estate. To identify as homosexual is to swim against a strong tide, against every family and social influence and opinion and against much peer group pressure. I do not believe that that can happen easily. It needs a deep-seated, overwhelming drive. Medical evidence has pointed to very early and very strong sexual orientation. However, those influences are brought to bear on young people by older, more experienced and influential people. That influence on young men and women can have longer-lasting and disastrous consequences. Guess who is left holding the baby! The position will not be changed by amending the laws. As long as man's virility, status and power are measured by the youth of the young blonde, of whatever sex, on his arm, the problem will remain. Perhaps we should question the influence of magazines and other media that glorify unions between ageing tycoons and young beauties.

In all seriousness, some people have suggested that although they do not want the existing law to be enforced, they wish it to be retained as a deterrent. To have a law that is not enforced places the Police Service in an invidious position. Such action would be intolerable. The Director of Prosecutions was also of that opinion. At the public hearings of the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice, he made the point that a law should not be on the statute book when Parliament did not intend that law to be enforced. A former Leader of the Liberal Party, Sir John Gorton, also made that point in debate in 1973, when he said—

"Why change the law? It is not usually applied. It is only infrequently applied. Therefore, leave it as it is. I would regard that argument as immoral and indeed as a completely wrong argument from the point of view of any member of Parliament."

He continued—

"But it is wrong from the point of view of a Parliament or anybody with a vestige of interest in the legal position because it is clear that a bad law is a law which is not applied, which has fallen into desuetude. A bad law is a law which is

not applied. It must be bad, and a law which is applied in a discriminatory way—sometimes applied and sometimes not—must be a worse law. A law which is sometimes applied and sometimes not and which gives an opportunity for blackmail must be the worse law of the lot. Yet this is precisely the law as it stands at present."

The same is true in Queensland. To enforce such a law would involve an invasion of privacy and a huge increase in police staff and that would be intolerable. The results of enforcement would be a massive increase in gaol occupancy. One has to question the benefits to society of this scenario in which, at great cost to the community, an offender is detected and gaoled when no harm has been caused to anybody. To send homosexuals to an all-male gaol is like locking up a sex fiend in a seraglio. As a result of this law as it stands unamended, homosexuals are the largest class of so-called criminals in this land apart from bad drivers. Surely the time has come to allow these people to be fully participating, active members of our society without discrimination. Surely we have reached an age and a maturity in this State when we can do so.

One of the questions put to me often throughout this discussion has been how I would feel if one of my sons was a homosexual. I have tried to step myself through that question as honestly as I can and I ask honourable members to do so, too. My first reaction would be one of guilt—what did I do wrong?—for mothers know that, whether it be infant colic, misbehaviour or acne, it is always assumed to be the mother's fault. But having some knowledge, I would go past this feeling to one of some pity because I would feel sad that he would miss out on some of the things that I regard as my greatest pleasure—my children. I would pity him as I pity married couples who wish to have children but are infertile. But, overwhelmingly, my concern would be that he not be subjected to blackmail, bashings, persecution and discrimination for something that has been accepted medically as being totally outside his control.

Australia, of course, is a land of immigrants. As such, we have achieved a high degree of political and religious tolerance. I am firmly of the view that we cannot justify interference in anyone's religious and political beliefs unless they impinge on the rights of others, and especially the rights of the young, the weak or the disabled. I apply those same standards of tolerance to sexual orientation. My tolerance of different forms of sexual expression do not mean that I have any intention of practising or promoting them, just as my tolerance of members opposite does not mean that I would ever cross the floor and join them. To defend the rights of homosexuals is not to endorse or advocate homosexuality; it is simply to recognise that, as long as homosexuals abide by the laws to which all citizens are subject, they ought equally to be free to express their sexual preferences.

These issues have been discussed widely in other Parliaments. I have already quoted from a speech by the Right Honourable Sir John Gorton, a former Liberal Prime Minister of Australia. I am sure that other honourable members will remember the speech he made as he introduced a similar Bill into the House of Representatives 17 years ago. Senator the Honourable Peter Baume, former Liberal Health Minister, physician, lecturer in medicine and member of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee on AIDS wrote to give his support for this legislation, and I commend him for this. The honourable member for Pine Rivers has already quoted his letter and I do not intend to do so again. I would also add a quotation from Dr David Tonkin, another physician, and leader of the Liberal Opposition in South Australia when he seconded the motion to change the South Australian homosexual laws in 1973—

"I congratulate the member for introducing the Bill. I believe it can only benefit society. After all, it is a Liberal principle that the rights of minorities must be protected as far as possible, just as the rights of the majority must be protected."

I would add this quotation from the brave former Liberal Minister in South Australia, Donald Laidlaw—

"I personally disapprove of male homosexuals or sodomites and I have no high regard for Lesbians either."

However, I do not think my personal prejudice is sufficient cause to oppose this Bill, and I support it for these reasons."

He is a man of courage and conviction. I am pleased that some Liberals at least recall the origins of their party instead of trying to out-Right the National Party on every issue, and I welcome the support of those Liberals who join with us in this vote.

Many of the arguments against the decriminalisation of homosexual acts have been that it is against God's will. Unlike some, I do not claim to be able to interpret God's will but I must make the comment that I was brought up—

An Opposition member interjected.

Mrs EDMOND: Yes, I am a Christian. I was brought up with a God of compassion, tolerance and love, not a God of hate and intolerance. That tolerance extended to people of all religions, political and sexual orientations and I try to maintain it, though sometimes the honourable member for Auburn sorely vexes me. I cannot accept a God who denies love and creates intolerance, nor can I accept that it is the role of the Government to decide what is moral and what is immoral. That is a role performed admirably by the churches and I respect them for it. In every debate on this subject, members have listed the names of eminent churchmen from the Archbishop of Canterbury down who have supported these moves. Tonight, I acknowledge and welcome their support again.

I wish to acknowledge the many men and women who have worked so hard to get this Bill before the Parliament. But I wish to pay tribute especially to the mothers and fathers of gay men who have, for the last 10 to 15 years, been working towards this end. They have worked constantly within the church groups gaining acceptance, educating and dispelling the irrational fears of ignorance. I know that I have been deeply touched by their selfless dedication to changes in these laws that will remove from their sons the stigma of criminality. To them, I say thank you. I support these amendments to the Criminal Code.

Dr WATSON (Moggill—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (11.14 p.m.): I rise to participate in this very important debate. As the Leader of the Liberal Party has already indicated, each member of the party has a free or conscience vote on this issue. It is a difficult issue and is one which pits fundamental tenets against one another, namely, a libertarian view that consenting adults should be free to interact in private whenever they like versus the legitimate concerns by the heterosexual majority that they do not want their value system to be undermined by a minority viewpoint, perhaps a minority some of whom are willing to extol their position in ways which the majority find that they are not willing to emulate.

I will deal with this fundamental issue later in my speech, but before doing so I wish to address the three arguments that the Government has put forward, through the Attorney-General's second-reading speech, on the issue of the decriminalisation of homosexuality. These are as follows—

- (1) that private practices should not be subject to the law;
- (2) that the law should be abolished because it is not enforced or can only be enforced selectively; and
- (3) that homosexual acts should be decriminalised to control the spread of AIDS.

I will discuss these three points sequentially. Firstly, I will discuss the argument that private practices should not be subject to the law. In his second-reading speech, the Attorney-General stated—

"No honourable member . . . can vote for a law that purports to govern the private consensual sexual activity that is the subject of this Bill."

I do not believe that this Bill addresses this narrow argument. The Bill eliminates sodomy as an explicit criminal offence whether it is committed in private or not. The Minister then relies on other sections of the Criminal Code which cover all publicly

explicit sexual behaviour to exclude public homosexual behaviour. We have no idea how effective these sections will be in such cases. The law prohibits many other acts that are carried out in private, for example, the taking of narcotic drugs or the act of incest with a consenting adult son or daughter. Using the Attorney-General's arguments, I do not see any logical distinction in these cases. Privacy does not necessarily lend legitimacy to wrongful behaviour. Private acts can have public consequences. The usual reason put forward by the Labor Party for Government intervention in the market is one of market failure, for example, where the price paid by freely consenting participants to an exchange does not reflect the full cost to society. Homosexual behaviour can impose considerable medical and financial costs on the community, for example, through the spread of AIDS, and these are costs that the participants do not fully shoulder. Therefore, the argument normally accepted by the Labor Party is that there be legislation dealing with such behaviour.

The second argument is that the law should be abolished because it is non-enforceable or can be enforced only selectively. Virtually all of our laws are enforced only selectively or intermittently, whether these are complex laws or laws against simple offences such as speeding or drink-driving. To do otherwise would involve a police presence which no member in this House would be willing to accept or tolerate. However, that does not imply that speeding laws should be abolished. The law does not exist solely to prosecute or punish offenders. In addition, it has at least two other roles. The first role is an educative role. The law acts as a guidance to people and provides an objective standard. It establishes a minimum standard of acceptable behaviour within a community. Speeding and drink-driving are certainly examples of that. The second role of the law is a preventive role. It stands in the way of further concessions; concessions that the majority of the population do not wish to make or be pressured into making. The laws relating to the public disclosure of conflicts of interest that were strongly supported recently by the Attorney-General are a good example. Many people in the community perceive the current Criminal Code as serving a similar function.

The third argument is that homosexual acts should be decriminalised to control the spread of AIDS. In his second-reading speech the Attorney-General stated—

"The reform of the law will encourage those in a significant high-risk group to become educated and informed and to be aware of the need for regular health checks and safe sex practices without the threat of criminal sanctions hanging over their heads."

He has not put forward any empirical evidence to back up his claim, and none was provided by the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice. In addition, the Criminal Justice Commission report stated on page 5—

"There is no hard evidence available to the supporters of decriminalisation as to its impact on AIDS."

However, in addition to the lack of evidence, there are reasons other than illegality to suggest a reluctance on the part of homosexuals to face health checks. The first reason is that so far AIDS is incurable and for many people diagnosis seems futile. The second reason is that testing HIV positive creates a moral dilemma for a homosexual, as it would for any other person, namely, whether or not that person should tell his partners and risk losing their sexual favours. For some people it is easier not to know. The third reason is that a positive HIV test may create an official record somewhere that may be used at a later date by a Government in a way that the person involved does not approve of. Each of these are disincentives, whether or not the behaviour is decriminalised. No empirical evidence has been put forward to suggest that these reasons will not dominate the legal status issue. Overall, it seems to me that the arguments put forward by the Government through the Attorney-General's second-reading speech have some serious questions associated with them. Anybody who was considering the issue would not find it particularly instructive.

I turn now to the fundamental trade-offs involved, to which I referred earlier in my speech. A pamphlet has been written by Thomas Sowell titled *Endangered Freedom*.

Thomas Sowell is a person who has written extensively on economics and social issues, such as discrimination, civil rights and minorities. He happens to be a black economist at the Hoover Institute at Stanford University. He drew a distinction between two views of the world which he termed the constrained vision and the unconstrained vision. Why are these visions important? They are important because even the most knowledgeable individuals are grossly ignorant over vast regions of a complex society. Visions not only substitute for knowledge, but also help to fit facts into a general framework. Sowell states as follows—

"Visions not only affect our explanations of the world around us; they determine what it is that we think needs explaining. When some social thinkers say that we must seek the 'root causes' of crime, or the 'root causes' of terrorism and war, if we are to solve these problems, they are expressing the unconstrained vision. In that vision, there are no inherent reasons why such evils exist and it is only a question of finding the proper philosophy and the proper leaders in order to banish them entirely. But when others say that crime can only be deterred—restrained but not eliminated—by punishment, and terrorism and war deterred by the threat of retaliation, they are expressing the opposite vision, the constrained vision, in which there are no solutions but only trade-offs, in which we must resort to unpleasant expedients to avoid even greater tragedies."

I believe that my vision of the world is closer to the constrained vision identified by Sowell. I recognise that, from time to time, there have to be trade-offs, even between what may seem to be fundamental tenets in a liberal society. These decisions are a matter of judgment on which reasonable men can legitimately disagree.

I am not convinced that the legitimate concerns of the heterosexual majority in this State's population are satisfactorily answered by this legislation. While significant liberties may be granted to minorities in a liberal democracy, the majority also have significant rights, including the right to feel that their values structure is not being unduly put at risk by the legislation we are enacting. I am not convinced that that is the case in relation to this legislation, and I will vote against the Bill.

Mr SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton North) (11.26 p.m.): I enter into this debate tonight to try to bring some reasonableness into it. Quite frankly, the issues that have been raised by the Opposition revolve around the interpretation of members of the National Party of "morality". This is not an issue concerning whether or not this Parliament or the members of this Parliament condone homosexuality, and that is quite clearly spelt out in the preamble.

Mr Elliott interjected.

Mr SCHWARTEN: I know that the honourable member is not literate. He should get back into his own place if he wants to interject on me.

I know that many members opposite are not literate enough to have read the preamble, but the preamble quite clearly specifies that members of Parliament are not in the business of condoning or condemning homosexual activity. The Bill states that this legislation is about changing the law, and the law needs to be changed for a number of reasons. Honourable members opposite have already identified the reasons. I am referring to members of the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice, including me, who identified the fact that the law is unenforceable. There is no doubt about that, and no-one can deny it. I have not heard one person in this House deny tonight that the law is unenforceable.

The other undeniable feature of the law as it currently exists is that it has led to other crime, such as bribery. Evidence of this illegal activity was presented to the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice at its public hearings to indicate that members of the public service, particularly, have been bribed to ensure that secrecy was maintained in relation to the sexual preference of certain people. There have also been occasions when people have been bashed and assaulted. As the law currently stands, it

is unenforceable and has led to other law-breaking activities—which, obviously, honourable members opposite want to condone.

Enforcement of the existing law also leads to the valuable time of police officers being taken up by entrapment of selected groups of homosexuals. For my money, I would prefer police officers to be out in the community and to prevent crimes being perpetrated on victims instead of their being involved in stalking homosexuals in parks, toilets and various other places, and instead of having them peeping through people's louvres or trying to verbal them into admitting that they are homosexuals. I would rather have police officers preventing people from being bashed in places such as the Rockhampton mall. I would rather have them preventing people from breaking into other people's homes. I would also rather have them out in the community enforcing the laws of this State that can be enforced. Members on the opposite side of the Chamber find that repugnant, and I can understand the reason for that. After all, for 32 years they presided in this Parliament over laws that they wanted to enforce selectively.

Mr Johnson: It was a Government of high morals.

Mr SCHWARTEN: The honourable member should not talk about high morals. He should look at what the Fitzgerald report said about the morals of his former Government. He should analyse that report, because it states that the former National Party Government had the morals of an alley cat. The fact of the matter is that the honourable member has something to hide, and that is why he is squawking.

In fact, the law that we are debating brings the law-making process of the State into disrepute. At present, because of the way in which the law is being enforced, only a small number of offenders are being caught. That brings the whole law-making process in this State into disrepute. Opposition members should not take my word for it; they should take the word of the Director of Prosecutions, Royce Miller. He informed the public hearings of the committee in Brisbane that it behoved the Parliament to ensure that, as far as practicable, the laws that are passed are able to be enforced. If we cannot enforce them, we ought not have them on the statute book. Tonight, we are correcting that anomaly. This Bill is not about morality or what the Parliament thinks about homosexuals; it is about putting in place laws that can be enforced. Earlier, the member for Barambah, Mr Perrett—

Mr Hayward: He never wrote that.

Mr SCHWARTEN: I take the interjection from the honourable member for Caboolture, who said that the honourable member for Barambah did not write that. I hope that the member for Barambah did not write that speech. I have been around the ridges for a long time and I have yet to hear a more vitriolic and misguided attack upon a political foe. I recall that, when Mr Perrett entered this place, he came under the shadow of the Citizens Electoral Council, which was a front for the League of Rights. I have heard those sorts of statements made by members of the League of Rights when they have conducted rallies. I have heard those sorts of Fabianistic attacks upon the Labor Party. I thought that the honourable member was above making that sort of vile attack upon this party. What he presumes—incorrectly—is that all homosexuals in this State vote Labor and that we have a total mortgage on the homosexual community in this State.

Mr Johnson: They will after tonight, I'll tell you. You are guaranteeing that.

Mr SCHWARTEN: Let me tell the honourable member that I know a few homosexuals who vote for Opposition members. As far as I know, there could be a few of them within the honourable member's party. Those people do not tend to follow a particular avenue in terms of politics.

Mr Johnson: Name them.

Mr SCHWARTEN: The honourable member does not like it. I can understand why he does not like having the truth brought home to him. However, this is an issue

that overrides political boundaries and one that we in Government are not prepared to duck away from, unlike Opposition members who were prepared to let all those issues that Fitzgerald talked about slide underneath the carpet.

Earlier, I heard the honourable member for Fassifern refer to the Spartans. He said that we should all become the Spartans of this society. If ever he used an incorrect analogy, he used it tonight. If he were to study history, he would discover that the indications are that approximately 80 per cent of the Spartans indulged in homosexual activities. If he is advocating that type of activity in this House, I must say that I am sorry that I cannot comply.

Mr Lingard interjected.

Mr SCHWARTEN: Obviously, I have struck a raw nerve. Other Opposition members indicated that in other States of Australia they have noticed a great spread of AIDS as a result of the legalisation of homosexuality. The fact is that we do not know how many AIDS-carriers there are in Queensland. There is a good reason why we do not know—because we placed a legal barrier between them and screening. We can only guess how many AIDS-carriers there are in Queensland. In other States which have encouraged homosexuals to come forward without fear of legal repercussions, many people have surfaced for screening; therefore, more people have been found to be carriers of that disease. With those few words, I indicate my total support for the Bill.

Mr ELLIOTT: Mr Speaker—

Mr WELLS: Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I cannot call the Minister because, if I were to do so, he would close the debate.

Mr WELLS: Mr Speaker, it is the Leader of the Opposition's turn to speak.

Mr ELLIOTT: Mr Speaker, that is incorrect. I am substituting for the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am saying that I will not call the Minister because, if I were to do so, he would close the debate.

Mr WELLS: Mr Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is due to speak. He is not even sufficiently interested in the debate to be present to speak on behalf of his party.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is incorrect. The acting Whip has already told Mr Speaker that I am substituting for him.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Cunningham.

Mr LINGARD: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, as you know, I previously changed the list and explained to you why the Leader of the Opposition is not here.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! His name was not on my list, but obviously he was on the Minister's list. I am not calling the Minister to close the debate; I am calling the member for Cunningham.

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (11.37 p.m.): Thank you, Mr Speaker. That is a fair indication of this bold, new, noble Government which was going to show us how democracy was practised. Yesterday, we had an example of democracy when I was given one and a half minutes' notice of the Estimates speech of the Minister for Environment and Heritage, which I had asked for the previous week and was told that I would receive. Now the Attorney-General has tried to gag the debate. That is a fair indication of the Labor Party's interest in democracy. It is interesting to hear the attitude of Government members on this matter. Regardless of their attitude from a moral point of view, a sheer, hard, cold, practical, clinical analysis of the matter will indicate that the only thing that this legislation will achieve is an increase in AIDS and hepatitis B. Members of the Government do not like hearing that.

Many members on the Government side are not voluntarily supporting this legislation at all. They would rather be in the position of the Liberals and be able to cast a conscience vote because they do not believe in what they are saying. Many people on the Government side are not at all pleased to be put in the position of having to support this legislation and, at some stage, having to vote on it. They had to go through the motions of supporting this Bill, otherwise their endorsements were going to be brought into question.

Mr Beattie: Rubbish!

Mr ELLIOTT: The member for Brisbane Central is a great exponent of that sort of thing. He has a history of being the strong-arm man of the Queensland Labor Party. He is the one who brought all the pressure to bear. Of course, he is a professional at that. Honourable members witnessed a pious performance by him tonight in which he endeavoured to use the various churches that he attends on Sundays. In fact, he was not content with that. I listened to his speech with great interest. He even gave the poor old Lutherans a workover. I thought it was very unreasonable of him to bring into the debate all of those churches and try to twist and use various quotes that he had been able to pick up. The honourable member had an opportunity to put forward his personal beliefs. I do not know why he had to bring the churches into it and try to make out——

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: The honourable member should go out into the real world and talk to the people who attend those churches and talk to the ministers of religion. If he did, he would be very disappointed at the number of them who support the stand that he took tonight.

Whether members of the Government like it or not, whether they believe that the previous legislation was good, bad or indifferent, the fact is that it prevented these people from flaunting their activities in the face of the public. This State does not have the gay mardi gras that are held in New South Wales. Young people in this State have not been given the false impression that homosexuality is some sort of romantic life-style. This Government does not like any of the names that were given to homosexual groups in the past. A very deliberate attempt has been made to use the word "gay". If members of the Government look up their Oxford dictionaries, they will find that the word "gay" certainly does not have the connotation that those people who practise this life-style would like it to have. That is part and parcel of trying to make that life-style acceptable to the mainstream of Australian society and, in particular, to make it attractive to young people. I believe that that is most reprehensible.

It is not much good the Premier saying on the one hand that legalisation and decriminalisation of marijuana are one and the same, yet on the other hand saying that legalisation and decriminalisation of homosexuality are not the same. That is purely and simply an exercise in semantics. I agree with him because, quite frankly, that is exactly what the Government is doing tonight. Members of the Government are utter hypocrites. Their leader has been branded as a hypocrite. Everyone knows exactly what he is saying. I, for one, do not support this legislation because I believe that it will make the practice of homosexuality more acceptable, particularly in the eyes of the young. Members of the Government might think that that is a good idea; I most certainly do not. I am also very concerned that many people in society, who are genuinely offended by homosexuality, are going to be confronted in the street or down the coast by people flaunting their homosexuality.

Mr Beattie: That is nonsense.

Mr ELLIOTT: I invite the honourable member to tell me why it is nonsense.

Mr Beattie: The Bill does not deal with that at all. The laws in relation to public decency remain exactly the same as they are now.

Mr ELLIOTT: The decriminalisation of homosexuality is going to make the behaviour of homosexuals far more acceptable in the public arena. If the honourable member thinks for one minute that that is not going to happen, then he is not being honest with himself. He should talk to his wife about it. She is a sensible, intelligent, well-educated person. He should ask her whether she does not think that there will be a difference in attitude and that people will be prepared to go just that bit further.

I have four children. I do not want them—particularly my son—to be confronted by public displays of homosexuality. I am sure that he will be a well-adjusted adult. I will certainly have a talk with him. Perhaps it will not be a problem for him. However, other children are going to be confronted by this. There will definitely be an increase in homosexuality over a long period. It will erode the behaviour of society. Members of this Government will be responsible for that. The member for Brisbane Central, who has a very high standard of education and a background and a better understanding of this subject than many other honourable members, should know better. I am surprised that he took the line that he did.

Mr Booth: It shocked us all.

Mr ELLIOTT: As the member for Warwick says, it shocked us all to some degree. I suppose one should never be surprised at the actions of someone who is so misguided as to support the ALP. I was living in hope that the member for Brisbane Central was a little bit above that.

Government members, as the members in this House responsible for the legislative program, should ensure that a program to test for AIDS is introduced. Every member of society should be prepared to be tested for AIDS. I am prepared to be the first one to be tested. The Government should change its attitude to AIDS and hepatitis B. In the past, everyone was prepared to undergo a chest X-ray. Further back in history, tuberculosis was almost a death sentence, too. Very few people actually survived the tuberculosis epidemics in the past. There is no difference today. Once someone has AIDS, they have a death sentence. It is not good enough to have wandering around the place people who, as far as their fellow men and women are concerned, are lethal time bombs.

One aspect that is of concern is that many of those people are bisexual. Unfortunately, AIDS is not confined to the city, to Kings Cross or to anywhere else. Those people tend to lead what appears to be a perfectly normal, natural life-style in the ordinary community. They then go off to Kings Cross and have their fling and come back to lead what appears to be a normal family life-style. The next step is that the female partner of that liaison then contracts AIDS as well.

Tonight, I have listened to many Government speakers during this debate. Obviously, they are concerned about the spread of AIDS. If they are really concerned about the spread of AIDS, they should do something positive about it.

Mr Beattie: This is positive.

Mr ELLIOTT: Yes, but a more positive step would be the testing of everyone for AIDS and hepatitis B. If that is not done, those diseases will spread right throughout the community because it will open the floodgates. Government members will be encouraging, aiding and abetting an attitude that encourages the spread of the AIDS virus throughout the community. Unfortunately, it will not remain with those people who carried the virus in the early stages of the epidemic, which came to Australia from California. Unfortunately, AIDS has not stayed there; it has spread, particularly because of the bisexuals, who have spread it to the heterosexual community as well.

If honourable members want to do something useful about the spread of AIDS, they should bite the bullet, grasp the nettle, and establish a testing program.

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (11.50 p.m.): I move—
"That the question be now put."

Mr LINGARD: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, Standing Order 142 states that you cannot put that question unless there are at least 30 members in favour of it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. I will put the question.

Question put; and the House divided—

DIVISION

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

DIVISION

Resolved in the affirmative.

Allocation of Time-limit Order

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (12.02 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That so much of the Standing Orders and Sessional Orders be suspended to enable the Criminal Code and Another Act Amendment Bill to be passed through its remaining stages on this sitting day. At the time so specified Mr Speaker or the Chairman, as the case may be, shall put all remaining questions necessary to pass the Bill including clauses en bloc and any amendments to be moved by the Minister in charge of the Bill, without further amendment or debate. Report from Committee and third reading at 12.30 a.m."

Mr LINGARD (Fassifern) (12.03 a.m.): Mr Speaker, I wish to speak to the motion. At least 30-odd members are listed to speak to this Bill. One member who has not yet spoken to it is the Leader of the Opposition. I ask members of the Government: do they believe quite honestly that the Leader of the Opposition, who has presented his name to the Speaker, asked to be allowed to speak to the Bill tomorrow morning and been given permission by the Speaker to do so should not be allowed to speak to the Bill tomorrow morning?

Mr MILLINER: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of dress of the honourable member for Lockyer.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Lockyer can remain in the House dressed like that only during a division. I call the member for Fassifern.

Mr LINGARD: The Opposition accepts the Standing Orders. It accepts also that, at the start of a debate, if the Government wishes to finish that debate by 12.30 or 1 o'clock, it is thoroughly entitled to put that as a particular motion. However, half-way through the debate, this Government has made a decision to omit the Leader of the Opposition, who should be able to present his point of view. This Government allowed him to put his name on the list of speakers for tomorrow morning. It has now effectively gagged him by not allowing him to speak to the Bill.

Mr McLean interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Administrative Services will cease interjecting.

Mr LINGARD: Mr Speaker, you should at least allow the Leader of the Opposition to present his opinions on this Bill. Therefore, I move that the Leader of the Opposition be heard.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! That motion is out of order. The Clerk has just advised me that the Bill has been read a second time and the House is now dealing with another motion. Mr Lingard's motion is out of order.

Mr MACKENROTH: Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the House will resume his seat. I call the member for Fassifern.

Mr LINGARD: Mr Speaker, I ask you to consider whether this motion is in order as far as the running of the House is concerned. I ask you to make that decision.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The motion is in order. To satisfy the member for Fassifern, I will confirm that with the Clerk. It is definitely in order. This is a motion to suspend Standing Orders. It is up to the House. It is totally in order. I call the Leader of the House.

Mr MACKENROTH: I draw the attention of the member for Fassifern to the fact that, if he allows this motion to go through, the Leader of the Opposition will have 20 minutes at the Committee stage during which to speak to the title or the first clause of

the Bill. During that time, he can say whatever he wants. However, if the Opposition wants to divide on this motion, it will waste 10 minutes.

Mrs McCAULEY: I rise to a point of order. This is outrageous. I demand the right to be heard, to put forward my viewpoints and those of my constituents. This is grossly unfair.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Callide will resume her seat. There is no point of order.

Question—That the motion be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

DIVISION

Resolved in the affirmative.

Committee

Hon. D. M. Wells (Murrumba—Attorney-General) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—

Mr COOPER (12.13 a.m.): Although the legislation has been described by the Attorney-General as one of the most important pieces of legislation that the Government has introduced this year, the Government has imposed a gag on the debate. I do not know how many times legislation that was regarded by either the Government or the Opposition as extremely important has come before honourable members, yet when the clock strikes midnight, Government members run for cover; debate on the legislation is gagged, or guillotined—call it what you like. Such procedures have nothing to do with parliamentary democracy. In the words of the Attorney-General, the Bill is regarded as being of immense importance. It never ceases to amaze me that the Labor Government applies the gag to such legislation. Let us compare with this legislation some other matters that are regarded as being of great importance. The National Party believes that what is happening now is a sad, sick and sorry indictment of the way in which the Government treats the Parliament, legislation and matters of so-called importance.

The amendment of laws relating to homosexual behaviour in this State—what an issue on which to hang the achievement hat! So many issues that potentially affect the lives of all Queenslanders—not only the minority—are more important, yet they have been buried by reviews, inquiries and committees that form very poor excuses for decision-making. Economic matters have been relegated to the background, put on the

back-burner, but the legislation before the Committee is described as being the most important legislation that has been introduced this year. So many other issues have withered on the vine in favour of homosexual law reform that I must ask: when the Government hails this legislation as a major achievement, where do its priorities lie, or are they totally misplaced?

The Government has ignored potential initiatives that could lift the standard of living of Queenslanders in favour of introducing this legislation. What a high priority the Government gives legislation that will jeopardise the health and the lives of more people who may now feel inclined to participate in homosexual activity. The Minister has said that this Bill should reduce the incidence of AIDS because people will be less inhibited about seeking regular health checks and will also become better acquainted with and better educated in a subject such as this. Again, what sort of priorities does the Government put on the lives of Queenslanders when it reduces itself, the Parliament and the people to something such as this. It may suit the Minister's argument but, quite frankly, the facts indicate the reverse. I intend to give some official figures that are generally accepted around the nation. The total number of AIDS patients in States that have repealed their laws against homosexuality is three times higher than the number in the States that have retained those laws. In the States that have repealed those laws—New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and the ACT—there have been 1 883 cases of AIDS as at 24 September this year.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much noise in the Chamber.

Mr COOPER: The noise demonstrates just how much importance they place on this subject. It is amazing what they will do for votes. In the States I listed, there were 13.8 cases per 100 000 people whereas, in Queensland and Tasmania, which have not repealed their homosexual laws, there have been 157 cases or 4.7 cases per 100 000 people. I am drawing attention to the fact that the Government is putting at risk the lives of the people of this State. Government members can shake their heads and do whatever else they like, but they are doing this simply to gain votes. It is a sick and sad indictment of themselves. Those figures come from a reputable source. They are from the *Communicable Diseases Bulletin* of 8 October 1990 and they emanate from Canberra. The figures on deaths from AIDS and HIV positive diagnoses, which come from the very same source, are three times higher in the States that have repealed their homosexual laws. Those figures and the facts are ignored by Government members.

The Minister believes that this legislation will somehow improve our community health. That is absolute nonsense, which is proved by the figures produced over a number of years. Government members do not seem to be able to come to grips with what they are plunging the people of this State into. They will be responsible for what happens for many years to come. There is no way in the world that they will ever duck away from that. Their policy is that they must never let the facts get in the way of the Labor line of thinking. That is somehow regarded as enlightened thinking but it is probably the most unenlightened thinking possible and is an absolute disgrace.

I mentioned the dissenting report. The National Party representatives and one of the Liberal Party representatives on the Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee recognised that the current law was difficult to enforce, but that is not a new phenomenon, as the Attorney-General tried to indicate. There is no doubt that while sodomy was an offence under the Criminal Code, the law acted as a deterrent to males who had an inclination to act that way. The Attorney-General argued that a law that is difficult to enforce should not be allowed to remain in the Criminal Code. He certainly overlooked the subtle influence that such a law can have on our society. It was absolutely vital that it remain in force. Those sorts of laws can have a tremendous effect on our society and this particular law was a deterrent. This is social engineering legislation of which the Labor Party is proud but which it will rue. It is an extremely sad reflection on our society and on Government members. We maintain total and complete opposition to this legislation. Despite our opposition and despite the Government's recognition of the need to protect children and disabled people, this Government, because it has the

numbers, will decriminalise homosexuality tonight. The gays will get their early Christmas present. I sincerely hope that the Government is proud of that, although I do not believe that it can possibly be proud of it. Society will certainly be the poorer for it. I do not know if the Labor Party is trying to salve its conscience by undertaking this act of social engineering and passing this legislation, but it has overlooked the subtle influence that the existing law can have on our society.

Rather than being a great occasion, this is without any doubt at all an extremely sad day for the people of this State. If this type of legislation is to be placed on the statute book of Queensland, it should contain a strong Preamble. The Opposition wants a strong Preamble and the minority of three on the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice moved to have a strong Preamble included in the legislation. Surely there are members on the Government side of the Chamber who have nothing to fear if the legislation, even if it is proceeded with, contains a very strong preamble. The Opposition believes that the existing Preamble is as weak as water. It is supine and meaningless and will have no effect on the morals of the people of this State. If the Government wants to achieve this aim through the legislation, and still put a stamp of authority on the legislation, it must be really firm and adopt a more appropriate Preamble. There are enough people on the Government side of the Chamber—and certainly on this side—who are red-blooded and strong in their own minds and have enough feeling for the people of this State to support the Preamble put forward by the Opposition. Members have had plenty of time to have a look at it. Surely members on both sides of the Chamber can salve their consciences to that extent. There is still time for the Attorney-General to reconsider the Preamble. The Preamble contained in the legislation is meaningless. The Government should put its stamp of authority on the Bill and give the people of this State a chance. I am mindful of the fact that other members wish to make a contribution to the debate, and I make the recommendation that the Preamble presented by the Opposition be accepted by the Committee.

Mr SANTORO: The Bill badly lets down the mainstream churches which, in their submissions and contrary to the impression engendered by members opposite, clearly advocated the inclusion of a strong and precise Preamble that would warn the young and impressionable and the community generally of the moral dangers of homosexuality. The member for Brisbane Central quoted extensively from the submission of his church, the Anglican Church, in support of the provisions of this Bill. What he did not tell the Chamber is that on page 7 of its submission the Anglican Church stated—

"It recommends further that the act of repeal carry with it an introductory statement indicating that such removal from the statute books is based upon the principle of equal treatment for all before the law and does not imply moral approval of homosexual acts."

The honourable member also quoted the Catholic Church's submission that was put forward under the name of Bishop Gerry. On page 10 of its submission the church states—

"The intent of the whole preamble of the Western Australian legislation should be retained in any Queensland legislation."

I make it clear that the mainstream churches do not support what the Labor Government is introducing through the auspices of this Bill. As the honourable member for Auburn stated, the Preamble to the Bill falls far short of what the churches wanted and what Labor members of Parliament in Western Australia and South Australia had the courage to include in the Preambles to their legislation. I hope that the churches will now come out and remind the Labor Government of its neglect in relation to the Preamble. The churches will quickly realise that the words of their submissions have been politically misused and abused by a party and Government looking for respectability and credibility through association with honourable institutions such as churches.

Government members interjected.

Mr SANTORO: I can hear Government members object.

Mr Beattie: You're wrong.

Mr SANTORO: If the honourable member for Brisbane Central looks at what is contained in the report, he will note that the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church want their moral attitude included, that is, that they are against homosexual practices. I have read the report and, if the debate had not been gagged with the support of the member for Brisbane Central, I would have taken my 20 minutes and explained it.

I also suggest to the churches that, in the absence of moral guidance that could have been provided for in a Preamble, they now have the enhanced responsibility to continually bring to the attention of their flocks the moral views about homosexuality which they wanted included within a Preamble, but which were conveniently left out by this Labor Government that wants to gain respectability through false association with the views of churches and ministers of religion, because the Government did not have the courage to represent these bodies properly.

Mr Beattie: I just quoted what they said.

Mr SANTORO: I am disappointed with the honourable member because I honestly thought that he would have quoted accurately. When the church people read the transcript of this debate they will be disappointed with the honourable member and the Labor Party for selectively omitting their most essential requirement, that is, that the law as amended and passed by this Parliament tonight reflect their moral view, which is that they, together with the majority of the people of Queensland, do not agree. I ask members to read their written submissions. Those members who choose to believe Mr Beattie should go back, read the transcript and read the submissions.

Mr KATTER: Mr Santoro has already mentioned to the Committee the deceit that has been perpetrated by construing that the churches are backing this Bill. I heard the Anglican Archbishop speaking on the radio and if he was backing the Bill, I will walk from here to Bourke backwards. Tonight, Mr Beattie greatly deceived this Chamber not once, but twice. He quoted a statistic comparing the figures in this State with those in Tasmania.

Mr BEATTIE: I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks —

Honourable members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will take the point of order from the member for Brisbane Central.

Mr BEATTIE: I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks offensive. They are not true, and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

Mr Katter: That is the truth!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Brisbane Central has asked for those remarks to be withdrawn.

Mr KATTER: I withdraw them, Mr Chairman. The statistics cited by him this evening compare this State to South Australia, but what he failed to do was compare this State to New South Wales, Victoria, and all the other States of Australia. I believed the man, which is why I am speaking with such great anger. When I saw the statistics, I realised what a great deceit he had perpetrated upon honourable members. In actual fact, Queensland has only one-thirteenth of the number of AIDS cases in Australia, but has one-sixth of the nation's population.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr Katter: I table these other figures, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member is out of order. The time limit has expired.

Question—That clauses 1 to 16, the postponed Preamble and the Minister's amendment be agreed to—put; and the Committee divided—

DIVISION

Resolved in the affirmative.

Reporting of Bill

Mr WELLS (12.35 a.m.): Mr Chairman, I move—

"That you do now leave the chair and report the Bill with amendment to the House."

Question put; and the Committee divided.

DIVISION

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill Taken into Consideration

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—Attorney-General) (12.42 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill as amended be now taken into consideration."

Question put; and the House divided—

DIVISION

Resolved in the affirmative.

Third Reading

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—Attorney-General) (12.47 a.m.): I move—

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

Question put; and the House divided—

DIVISION

Resolved in the affirmative.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (12.51 a.m.): I move—
"That the House do now adjourn."

Protection for Australian Primary Producers against Imports

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (12.52 a.m.): I take this opportunity of saying that I hope members of the Government go home and have a good sleep with the legislation that was just debated on their consciences. Some members of the Government are good people, and the member for Pine Rivers is one of them. I am sure that she will not sleep soundly for the next two years.

I want to speak about protection for Australian primary producers and Australian workers against imports into Australia. The ridiculous stage has been reached at which the products imported into Australia include potato chips from Holland, oranges from Brazil, bananas from Ecuador, peas and beans from New Zealand and, above all, sugar. Sugar is being imported into Queensland—one of the greatest sugar-producing areas in the world. The Hawke Government is promoting the importation of sugar into this State. There should be protection not only for primary producers but also for secondary industry. It is not all that long ago that this fair country had a footwear industry that was one of the best in the world. Australians were proud to wear locally-made shoes such as Dixon shoes. Now when one goes to buy a pair of shoes, one finds that there is a choice of two or three brands. There may be one Australian brand and there may be some Chinese footwear. If one wants really good footwear, one has to buy Italian shoes. Australian jobs in that industry have gone down the drain.

I am not so one-eyed as to say that there should be protection for primary industries and not for others. However, I believe that the idea of a level playing field and no protection is an Australian myth. It is a myth perpetrated by Hawke. Every time he sends people overseas or he travels overseas himself, he says that Australia is going to have a level playing field and that there will be no countries to which Australian producers can export without protection. I remind honourable members of what has happened in the common market—

Mr Borbidge: There is no such thing as a level playing field.

Mr BOOTH: There is no such thing as a level playing field in trade. Hawke has made a fool of himself. It is coming home to Australians that that is why the balance of payments is so sick. It is because he just cannot accept that he has to do something to protect Australians and Australian workers. Potato chips are being imported into this country and sold at village fairs. That is absolutely ridiculous at a time when Australian producers are ploughing potatoes into the ground.

What is happening in the orange industry? One cannot make a livelihood from growing oranges in Australia. Have honourable members thought about the oranges that are grown in Brazil? When they are dried in that country, large quantities of preservatives are added. The oranges are imported into Australia and the larger quantities are broken down into 20-litre drums and more preservatives are added. When the juice is bottled into the small bottles that are sold to the public, more preservatives are added, and that is why people experience indigestion.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! If the honourable member wants to interject, he should go to his usual seat.

Mr BOOTH: I believe what the member for Barambah says, and that is why I am standing here tonight.

The people of Australia are heartily sick of deregulation. The Federal Government deregulated the wheat market. What did that do? It not only spoilt the wheat market but also wrecked the coarse-grain market. That is why the people in my district are selling barley for less than the cost of production, and they will not be able to plant a crop and do that again next year. They pay all their fees, including the research levies. They do everything right and get nothing for it. The Government is making a great mistake if it believes that this can continue and that the workers of Australia will not be affected. Those members who have read the book *My Brother Jack* would know that Jack returned home and his mother said to him, "Why are you home, lad? You were out working in the Wimmera." He said, "Something has happened to the wheat market. It has collapsed." His mother said, "Thank God that won't have any effect on us." Within 12 or 18 months of the Great Depression they were standing in the soup kitchens.

Tonight, honourable members participated in a debate about civil liberties. I believe that the only civil liberty that people such as the member for Yeronga can guarantee is the civil liberty to stand in a dole queue. Australian jobs should be protected.

Time expired.

Arson in the Springwood Electorate

Ms ROBSON (Springwood) (12.56 a.m.): Tonight, I want to speak about a recent outbreak of deliberate fires in my electorate. This state of affairs has reached the point at which it must be addressed. I am aware of three very serious fires in my electorate in the last month, two involving schools and one involving the burning down of the St Vincent de Paul depot. At one school, a nature playground, which was valued at \$5,000, was destroyed. That damage was caused by two children who were under nine years of age. One wonders what is happening when children of that age are out in the dead of night lighting fires. The second fire occurred last Saturday at the Shailer Park State School, where a modular classroom valued at \$70,000 was burnt to the ground.

My primary concern is about the St Vincent de Paul depot, which was the society's third-largest storage depot in this State. It is appalling that so close to Christmas somebody went out in the dead of night and set fire to such an establishment. The damage was caused to the warehouse itself, which was valued at \$180,000, and to clothing and furniture, which was worth \$200,000. I do not know what is wrong with people in our society when these outbreaks continue to occur, but it is about time that consideration was given to the reasons behind the deliberate arson attempts that are occurring and the community's responsibility. It is fine to talk about using more police and firemen and equipment to cope with fires. However, the reality is that there are people in the community who seem to get some sort of perverse delight out of setting fire to community property. On behalf of my electors, who have responded to this spate of fires, I object very strongly. These incidents did not occur just in my electorate. The Ashgrove Police Station was also burnt down. This demonstrates that a major problem exists in the community. Everyone in this House has a responsibility to be aware of and to get out into our communities to try to do something about it.

As I said before, I do not really believe that the cause of the problem is a total function of policing, lack of policing or whatever. I think we have to take some responsibility. For example, we have to get messages through to schools to talk to kids about responsibilities. We have to get through to parents and tell them that they ought to know where their kids are, particularly at night. The three incidents that occurred in my electorate all took place in the dead of night. I am informed that one in particular, which involved a school, occurred at approximately 2.45 a.m., after an inspection had been made by a security officer. It seems that it was a fairly deliberate act. It appears that people are aware of the times at which security officers do their rounds, wait for the security officer to leave and then deliberately set the buildings alight.

I call upon parents in particular to have a bit more of an idea of what their kids are doing. It is not only kids who are responsible for these incidents; there are also some very violent and sick people in our community who seem to get some sort of a buzz

out of watching a facility burning. I hope that when those people are apprehended they suffer severe retribution for the acts that they have inflicted upon the community. I reiterate that I consider the burning of the St Vincent de Paul facility last Thursday night to be a very, very sick act. It is believed that it was a case of deliberate arson. That facility was stocked up for Christmas. There are people in the City of Logan and, indeed, all over the suburbs of Brisbane who rely upon the facilities and services that are provided by the St Vincent de Paul Society. I appeal to people in the community to take a bit more responsibility for what happens around them and to try to do something to stop this deliberate vandalism.

Corrective Services

Mr CONNOR (Nerang) (1.01 a.m.): I acknowledge the presence in the Chamber of the Minister for Corrective Services. I rise to speak on the issue of corrective services and to bring to the attention of the House the fact that corrective services in Queensland are not as open and accountable as one would hope. As all honourable members know, corrective services in Queensland are presently under investigation by the Criminal Justice Commission. This is as a result of information I forwarded to it.

A great deal more information has also been given to me which I quickly passed on to the CJC. If the Minister is genuine in wanting to rid corrective services in Queensland of the corruption that he has already acknowledged exists, it is essential that a level of cooperation exist between his department and me. However, this is not the case. On a number of occasions, while trying to gain information I have been given the run-around. In the Corrective Services Commission handbook on philosophy and direction, it quite clearly states under the heading "core values" that when the management of the commission makes any decision, it should be assessed in the light of "will it stand up to public scrutiny?". Under the title "mission", it states—

" . . . to actively seek community involvement and support and act as a community sponsor".

Getting back to the former "will it stand up to public scrutiny?", I guess if the commission does not let anyone know what is going on, it does not have to worry about whether it stands up to public scrutiny. As far as seeking community involvement is concerned—as a member of Parliament, I am a stake-holder within the system and am therefore entitled to some involvement within this operation.

When in Opposition, the present Corrective Services Minister, Mr Milliner, was highly critical of the then Government for not releasing the information from the Touche Ross report into the Boggo Road fun run mass escape. The Minister was at that time very critical of that information not being made available to him. However, he now sees fit to similarly restrict my access to information. Firstly, I would like to have access to the names of prisoners and their classifications, something that I have now been twice denied. Secondly, I would like access to the operational audit documents that are regularly compiled—

Mr Borbidge: We need the freedom of information legislation they promised.

Mr CONNOR: Yes, we certainly look forward to that. I repeat that I would like access to the operational audit documents that are regularly compiled after inspections are made of the new private-enterprise prison at Borallon. That has also been denied me. Thirdly, I ask the Minister to make available to me the original Touche Ross report. The Minister is covering things up. This begs the question: will the Minister tell me why he has refused to give me that information? Secondly, does he intend to continue to limit the access of opposition parties to such information? Does that mean that the Goss Labor Government is no longer committed to open and accountable government?

A second worrying incident has occurred in relation to corrective services. I refer to the run-around that I receive when I try to arrange a visit to the Brisbane Correctional Centre by the media and several Liberal Party members. I have made a number of attempts to do that and supplied dates considerably in advance so that the media can

accompany Liberal Party members to the prison. I have not been given confirmation of when that can occur. I am talking about only 10 people. I have been told that that number is too great for the local manager to authorise such a visit and that this issue must be decided by the Minister. For several weeks, we have been messed around. We have received no confirmation of when we can visit the prison.

It is totally unacceptable, firstly, that I do not have access to that information when, quite clearly, it is essential that opposition parties have access to that type of information and, secondly, that we should be severely inhibited from gaining access to the prison system. What does the Minister have to hide? Why is he limiting that access?

Access to Buildings by Handicapped and Elderly People

Mr McGRADY (Mount Isa) (1.06 a.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr Borbidge: How is daylight-saving going?

Mr McGRADY: It is going very well. After the oratory of the previous debate, the subject that I wish to discuss tonight may appear to be somewhat trivial.

Mr Heath: I am glad that you didn't say "the previous speaker".

Mr McGRADY: Not the previous speaker—the previous debate. Although this matter may appear trivial, I assure honourable members that it certainly has a direct effect on the day-to-day life of the people concerned and, certainly, on the quality of their life.

Earlier today in this House, I asked a question of the Minister for Land Management about access to public buildings for handicapped, elderly and other people. I asked that question because I was most annoyed—to say the least—when the Department of Lands opened a new office in Mount Isa on the first floor of a building with no lift or access for disabled or elderly people. The three levels of government, namely, local, State and Federal, and Government employees in particular, must realise that, when a Government office opens, access must be provided for handicapped and elderly people.

Approximately 18 months ago in my home city of Mount Isa, a group of people organised to put a number of able-bodied people into wheelchairs and push them around the city centre for approximately two hours. I was one of the persons who was pushed around. After that activity, I certainly had a better understanding of the problems faced by handicapped people on a day-to-day basis. During that exercise, I discovered that it is impossible for handicapped or, indeed, elderly people to gain access to many public buildings. For a relatively small amount of money, access to many of those buildings could be provided for those people. The buildings that were impossible for people in wheelchairs to enter included the post office, the courthouse, the police station, insurance offices, solicitors' offices and, indeed, the local city council office. Worst of all was the fact that, for the sum of approximately \$50, I was able to install ramps that allowed handicapped people to gain access to the council office. It is annoying that very few footpaths in Queensland cater for people in wheelchairs.

Mr Veivers: We do down the Gold Coast.

Mr McGRADY: Yes, I understand that the former administration did that. The point that I am trying to make is that, for a small amount of money, ramps for elderly and handicapped people can be provided. As a direct result of the activities in which I was involved, over several years the Mount Isa City Council allocated money to provide the ramps and footpaths in that city.

Another annoying aspect is that able-bodied people took up car-parking spaces that had been allocated to handicapped people. In the City of Mount Isa, the council imposed a \$100 fine on any able-bodied people who parked in those car-parking spaces. I am pleased to note that the Minister for Transport has announced that he intends to bring legislation before the Parliament that will extend the scheme whereby handicapped people

are allowed free parking in places that are now designed for car-parking meters. I urge all honourable members who have any influence at local, State or Federal Government level to urge those authorities to provide facilities for handicapped people to gain access to public buildings.

Townsville Aircraft Maintenance Facility; Mr M. Omodei; Mr L. Dunning

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (1.10 a.m.): I refer to the Government's bungling of a \$200m aircraft maintenance facility in Townsville that could have created over 3 000 jobs. The former Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone has gone the way of China Steel, the Boyne Island smelter expansion, the Ensham coalmine, the MFP and practically every major economic development project that has been before the Goss Labor Government. As is the norm, having bungled the negotiations, the Government has resorted to personal abuse of those involved, even political journalists who have sought only to do their jobs.

Mr Len Dunning's distinguished business career in Hong Kong follows his instrumental involvement in the colony's post-war development, notably as head of the industrial development and export branch of the Department of Commerce. Contrary to statements made in this place yesterday by the Minister for Business, Industry and Regional Development, I am reliably informed that he was happy with the report in Monday's *Townsville Bulletin* on the Minister's latest fiasco. Having sought to denigrate Mr Dunning, the Minister turned his wrath on prominent Townsville businessman, Monte Omodei. That man's CV makes the Minister pale into rightful insignificance and total irrelevance in terms of commitment to the people of north Queensland. For the information of honourable members, I table Mr Omodei's qualifications.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr BORBIDGE: He achieves more in a working day for the people of Townsville than Minister Smith is likely to rate in a life-time.

Mr Elder interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: I am about to tell the honourable member the way in which the Minister has misled the House. I can understand the sensitivity of Government members; the Government has just bungled another project. Townsville was set to receive \$200m worth of maintenance facilities, but that will now go to Tijuana in Mexico. The Minister had the audacity to rise in the House yesterday and say that he had not discussed the matter with Mr Dunning. The Minister claimed that he had assisted a Townsville business delegation in discussions with Mr Dunning in Hong Kong. The Minister is handling the truth carelessly in another attempt to preserve his Cabinet position. I am reliably informed, and I challenge the Minister to deny, that his department was not represented on the trade mission in question and that the regional manager of his department was refused ministerial permission to travel to Hong Kong. I am also advised that the honourable member for Townsville, Mr Davies, withdrew from the mission.

The decision by Denbridge Ltd to establish its facility in Mexico is another addition to the litany of lost opportunities presided over by a Government that is simply incapable of delivering major economic development projects to Queensland. What is of equal concern is the deceit, misrepresentation and misinformation that the apparatchiks who control this Government indulge in to protect this fragile Minister and his plastic Premier. If they cannot defend their own record in this place, they should not denigrate others who are better Queenslanders than they will ever be and, more importantly, should not, to disguise their own inadequacies, seek to misrepresent and abuse potential investors from abroad.

The door is still open and I now challenge the Premier to send a senior Minister to Hong Kong in a last-ditched attempt to salvage the project and to demonstrate some leadership and initiative, which has been so lacking in this Government. This proposer of this particular project contacted the Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone,

which has now been abolished. All the Government had to do was walk it through. All the Government had to do was negotiate it. Once again, because of this Government's inability to deal with projects and its failure to be proactive, we have seen a major economic development project in Queensland bite the dust; once again, Queensland looks like losing a project that it should be able to secure. The door is still open. I urge the Premier to start giving this and other projects the priority that they rightfully deserve.

Importation of Fresh Bananas

Mr SULLIVAN (Glass House) (1.15 a.m.): I welcome the opportunity to raise a matter of great concern to people in my electorate. I speak, of course, of the threat of imports into Australia of fresh banana fruit to which the honourable member for Warwick alluded earlier in the debate. I am sure that all honourable members will have been following the application by Ecuadorian interests who now sell their fruit on the New Zealand market to also export bananas to Australia.

The Federal Minister, Mr Kerin, has told the House of Representatives that he does not expect any decision on this matter until 1992 or 1993, pending a detailed investigation by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, AQIS. However, the fears of growers and their families have not abated. Not without justification, they regard the destruction of their industry as the only and inevitable consequence of the import of fresh banana fruit. They have, after all, the examples of other horticultural crops, such as citrus and pineapples, to guide them, in which formerly healthy local industries have been virtually sacrificed on the altar of free trade. So concerned are growers that they are voluntarily contributing 1c per carton to a fighting fund in order to more effectively campaign against imports.

The Federal Government is quite clearly committed to free trade. In a press release dated 7 November, Mr Kerin said—

"Australia's agricultural industries export around 70% of total production. We are exposed to world markets and stand to gain many millions of dollars if subsidies and protection by the world's powerful economies can be wound back.

We simply cannot justify blocking imports from developing countries. We live and trade in the real world and can gain nothing in the long term from artificially protecting ourselves from competition."

In Mr Kerin's real world, smaller agricultural industries appear to be expendable as Australia chases the elusive dream of unrestricted entry into the giant North American and European markets for our major primary industry sectors.

The banana industry in the Glass House electorate is not insignificant. A recent newspaper report cited the Caboolture district as having 216 growers, roughly half the number of growers in the State. In 1987-88, the industry was worth \$62m to Queensland, so it follows that the banana-growers' contribution to the local Caboolture economy is substantial. We can ill afford to lose this industry, coming as it would on the heels of the import-induced difficulties to the other major fruit crop grown locally, pineapples. The effect on the local economy would be catastrophic, and recovery for many local traders difficult, if not impossible.

While the Federal Minister seeks to allay the fears of producers by nominating a period of some two years in which imports will, by necessity, not be possible, under Federal Government policies the outlook for the industry must be regarded as grim. Mr Kerin is reported in the *Courier-Mail* of 14 November as having "ruled out any Government policy rejecting the foreign bananas merely as a form of protection for the domestic industry if there were no health and disease concerns". There are some questions in that regard with the Ecuadorian bananas, hence the two-year stay of execution pronounced by the Minister, but Ecuadorian bananas may not be the only threat. In a

letter dated 10 October to Ross Boyle of the Australian Banana Growers Council, Mr Bob Paton, Principal Science Administrator with AQIS, stated—

"The Ecuadorian proposal is the only one AQIS has received, but it is our experience that if importers are aware that a proposal from one country is being assessed, other countries will be suggested."

Quite clearly, AQIS anticipates that other applications will follow, and it could be that there are no health or disease concerns associated with those applications. Those imports would be allowed under the Federal Government's existing policy.

On 19 November I attended a meeting of banana-growers at Caboolture, a meeting attended by a large percentage of the 216 growers engaged in the industry locally. It is my view, and I believe also the view of those attending that meeting, that the Federal Government must act quickly and positively to ensure the continuation and viability of this comparatively small, but nonetheless valuable, local primary industry. There is no short-term or long-term gain that can justify the eradication of an industry that is currently supplying the total domestic market. As my Federal colleague, Michael Lavarch, told Federal Parliament recently—

"If our efforts to promote free trade fail, through no fault of our own, we must not allow ourselves to be the victim."

The reality is that, while Australia marches forward, banging the drum and carrying the flag of free trade, insufficient other countries are following behind. I submit that it is time to face up to that reality and abandon the parade.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 1.20 a.m. (Thursday).

