

NOTE: There could be differences between this document and the official printed Hansard, Vol. 319

TUESDAY, 1 OCTOBER 1991

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. J. Fouras, Ashgrove) read prayers and took the chair at 10 a.m.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr Speaker—

Building Act Amendment Bill;
Fire Service Act Amendment and Fire Safety Act Repeal Bill;
Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations Bill;
Local Government (Swimming Pool Fencing) Amendment Bill;
Air Navigation Amendment Bill;
Public Hospitals (Third Party Patients) Validation of Fees and Charges Bill;
Universities of Central and Southern Queensland Amendment Bill;
Surveyors Amendment Bill;
Mental Health Amendment Bill;
Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Bill;
Dental Amendment Bill;
Corrective Services Amendment Bill;
Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement (Service Personnel) Bill;
Acts Repeal Bill.

ABSENCE OF THE CLERK

Mr SPEAKER: I have to advise the House of the unavoidable absence of the Clerk of the Parliament, who is on preretirement leave.

QUEENSLAND INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Report

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that on Tuesday, 17 September, I received a report of the Queensland Industry Development Corporation for the year ended 30 June 1991 in accordance with section 46J (6) of the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977.

ELECTORAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMISSION

Report

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that on Thursday, 19 September, I received from the Chairman of the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission the report on the review of public sector auditing in Queensland.

Ordered to be printed.

PRIVILEGE**Complaint Regarding Removal of Petition**

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have received a complaint regarding a petition to Parliament. Consequently, I have decided to refer the following matters to the Privileges Committee—

- (1) Whether the removal of a petition to the Parliament or a page of a petition from the possession of a person intending to cause such a petition to be presented to Parliament is capable of constituting a contempt of Parliament.
- (2) Whether the signing by a person of his or her name on a petition to the Parliament without a bona fide intention to petition the Parliament thereby is capable of constituting a contempt of the Parliament.
- (3) Whether it is necessary or desirable to include these matters in the current review of the privilege attaching to parliamentary papers.

PETITIONS

The Acting Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Child-care Centres

From **Ms Spence** (130 signatories) praying for regulations to be introduced to ensure that directors of child-care centres hold at least a 3-year tertiary early childhood qualification, group leaders at least a 2-year qualification and for a reduction in total group size in all age groupings.

Child-care Centres

From **Mrs Woodgate** (147 signatories) praying that any proposed changes relating to child-care centres be preceded by a Green Paper and a 6-month commentary period before any legislation.

Gun Laws

From **Mr Fenlon** (47 signatories) praying for stricter laws on the availability of guns to persons outside of highly regulated gun clubs.

Radioactive Material Storage

From **Mr J. H. Sullivan** (1 557 signatories) praying that no new or temporary radioactive storage facility be established anywhere in south-east Queensland until a more suitable site is found in another area.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

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

Report of the Department of Primary Industries for the year ended 30 June 1991.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Orders in Council under—

- State Housing Act 1945
- State Housing (Freeholding of Land) Act 1957
- Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1990
- Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982
- Harbours Act 1955
- Gas Act 1965-1990
- Gas Act 1965
- Mines Regulation Act 1964
- Mineral Resources Act 1989-1990
- Mineral Resources Act 1989
- Fishing Industry Organization and Marketing Act 1982
- Forestry Act 1959
- Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926
- River Improvement Trust Act 1940 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982
- Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936
- Water Resources Act 1989
- Auctioneers and Agents Act 1971
- Supreme Court Act 1921
- Supreme Court Act 1921 and Corporations (Queensland) Act 1990

Regulations under—

- State Housing Act 1945
- Builders' Registration and Home-owners' Protection Act 1979
- Architects Act 1985

Proclamations under—

- Art Unions and Amusements Amendment Act 1991
- Forestry Act 1959

Rules under the Casino Control Act 1982

By-laws under—

- Harbours Act 1955
- South East Queensland Water Board Act 1979

Guidelines under the Sugar Industry Act 1991

Report of the Bread Industry Committee of Queensland for the year ended 13 October 1990

Reports for the year ended 31 December 1990—

- Queensland Canegrowers Organisation
- Queensland Pork Producers State Council
- Tobacco Leaf Marketing Board of Queensland and the Tobacco Quota Committee

Reports for the year ended 31 March 1991—

Bean Growers Co-operative Association Limited

Navy Bean Marketing Board

Peanut Marketing Board

Queensland Dairyfarmers Organisation

Queensland Peanut Growers Co-operative Association Limited

Report of the Registrar of Retirement Villages for the year ended 30 June 1991.

DAYS ALLOTTED TO SUPPLY

Sessional Order

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (10.09 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That for this Session, unless otherwise ordered and, notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders or Sessional Orders, the following Order concerning the financial procedures of the House shall apply—

- (a) As soon as the Debate on the Financial Statement has been concluded, the business of Supply shall, until disposed of, be the first Order of the Day.
- (b) Not more than twenty days, each day comprising four hours Debate, shall be allotted for the consideration of—
 - the Estimates for the year;
 - the Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated (Supplementary Estimates); and
 - the Vote on Account for the ensuing year.
- (c) On days allotted for Supply, Debate on the business of Supply shall commence—
 - (i) on Tuesdays at 12 o'clock noon;
 - (ii) on Wednesdays at 3.30 o'clock p.m.; and
 - (iii) on Thursdays at 11 o'clock a.m.

Formal motions and other Government business may be proceeded with until those times.

At the specified times any proceedings on such other business shall be interrupted and the business of Supply proceeded with forthwith; and any business so interrupted shall stand as an Order of the Day for the next sitting day.

- (d) On the days allotted for Supply, no business, other than that specified in paragraph (c) of this Sessional Order shall be taken until after the consideration of Supply; and no discussion of a Matter of Public Importance under Standing Order No. 137 shall be entertained.
- (e) The following speech times shall apply for a Debate on each allotted day for Supply—the Minister in charge 30 minutes, Opposition spokesperson in response 30 minutes, other Members 15 minutes, Minister in reply 10 minutes.
- (f) At five minutes before the expiration of the Debate the Chairman shall put the question under consideration and all remaining questions necessary to

conclude the Debate on that Minister's Estimates, all such questions to be decided without Amendment or Debate.

- (g) Provided that, if the discussion of the Estimates of a Minister is concluded before the expiry of the allotted day so allowed, the period of time remaining shall be allocated to the discussion of the Estimates to be next brought before the Committee.
- (h) At the conclusion of the last but one day of the days so allotted, the Chairman shall put every Question, without further Amendment or Debate, necessary to decide the Vote or Votes under consideration, and shall then proceed to put the Question that the total amount unvoted for the Estimates under discussion (if any) be granted for the Services defined in the Estimates, and a similar Question for the total amount of each Estimate, or Supplementary Estimate, any postponed Vote of any Estimate partly dealt with, and the Vote on Account for the ensuing year, all such Questions to be decided without amendment or debate; and the Chairman shall then leave the Chair without Question put, to report that the Committee have come to certain Resolutions, whereupon an Order for the reception of the Resolutions of Supply shall be made, and such Question shall be put by Mr Speaker without Amendment or Debate.
- (i) At 9.00 o'clock p.m. on the last of the days so allotted, not being earlier than the twentieth day, Mr Speaker shall forthwith put every Question, to be decided without Amendment or Debate, necessary to dispose of the Report of the Resolution then under discussion, and every Question, to be decided without Amendment or Debate, necessary to dispose of all other Resolutions of the Committee not already agreed to by the House.
- (j) It shall be within the discretion of the Leader of the House to extend the Sitting on the last day allotted for Supply for the purpose of dealing with and bringing to a conclusion all the necessary proceedings for the founding and passing of the Appropriation Bill through all its stages.

At 11.30 o'clock p.m., subject to the following proviso, the Question under consideration and every Question necessary to bring to a conclusion the proceedings of the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means, and the passing of the Bill through all its stages, shall be put by Mr Speaker or the Chairman of Committees, as the case may be, without Amendment or Debate.

Provided that if, at 11.30 o'clock p.m., the Question for the Second reading of the Bill is under consideration the Sitting may be further extended to enable the Mover of the Motion or his Deputy to speak in reply."

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Reports of Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody

Hon. A. M. WARNER (South Brisbane—Minister for Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs) (10.15 a.m.), by leave: I seek leave to table the reports of the royal commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody.

Leave granted.

Ms WARNER: In welcoming this most comprehensive work—the five volumes of the final report and the six volumes of regional reports, with over 5 000 pages and 339 recommendations—I point out that it is most important to remember the national tragedy

that the royal commissioners examined. Between 1 January 1980 and 31 May 1989, 99 Aboriginal people died in custody, and 27 of those deaths, that is, nearly one-third, occurred in Queensland. This is significant. Not only does Queensland have the highest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, and also the second-highest number of deaths in custody of any State or Territory, but also in Queensland, more than in any other State or Territory, there has been decades of callous indifference mixed with arrogant paternalism.

The greatest tribute that we can pay to these people who died in custody is to commit ourselves to dealing with the causes of this national tragedy. Who were these people who died in custody? While not wishing to identify individuals by name here, it is important to answer the question of just who these people were. The 99 people who died were young. Their median age was just 29 years. In Queensland, of the 11 men who died by hanging, six had not yet reached the age of 21. The royal commissioner found that, both nationally and in Queensland, almost half the people who died had been separated from their families by State, mission or other institutional interventions. Three-quarters of them were under 20 years of age at the time of their first criminal charge. Further, over half of those who died were in custody as a result of having been arrested for drunkenness.

Of the 27 who died in Queensland, all but three were born or spent many years of their lives in what are now known as the deed of grant in trust communities—the former Aboriginal reserves. These communities are monuments to decades of Queensland Government policies that harshly imposed a total and an alien control on all aspects of life. It is only quite recently that people in these communities have been allowed to make decisions that any adult person would expect to make every day. The present Government must take responsibility for the effects of previous Government policies in these communities, which have distorted so many lives, including nearly all those who died in custody in Queensland.

Let us be guided by the royal commissioners in understanding the causes of these deaths in custody at a deeper level. Commissioner Johnston found that for each and every one of the 99 deaths the Aboriginality of the deceased played a significant and, in most cases, dominant role in their being in custody and dying in custody. Commissioner Johnston acknowledged that despite considerable experience in Aboriginal issues he had no real idea of the degree of “pin-pricking domination, abuse of personal power, utter paternalism, open contempt and total indifference” which confronted Aboriginal people in their everyday lives. Commissioner Wyvill, who reported on deaths in custody in Queensland, found “systemic and structural disadvantage of an appalling magnitude”. Commissioner Dodson, who specifically examined underlying causes, has stated that the report of the royal commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody holds a mirror to our society.

The overwhelming factor in the deaths is clearly the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in rates of arrest, police detention and imprisonment. In Queensland, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were found to be represented in police custody at a rate of nine times that of the general population. Further, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were found to be represented in prison custody at a rate of over 12 times that of the general population. The underlying cause of the statistics is a reflection of the paltry place that we as a society have allocated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people not only historically but also today in Queensland. The reports of the royal commissioners into Aboriginal deaths in custody represent the most thorough and comprehensive consideration of the relationship between Aboriginal and Islander people and the wider Australian society that has been undertaken since Federation. These reports and their 339 recommendations prevent us from justifying inaction through ignorance. In view of the time and the

lengthiness of the report, I seek leave to have the remainder of this statement incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The royal commissioners have placed before us a detailed program for addressing the underlying causes.

Mr Speaker, the program contained within the royal commissioners' recommendations must be implemented on two levels. The first concerns overcoming the significant systemic disadvantage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people suffer in the criminal justice system.

The second level must address Commissioner Wyvill's finding of systemic and structural disadvantage of an appalling magnitude, by a greater commitment to changing our attitudes and behaviours, not only on an individual level but at an institutional and governmental level.

In implementing the recommendations of the royal commission into Aboriginal deaths custody it is of fundamental importance that we be guided by the principle of reducing the likelihood that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be in custody. It is also important that we aim to increase the safety and well being of those who are incarcerated.

The royal commissioners' reports clearly demonstrate that our approach as a Government to the delivery of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must improve. A large part of that improvement will need to be the acceptance by Government departments that their actions have contributed to the fundamental disempowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The recommendations of the royal commissioners make it very clear that consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the implementation of policies is grossly inadequate and co-ordination is so splintered and piecemeal as to deny communities effective involvement in the decisions that affect them—thus maintaining their powerlessness.

It is essential as part of our response to the royal commissioners' recommendations that all Government agencies thoroughly consider the extent to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people benefit from their programs.

All situations, where Aboriginal and Islander people are excluded from the delivery of a service or participating in a program, or where in comparison to the general population the service they receive is inadequate, or their participation in a program is limited, must be transformed.

Since the Commonwealth tabling of the royal commissioners' report in May, considerable work has been done in Queensland to address the question of how we will implement the royal commissioners' recommendations.

I believe that emphasis in implementing recommendations must be given to those recommendations which will most directly benefit Aboriginal and Islander communities, rather than those recommendations which will alter arrangements between agencies, collect data, or train non-Aboriginal staff of agencies.

While these latter objectives are important, in general they should be seen by agencies as part of their normal ongoing responsibilities to all the people in Queensland.

Mr Speaker the report recommends the establishment of sobering up shelters to reduce the number of people held in custody for drunkenness, the development of schemes to divert offenders from the system, including the reduction of imprisonment for fine default, the expansion of community corrections options and community involvement in sentencing generally.

It calls for improvements in coronial and police investigations, recognition of the principle of imprisonment as a last resort, the redressing of inequalities in access to bail and the assertion of legal rights, cross-cultural training of criminal justice personnel, the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural needs and improvements in cross-cultural communication throughout the system.

The Government has begun to address each of these issues through a range of initiatives involving various departments. I will now mention just a few.

Many important initiatives have already been undertaken within the Queensland Police Service.

The priorities for the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs have been those of alcohol and alcohol-related problems, juvenile justice and social justice issues.

The department responded to the interim report of Commissioner Muirhead by establishing an alcohol awareness program under which initiatives developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to reduce alcohol abuse are encouraged.

It is also establishing in Mount Isa the first of the diversionary facilities which will provide real alternatives to police detention of people charged with drunkenness.

For those detained in watchhouses the department is assisting community-based "cell visitor" programs. Three commendable programs are already operating with much success in Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns, and another will soon be operating in Mount Isa.

For those in prison custody, the Queensland corrective services commission has moved to improve the experience of imprisonment in a number of ways as well as expanding the range of culturally appropriate community correctional facilities available.

The Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs has complemented this process with the funding of prisoner-initiated Aboriginal cultural heritage programs.

In the area of youth, the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs is committed to reducing Aboriginal youth involvement with the juvenile justice systems.

Review of the juvenile justice and child protection legislation is designed to empower Aboriginal families and communities to ensure that Aboriginal children are not alienated from their social support, that culturally appropriate and Aboriginal-initiated crime prevention programs are put in place, and that communities have input into the juvenile justice system.

Mr Speaker beyond the recommendations for justice reforms, the report addresses the deeper, underlying causes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage, uncovering a history of deliberate and systematic marginalisation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population through successive Government policies of dispossession, protection, assimilation and integration.

As a result of previous policies Mr Speaker, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people suffer from more ill health, premature death, lack of education, unemployment, poverty, poor housing, alcoholism, and poorer access to basic services than any other sector of Australian society.

There is no easy fix. The recommendations relating to improving the living standards of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and to giving meaning to the concept of racial equality, require responses from many Government agencies. Co-operative implementation, a necessary element of any Government response to the recommendations, is planned in Queensland.

Of primary importance is the general approach and philosophy we choose to adopt toward Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and rights. Central to the underlying issues identified in both the Queensland regional report and the national report is that of autonomy and self-determination.

No number of Government initiatives and no amount of funding can be expected to produce results with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people being denied some ownership in the processes that affect them.

As you will be aware Mr Speaker, since this Government's election to office, we have been firmly committed to a re-ordering of relations between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and the Government. The Government intends to achieve a genuine re-empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, facilitating moves towards greater independence, with the provision of vital resources.

This is especially appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ex-reserve communities.

This Government is firmly committed to the legislative change necessary to restore, to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the fundamental right to control their lives and environment which has been historically denied them.

A review of legislation governing ex-reserve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is nearing completion. This is being carried out by an all-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander committee in full consultation with the people affected.

Complementing this will be the implementation of the new Aboriginal Land Act and Torres Strait Islander Land Act. This will allow lands to be granted which are of traditional, historical or cultural significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The legislation recognises the fundamental importance of land to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in many ways, including the provision of an independent resource base to give meaning to economic independence and to redress the legacy of dispossession.

Mr Speaker, the recommendations of the royal commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody are of particular significance to Queensland.

Mr Speaker, things have changed in Queensland and those changes are not going to stop. There is much to redress. In this context, Mr Speaker, it was very heartening for me to attend the meeting of Commonwealth and State Ministers concerned with implementing the recommendations of the royal commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody, in Canberra on the 8th July.

That meeting agreed that by March next year that Commonwealth and the States and territories will announce a national integrated "whole of Government" response. Two aspects of the work of that meeting are worth noting here.

One is the expectation that following the meeting next March, the Commonwealth, State and territory Governments will be in a position to implement much of what the royal commission has recommended through budget considerations for 1992/93.

The other substantial aspect was that there must be meaningful participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the formulation of the "whole of Government" response as well as in the ongoing monitoring of the implementation of recommendations.

Mr Speaker we can no longer justify inaction through ignorance. Not only has the royal commission held a mirror to our society that reflects an historical and continuing silent war against Aboriginal and Islander people, it has also delivered to us a set of terms for ending that silent war.

With this report, the Queensland Government has the opportunity to negotiate an end to the alienation, the indifference, the tragedy. There will be many challenges but we now know a lot more about them and about how to approach dealing with them. Let all Queenslanders join to meet these challenges and let history record that we overcame them.

Mr Speaker I urge the members of this Parliament and the people of Queensland to read, then act upon, the report of the royal commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Death of Hon. J. H. Warner

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (10.18 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late Honourable John Herbert Warner, a former member and Speaker of the Parliament of Queensland.

2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the widow and family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the

sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland in the loss they have sustained.”

John Warner served in this House as the member for Toowoomba South from 1974 to 1986. Following the 1983 State election he was elected Speaker of the House. My first term as a member of this House coincided with John Warner's last term. Other members on both sides served with him and knew him well—better than I. I think we are all aware that controversy and the job of Speaker seem to go hand in hand. That has often been the case in this Parliament and in other Parliaments. John Warner's term as Speaker was no exception. I must say that I found a number of his rulings perplexing, and on a number of occasions I had arguments with him. I must also say that I gained the impression that he was a fairly gentle sort of person and, without casting any aspersions on anybody else, perhaps too much of a gentleman to occupy that chair. I do not say that by way of criticism because I think the term “gentleman” genuinely applied to John Warner in the three years that I spent in this place with him.

I note that in interviews after he announced his intention to retire, John Warner said quite firmly that he stood by the decisions he had made and he simply recognised that criticism was part of the job. John Warner served the people of Toowoomba South, this Parliament, his party and the general community in many capacities. He served with the RAAF in World War II in the Pacific and in America. He came from a grazing family and always took an interest in rural matters and in the welfare of rural communities. He also had a keen interest in horse sports and horse-breeding. On behalf of the Government, I express sympathy to John Warner's family.

Hon. T. J. BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government) (10.20 a.m.): I second the motion moved by the Premier and offer my sympathy to the family of the late John Warner. John was elected to this Parliament in 1974 at the time when Labor was reduced to a cricket team. Although John and I did not agree politically, he and I became friends. In fact, I recall with some pride and a tinge of regret John's words on his retirement on 18 September 1986. He said—

“There is no doubt that I will miss the many friends I have made in this place. I mention Neil Turner, Claude Wharton and Tom Burns. It may surprise people that I mention Tom Burns, but he is one of the friends I have made over the years, although he continually says nasty things about me.”

I will not be saying nasty things about John today.

John was born in Sydney in 1923. I liked talking to John because we had a few things in common. He was an former air force man. I never saw any shots fired in anger, so I am not trying to pretend that I am an old digger, but John flew across the Pacific in the ferry command during the war, which was a fairly onerous task. A lot of air force men were lost. The planes were rushed off the assembly line and many a time I think there were pieces missing. At any rate, a lot of airmen went missing. He was also a sailor and was involved in air-sea rescue. Because I liked sailing, we had a common interest. On a couple of occasions he gave me a day off on Moreton Bay. As well, John Warner was a show person. He enjoyed membership of the RNA and was a life member of the Warwick Show Society and the rodeo. Those were common interests that John and I had other than our interests in this place.

John Warner was a quiet and gentle man. The way in which he attempted to handle this Parliament provided a bit of respite following the Speakers who had preceded him in this place. I entered this Parliament at the end of the Nicholson era. Dave Nicholson attempted to get rid of Joh. Three or four others, including Jim Houghton, were involved. That was a fairly prickly mob.

Mr Gibbs: They were visionaries.

Mr BURNS: As my colleague said, they were visionaries. However, in the chair, Dave was a fairly tough master. Bill Lonergan followed Dave as Speaker. Of course, Bill got up against the numbers in this place. He was also a prickly character. The next Speaker was Jim Houghton, who had been defeated by Bill Lonergan. Jim had been an Independent member, a Liberal Party member, a Country Party member and a National Party member—a real rebel in his own way. He turned out to be a good Speaker. The next Speaker was Sel Muller, who began on the wrong foot by stating that his loyalty was to the Government, not to the House. He also was a bit of a rebel. Then came John Warner, who was gentle and kind. As the Premier rightly said, he was the type of person who would find it very difficult to be a tough Speaker. The position of Speaker aged John considerably. At times, he found it very hard to be the Speaker in this place.

Sometimes, I was disappointed with what happened in this place. I admit that I was never the best behaved person in Opposition, and I am sure that John would accept that admission today. In 1985 or 1986, a Premier's announcement appeared on the front page of the newspapers that John was not up to doing the job. I did not believe that it was necessary for that announcement to be made. It was not fair, and I said so to John and also to Joh. This place can be very hard. It is a boisterous place. Last week, my parliamentary committee and I attended question-time in the Western Australian Parliament in Perth and, to be truthful, it was boring. It was so quiet and so peaceful that I did not believe that Parliament was in session. In fact, a vote of no confidence was moved against a member and we did not hear even a voice raised, which appeared strange to a person who has been brought up in this place. At the time, I thought that John would have been happy to have that group of politicians under his control instead of the members of the Queensland Parliament.

The debate on this motion is forwarded to John's family. As all families of politicians would know, John's family would have suffered greatly because of his service here. Men and women enter this place and their years of service to the community and the Parliament are years that are taken away from their families. When a person decides to serve as a politician, it is a loss that his or her family must suffer. John's family was no exception. For years, some of his family lived in Toowoomba while John attended this place. To all of them, I offer our condolences and the support of the Parliament in the future.

Mr COOPER (Roma—Leader of the Opposition) (10.25 a.m.): On behalf of the parliamentary National Party, I endorse the motion moved by the Premier and seconded by the Deputy Premier. I note the comments that have been made. I recognise that John Warner was elected as Speaker in November 1983, which is the year in which I entered Parliament. Being new to Parliament, I thought that the business of Parliament, instead of dealing with legislation, was belting the Speaker. As the Deputy Premier stated, the Speaker came in for an awful lot of stick. However, although John Warner had to endure a testing time—Parliament is a place in which to test out the weak links—he came through. He did not break or crack, and the business of Parliament was conducted.

As has been pointed out, John was one of nature's gentlemen. He had a natural charm which, as has been stated, might not have suited him for the role of Speaker. As you would know, Mr Speaker, it takes much strength and audacity to occupy the chair; but the main point is that the business of the House is carried out smoothly, and under John Warner it was. John was also a tireless worker for the electorate of Toowoomba South. He was rewarded with the strong support of the people. John was born in Sydney on 26 November 1923. He married Mary Alison Sword in 1949, and they had four children. For some time, the Sword family lived in Texas and were good friends with my family. During World War II, John served in the RAAF for six years as a pilot. He was involved in air-sea rescue and in the trans-Pacific ferry command services from 1939 to 1943. That

involvement was a high-risk operation, but John came through it well. He held a Diploma of Engineering (Aircraft) and a general reconnaissance certificate. Unfortunately, we do not know these things about people until occasions such as this occur. After the war, he managed his father's property near Goondiwindi. Later, in 1953, he bought a property near Warwick and became a farmer and grazier.

It is interesting to note the reason for his entering politics. His father died at the height of a cattle boom and death duties almost forced his family off the land. Because of that and because of the conditions being imposed on the rural community at that time, he became very interested in politics. Initially, he decided to do something about abolishing death duties. Joh Bjelke-Petersen, who was later to become Premier, urged John to go into politics and fight that iniquitous tax. A decade later, that tax was abolished and Queensland has not looked back. John was also a staunch supporter of and believer in the National Party. Between 1972 to 1974, he was secretary of the Darling Downs division as well as being a divisional returning officer. In 1974, he was elected as the member for Toowoomba South and he increased his majority in each election after that—in 1977, 1980 and 1983—which is indicative of the way in which he was doing his job.

From 1975, he was a member of the Parliamentary Privileges Committee, and from 1979 to 1983, its chairman. From November 1983 until his retirement in 1986, he was Speaker. As has been said, that role was most certainly very demanding. As we cast our minds back, the most important thing to remember is that John ensured that the business of the day was done. We know that John was a quiet achiever. He kept a very low profile. However, he was certainly a hard worker. He campaigned very successfully on the local scene for the seat of Toowoomba South and was successful in ridding the Toowoomba General Hospital of its chimney stack, which caused a great deal of pollution. He also played a key role in securing a new services block for that hospital.

Before he died, I was told that John Warner had had cancer for something like three years. Just recently, quite a number of us were at his funeral in Toowoomba and we saw his family there. It was said then—and it is true—that the greatest thing that he would miss, apart from his immediate family, would be his grandchildren, whom he wanted so much to see grow up. Those things demonstrate the cruelties and the sadness of life. In fact, it is sad that his life was cut short by that dreaded disease. His funeral was very well attended. I know that Mr Elliott, Mr Fitzgerald, Mr Lingard, Mr Harper and quite a number of the staff of the Parliamentary Service Commission attended the funeral. It was pleasing to see them in attendance. The funeral was also attended by many other people, both old and young, from around the district. That indicated quite clearly the depth of feeling that they had for John Warner. We on this side of the House extend our condolences to the family, whom we have known for quite some time. We wish them well. They know that, if nothing else, John Warner was respected and was most certainly a great achiever for his electorate and for the Parliament of Queensland.

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong—Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.31 a.m.): On behalf of members of the Liberal Party, I rise to support the motion before the House and offer our condolences to the family of John Warner. Although not well known to me personally, John nevertheless was very well known to many former Liberal parliamentarians who served in this House over a very long period. I suppose John can be summed up best as being a family man and, as has already been mentioned, a gentleman. He was a nice bloke who had few, if any, enemies. I think it says something for a person if he can be summed up in those words. They certainly apply to John Warner.

His time as Speaker of this House was not easy; it was fairly controversial and torrid. No doubt, that meant that his family suffered somewhat during those years. It was certainly a testing time. During World War II, John served overseas for his country. His service, not only to this Parliament but also during the war years, to the people of this

State and this nation is quite worthy of note. Over the 12 years that he was the member for Toowoomba South, he strongly represented his electorate. On behalf of members of the Liberal Party, I extend our sympathies to the family of John Warner.

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (10.33 a.m.): I join in this condolence motion to the widow and family of John Warner. I want to place on record my appreciation to that family for the load they have borne in providing for Toowoomba and the rest of Queensland a member of Parliament who rose to the office of Speaker. I knew John Warner quite well—in fact, very closely. One shares a lot with someone who represents a next-door electorate. In 1974, I campaigned all day for John Warner, handing out “how to vote” cards. When one has that sort of affinity with a colleague and has worked for his election, one shares a common interest with him.

As has been said, John Warner was a very gentle man. He was a country man. He had a certain style and charm about him. His constituents related easily to him. John Warner was not a person who sought a lot of publicity. He really worked very, very hard behind the scenes. He was like a duck paddling across a pond, looking very serene on top of the water but with the legs going like anything under it. John felt passionately about issues. If he really felt strongly about an issue, he had a method of conveying that passion and feeling to a Minister or to anyone else who was involved. As was said, he was interested in many sports. I can recall his interest in quarter horses and sprint racing in Toowoomba. I know that he attempted to make Toowoomba the home for sprint racing in Queensland. He was not successful; nevertheless, that was his passion.

I place on record my condolences to Mary Al, who really stood beside John through his years in politics, supported him in his role as Speaker and spent quite a lot of time in this House with him. I also extend my condolences to his family of David, Philip, Simon and Annie. I know all of them personally. As we remember the life of John Warner, I thank them for their contribution to it. Honourable members may not know that for all of his political life, John Warner lived in the electorate of Lockyer. At present, Mary Al lives in that electorate, which, I understand, will soon become the seat of Toowoomba South. I think the people in Toowoomba South and in Toowoomba generally would like to say thank you for the life of John Warner.

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (10.36 a.m.): In taking part in this condolence motion, I want to reminisce very briefly. This is an interesting time to reflect on the life of someone like John. I found it quite amazing that a number of people actually underestimated him. When many of us on this side first came to this place in 1974, we shared an interesting office. In those days, members did not have offices of their own; they had to share an office with a large number of other people. In our office, there was a very illustrious group. There was the champion backwards-walking gentleman who came from the bakery in central Queensland, Vince Lester. There were also Bob Katter, John Warner and me. It was a real mixed bag. In fact, Katter and Lester all but got themselves chucked out of Parliament on the first day that they were here. It was interesting to see the look on John Warner's face when he saw that pair misbehaving in this august place. They had been here only five seconds and Jim Houghton all but chucked them out on their first day. John had a presence about him. He always did the right thing and was always there. If there was a group of people and a door to be opened for a lady, John would be to the forefront to open that door. If a car door was to be opened, John Warner did it. That is possibly where people misunderstood how John operated in Toowoomba South.

It never ceased to amaze me that people used to say, “John Warner will not necessarily get back in in Toowoomba South.” I used to say, “Would you like to have a few Casket tickets on it, because I will bet on him, if you like.” John Warner continually increased his majority. As Tony FitzGerald said, like a duck on a pond he perhaps did not appear to be doing a tremendous amount on the surface, but, believe me, beneath the

surface he was working continually for people, particularly older people, in his electorate. There are a lot of retired people in Toowoomba. Not only did they appreciate the work that John Warner did for them, but they also appreciated his tremendous sense of understanding and the empathy that he was able to convey to older people and their problems. Because John had that old-world charm and ability to deal with people, particularly older people, he was very greatly appreciated.

I was asked to act as a kind of usher at John's funeral and I spoke to some of the people who came through the door. The support that those people gave was amazing. Many people had a tremendous respect for John. The service was quite a moving experience. Bishop Wicks did a great job at the funeral. Quite often when one attends a funeral one feels that the clergyman or whoever is conducting the service takes that opportunity to give everyone a lesson while he has them there as a captive audience. In this instance, Bishop Wicks really did John proud. I am sure that John was somewhere there listening to it all and taking it in. He would have appreciated the service, because he was a bloke with a sense of occasion. I believe that he would have appreciated how it all went. I join with other members in conveying my condolences to John's family. This is obviously a very tough time for them. It is very hard when someone is taken from us much earlier than we would have expected that person to be taken. Particularly for John's children, who now have families of their own, I am sure that this is a time of great sadness for them. However, it is much better to emphasise the happier times.

Mr Speaker, you will remember the early times when we first came into this place. At that time there was a sense of camaraderie between all members of Parliament that does not really exist to the same degree today. In fact, we never wrecked a famous tradition by sitting on Wednesday nights. As often as not, we used to go to the movies. We lived in the Bellevue Hotel, at which, regardless of the guests' political persuasion, a lot of good-natured fun and ribbing took place. John and I, Vince, Bob Katter and some others—I think Neil Turner might have come with us—went off to see a film. We took with us that famous Laborite from Bundaberg. I will not let on exactly who he was. We vowed and declared that of all the Labor guys we used to go to the movies with, we would never take him again. He used to make the most outrageous remarks at the most inappropriate times during those films, and we thought that we would all get chucked out.

I am pleased to rise to speak to this condolence motion, although I will not speak at any great length. As I said, John was underestimated. I believe that in his role as Speaker, John improved conditions in this House not only for members but also in respect of the public's appreciation of the House and its beauty, charm and sense of history. John had all the necessary qualities and understood that part of his duties very well. Whereas he might have found his job in this Chamber difficult, he performed the other part of his job very well. We all owe him a great debt of gratitude for that.

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn) (10.42 a.m.): I rise to add some of my thoughts in this motion of condolence for the late John Warner. John was a friend as well as a colleague. Of course, all members would recognise that there is a degree of difference there. John's daughter and my younger daughter were at school together at Southport. Later, they attended the DDIAE together. I have also known John's son Simon for all of those years.

Last Wednesday, during the memorial service conducted by the former Bishop of Toowoomba, he suggested that perhaps John Warner really was not fitted for the cut and thrust of politics. I believe that the Honourable the Premier and the Deputy Premier have indicated that they felt the same way. John Warner certainly was a kindly and gentle man. As Tom Burns said, "gentle" is a separate word from "man". John Warner was certainly a gentleman, but he was also a gentle man. Indeed, when John Warner sat in the chair of this Parliament as Speaker he often appeared to me to be quite stunned by some of the

antics and behaviour of members in this Chamber. I can well understand that you, Mr Speaker, would smile. Perhaps you are equally stunned, although you do not show it in the same way as John did. I must admit that often I had a strong degree of sympathy for the position in which John sometimes found himself. Mr Speaker, you would appreciate that there was a different Premier in the Parliament at that time. I felt that the position in which John often found himself was certainly not always—by no means always—of his own making. It was said by the Leader of the Opposition that John was a well-respected representative of his constituents, and indeed he was. He was an understanding representative of his constituents. It was his gentle sincerity that won him the seat initially. There again, I know that John himself was somewhat stunned to win the seat. My electorate does not adjoin the electorate of Toowoomba South, as do the electorates of the member for Cunningham and the member for Lockyer. However, it was, as Tony Elliott said, that sincerity and his ability to mix with people, particularly elderly people, that certainly won him the seat initially and enabled him to retain it, increasing his majority at each election. I record the sympathy of myself and that of my wife and family to his widow, to his children, Anne and Simon, and to his grandchildren.

Hon. N. J. TURNER (Nicklin) (10.46 a.m.): It is with a certain degree of sadness that I join in this condolence motion. It seems to be a sad fact of life that, whenever we return here from a break, we have to pass a condolence motion to some former member of the Legislative Assembly. As was mentioned, John Warner would be well known to the majority of older members. He entered Parliament in 1974 and served until 1986, retiring as Speaker. I entered Parliament at the same time and served with John Warner during that 12-year period. As was mentioned by other members, he had a rural background and always retained a love of the land. It was my privilege to serve for 12 years with John Warner and, during that period, I shared a small common office with him, Bill Glasson and Tony Elliott. As Tony and others have said, things were slightly different in those days.

While we reminisce, I will tell a story. One day, I was in the office with John. One could hardly swing a cat in the office and the phones on the other desks were ringing. I said, "I feel like going over, picking up the phones and doing what I do when no-one is around." He asked, "What is that?" I said, "I say something nasty into the phone. I say, 'Don't bother ringing me again' and I hang up." He said, "Oh God, you haven't done that on my phone, have you?" Something that one never does is pick up another member's phone, but John would believe nearly anything. He was a very serious man. He was always a sensitive man who cared for his people, his State and his nation. If someone were to ask me what is the greatest distinction that any person could have, I would say unquestionably that it is to serve one's fellow man. John Warner did that in so many ways. He did it through his rural organisations, through his family, as a member of Parliament, and as a Speaker, and he had the added distinction of serving his country in the theatre of war. He was a man of integrity, principle and dignity. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him. I extend my sympathy and that of my wife and family to Mary Al and to all of his family and friends.

Hon. R. C. KATTER (Flinders) (10.48 a.m.): As some of the other speakers have said, I shared a room with John and also sat beside him in this House for many, many years. As an honourable member who spoke before me will recall, we used to sit in the back of the joint parties room and the party room in what was called "Rebel Corner". For all of his upper-class credentials, John was very much a rebel inside the party room and was one of the people who, on numerous occasions, had the courage to stand up to the then Premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen. The honourable member for Southport, Mr Veivers, said to me a short time ago that when John Warner came into this place as Speaker, Mr Veivers' cousin, Tom Veivers, said that John Warner always looked as though he was an

Australian opening batsman going in to face Wes Hall and Charlie Griffiths on a wet wicket without a box. I thought that was a fairly good analogy.

Many members have said that John was a gentleman. When he contested the endorsement for his seat, the then party president, Sir Robert Sparkes, said to him very bluntly that he was a silvertail and that he need not apply; that there were no positions in Parliament or that party for silvertails. John Warner got very angry at that and was then determined to contest the endorsement battle, which he did successfully. The word "gentleman" can be used to put people down. However, in the case of John Warner, it was very much a tribute to the man. He had a very strong sense of noblesse oblige. He was brought up to think that, because he was born into a rich, prominent family, it was his duty to work for people who were not so fortunate as himself. During all of my years in this House—having worked very, very closely with him, having shared rooms with him and having sat beside him in this Parliament—I thought that John Warner's life and his commitment in this place always reflected a very great sympathy and commitment to people who were less fortunate than himself—the underdogs, if you like.

In common with Tony Elliott, I thought that John had a lot more ability than people gave him credit for. The very successful design for Aboriginal housing in Queensland came from John in the sense that he told me that, if I were to take on the portfolio which was responsible for Aboriginal housing, I should look at the design of the buildings that were constructed during the war when our troops were serving in Darwin. They were tent-like structures. They were very tall and were open at the top to let air out. The buildings had sprinklers at the bottom so that the air was sucked in at the bottom and went out through the top. It was a most successful design and a great architectural achievement; but the original idea came from John.

He said that he came into this place for two reasons. One was to see the abolition of death duties, which had torn his own family fortunes to pieces. The other was to see the death penalty reintroduced, because he had been a very, very close friend of a woman who died on a neighbouring station in very cruel circumstances, which was a terrible tragedy. He saw half of his ambitions in this place fulfilled, and that is probably a lot more than most of us will ever see.

He was a very strong family man and talked long and often of his children. He was immensely proud of all of them. He took a very strong position inside this House on the abortion debate and was one of the leaders in that debate. That reflected his attitude towards the family. At times he showed a certain wit. His friends were very worried when he took the position of Speaker, because he used to get flustered and we felt he would have great difficulty. In the early stages he took part in a debate with Kevin Hooper. Honourable members who remember Kevin will remember that he was a very quick-witted person. We were very worried. We watched the television and Kevin Hooper said, "You could not comment on what I did, Mr Warner, because you were asleep during my speech." John had a very painful look on his face and he said, "I am always asleep during your speeches, Mr Hooper. So is the rest of the House." It was the only time that I can remember Kevin Hooper grasping for words. Mr Warner's friends were watching in great terror, but we were very pleased that he put on an excellent performance.

Mr Warner had great difficulties while Speaker of this House because of his fair-mindedness, which was in great conflict with the pressures put upon him as Speaker in this House with respect to party loyalty. On a number of occasions, he sat down the then Premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, and it took a lot of courage to do that. In addition, the job took a lot out of him, and his health paid the price of the great courage and commitment that he displayed throughout his life. He was a very sincere friend. I have very pleasant memories of John, and I think all members who were associated with him would say exactly the same.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (10.53 a.m.): I wish to speak briefly to this motion. Most speakers have referred to John Warner's time in this House, but I knew him before he came to the House and I will speak a little about that side of him. He always loved socialising. I did not know anyone who loved a social life more than he and his wife. They had a wide circle of friends. I knew him during the period of the Whitlam Government when he was an organiser for the National Party. On a number of occasions, he and I went out campaigning together. It was the easiest job that anyone had. We used to get members everywhere we went, even if we went to the wrong house. He had a fairly easy time. On one afternoon after a very successful day, we pulled up at a hotel at Maryvale and he finished up singing. There was a cheerful and lighter side to him than the side of him that members have referred to today. I enjoyed his company. He was also witty. When I fought the plebiscite he said, "I knew you were going to win because we got 240 new members from the people you knew."

I wish to express my sympathy and that of my wife and family to Mary Al and her family. The thing I remember most about John was his cheerful side when he used to relax.

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs) (10.55 a.m.): I wish to briefly add my comments to this motion of condolence. I am one of the four members who seem to have gained quite a bit of notoriety here this morning. The four of us came into this Parliament in a wonderful way; they were very happy times when we were here together. I often wish that the Parliament was the same today. We are not quite as happy as we used to be in those early days. Then, we were always able to make jokes of things. Every so often John Warner used to take me to one side and give me a little lecture. I found it interesting. Even when he was Speaker of this House and I was a Minister, he would still get me to one side and give me a lecture. I do not think I ever impressed John with my ability to improve. Even after he left Parliament and I ran into him on one occasion in another place, he still gave me a lecture. He was a great Australian and a great Queenslander. Mary and I certainly wish Mary Al and the family well.

Motion agreed to, honourable members standing in silence.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. **Aboriginal and Islander Consultants**

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

"With reference to his answer to a Question on Notice on 4 September concerning the employment of Aboriginal people in the preparation of Land Rights proposals which exemplified his capacity to be led up the garden path by his officers—

(1) Why did he seek the advice of ATSIC regional councils, when ATSIC, at the time of these appointments was in the process of foundation, and in a state of disarray?

(2) Why did he not, instead, seek the advice of Queensland Statutory Bodies, namely the elected Aboriginal Community Councils, or the elected Aboriginal Consultative Council in order to make these appointments?

(3) Will he provide the names and addresses of the ATSIC-nominated liaison officers, the areas they represented, and the areas within which they were to carry out their work for the Goss Government?

(4) Will he produce the invoices presented by Mr Hurley and Haglund and Associates with respect to the work they carried out, and will he explain why dissatisfaction with the Haglund and Associates invoices was not expressed until 22 May, although six invoices had been presented between 16 March and 28 April.

(5) Is he aware that vouchers were authorised and a cheque drawn in payment of at least some of the Haglund and Associates fees?

(6) Is it possible that his own associates in his Office of the Cabinet did not send this cheque because Mr Noel Pearson, who is an associate, not an employee of Haglund and Associates, publicly disagreed with Goss Labor Government policy on Aboriginal land legislation?

(7) Is this infantile episode yet another expression of the political racism that permeates the ranks of his party, and is apparent in his own Office of the Cabinet?"

Mr W. K. GOSS: (1 to 7) The question is in seven parts. The answer is some five pages long. I seek leave to table the answer and have it incorporated in Hansard.

Leave granted.

(1) The Government chose to utilise the ATSIC regional council structure as the major consultative mechanism in the development of its policy on Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander land rights.

The ATSIC structure was considered to be the most legitimate consultative mechanism having been established by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989 following an exhaustive process of Australianwide consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations. ATSIC committees are those elected by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

Support for ATSIC was one of the major recommendations of the report into Aboriginal deaths in custody. In addition, the Commonwealth House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs recommended in its report "*Our Future Ourselves*" published in 1990 that ATSIC be supported by all levels of Government as one of the key methods of communication between Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community councils and organisations.

(2) While the Aboriginal community councils and the Aboriginal consultative councils are recognised Aboriginal organisations, they represent the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population resident on DOGIT communities about 30 % of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Statewide representative structure of ATSIC was thought to be a more appropriate consultative structure in the context of developing a policy with Statewide implications.

(3) See attached list.

(4) I am informed that a senior officer spoke to Ms Haglund on several occasions prior to 22 May explaining the level of information to be provided in invoices. When no more detailed invoices were provided it was decided to write formally requesting additional information. These invoices are a confidential commercial matter and I am advised that normal practice requires they not be tabled.

I am also advised that in response to correspondence from my department that on Friday, 27 September a more detailed invoice has been received from Haglund and Associates which is now being examined by financial officers of my department.

(5) I refer you to my previous reply of 4 September 1991 in which I stated that the Haglund and Associates invoices do not provide sufficient information to enable payment. This was discovered during normal checking processes by senior officers. When Haglund and Associates provide the information requested they will be paid.

(6) No

(7) It is my belief that at all times officers of the Department of the Premier, Economic and Trade Development have worked towards introducing a well coordinated and workable set of

legislation which reflects the needs of all Queenslanders and is balanced in its approach to the extremely complex and diverse range of issues involved.

List of Liaison Officers

Mr Terry O'Shane

Cairns Regional Council

PO Box 1559

Cairns Q 4870

Mr Richard Wayne Johnson

Rockhampton Regional Council

PO Box 550

Rockhampton Q 4700

Mr Brent Pearson

Palm Island/Yarrabah Regional Council

Black Beach Road

Yarrabah Q 4871

Mr Phillip Yanner

Gulf Regional Council

PO Box 2416

Mount Isa Q 4825

Ms Marlene Speechly

Mt Isa Regional Council

PO Box 2416

Mount Isa Q 4825

Ms Sheryl Lawton

Charleville Regional Office

5 Liverpool Street

Mitchell Q 4465

Mr Rowan Silva

c/- Mr Alec Illin Townsville Regional Council

17 Wotton Street

Aitkenvale Q 4814

Mr Pearce Powder

c/- Post Office

Woorabinda Q 4870

Mr John Newfong

Brisbane Regional Council

c/- ATSI Regional Office

GPO Box 165

B r i s b a n e .

2. Government Contract Tendering Procedures

Mr STEPHAN asked the Minister for Administrative Services—

“With reference to the tendering process where deposits are paid when tenders are submitted and held for a considerable time—

(1) Why is the delay of four months or more necessary between when the tenders close and the unsuccessful tenderers being refunded their deposits?

(2) If this period of time is necessary, will he recommend paying interest on this money which no doubt is used for that time by the Government?”

Mr McLEAN: (1 and 2) In answer to the question asked by the member for Gympie, I point out that there is no delay of four months. There is no period of four months laid down. Despite the fact that the member appears to have his wires crossed, I caused a detailed investigation to be carried out. I table the resulting information for the benefit of the member and ask that it be incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Purchasing and Sales do not generally impose tender deposits or document fees. The exceptions mainly relate to those tenders where the documentation is large such as large computer installations. In these cases we usually charge a document fee of \$50 or \$100 which is non-refundable. These fees are charged to cover the cost of preparation of documents and also to ensure that those seeking documents are genuine potential tenderers. The charge is very minor in comparison with the value of the tender. Refundable fees are charged only where the documentation is delivered to Purchasing and Sales, already printed, and the documentation states that a fee is refundable.

In the last six months we have had 10 non-refundable document fees from \$25 to \$100 and four refundable deposits from \$25 to \$200. Refundable deposits are returned on receipt of bona fide tenders, normally one month after tenders close.

Within the construction tendering process there are two types of "deposits" to which the Honourable Member Mr Stephan's query may refer, "Tender Deposits" and "Document Deposits". The wording of the question suggests that he is referring to Tender Deposits. The following is an outline of the administration of both. However, as Administrative Services Department rarely uses Tender Deposits, greater detail is provided of Document Deposits.

1. Tender Deposit

Tender Deposits are required by Principals to be lodged with tenders as a bona fide security commitment of the tenderer to proceed with the work. Generally, Tender Deposits are refunded to unsuccessful tenderers unless their tender is withdrawn. The successful tenderers deposit is often held and used as security under the terms of the contract.

This type of deposit is rarely used by Administrative Services Department—once in the last five years.

2. Document Deposit

Document Deposits are required to be lodged by all those issued with Tender Documents. Administrative Services Department regularly uses this form of deposit—approximately 20% of projects.

The object of this deposit is to encourage—

- (i) only bona fide tenderers to request issue of documents; and
- (ii) the return in good order of documents in time for same to be utilised in administering the contract.

The Conditions of Tendering state-

"The Tender Documents shall remain the property of the Principal. Any amount charged therefore will be refunded upon the return in good order and condition of the Tender Documents before the time specified for the closing of tenders or upon the return within 14 days of the close of tenders in good order and condition of such documents (except Bills of Quantities) and the receipt of a bona fide tender."

Administrative Services Department requires a \$200.00 deposit for documentation which includes a Bill of Quantities. This documentation, for the more significant projects—usually in excess of \$1 million in value, is expensive to produce. A minimum of 8 sets of documents is required for contract administration at the time of tender acceptance, therefore any documents returned in good order can significantly reduce document reproduction costs and ultimately save the Queensland taxpayer an unnecessary financial burden and reduce wastage of resources.

Deposits that are forfeited because of the non-return of documents in accordance with the Conditions of Tendering are paid into Treasury and indirectly assist with the costs of document production.

In excess of 250 construction tenders have been called by Administrative Services Department this calendar year, of which 21 required the lodgement of a Document Deposit prior to the issue of Tender Documentation.

Deposits are generally refunded immediately upon return of documents in accordance with the Conditions of Tendering. However, this system is traditionally difficult to administer as claims that documents have been returned are often received when no record of same is held and no receipt of the return can be provided. In these instances the officers administering the refund of the deposits give the benefit of the doubt to the contractors and refund the deposit.

Worth notice is the fact that many constructors, including other Public Authorities charge a non refundable fee for all tender documents.

Officers responsible for the administration of Document Deposits are unaware of any current abnormal delays in the refund of deposits. However, should the Honourable Member Mr Stephan wish to name specific instances of abnormal delays, I undertake to investigate and respond accordingly.

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

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Drought Effects on Primary Producers

Mr PERRETT (Barambah) (10.59 a.m.): Today, I wish to talk about the very serious drought that is occurring in Queensland and the effect it is having on all Queenslanders. I refer not just to rural producers but to all Queenslanders in rural and provincial areas because, inevitably, the effects of this drought will flow through to the city areas of this State. This drought has the potential to be the worst that has ever occurred. It has been brought about by a set of circumstances that have never previously come together at the one time. For a start, the whole State is very dry, but the south-eastern corner of the State—namely the Lockyer Valley, the Darling Downs and South Burnett—contains areas that, because of their geographical position, can normally be expected to receive higher rainfall than most other areas of this State. These areas normally have fodder supplies that can be transported to other parts of the State to keep starving livestock alive, but during this drought the south-east Queensland region is probably the driest part of this State.

Some property-owners claim that they have had as little as 3 inches of rain in the last 18 months. Of course, there are other circumstances that create problems experienced by farmers at this time, and they include the economic conditions caused by decisions made in Canberra. People no longer have the fat of the land to live off to get them through times of drought. In addition, there is a shortage of available and, I emphasise, affordable fodder. It is in such short supply as to be virtually unobtainable. The small quantity of hay that is available is bringing unrealistic prices, so much so that livestock-owners cannot afford it. Grain fodder is also in short supply, and the very little that is available appears to be sorghum from last season's harvest in central Queensland.

The Darling Downs area has not had a grain crop for 18 months. Because of the problems being experienced in the sugar industry that have been created by prolonged dry weather, there will be an early end to the crushing season. One must ask: just how long will the molasses supply last? Last week, it was very pleasing to see the Minister for Primary Industries take positive steps to release 9 000 tonnes of molasses onto the market, which has been a great boost to livestock-owners in Queensland. One must ask these questions: how long will it last? Where will future supplies come from? I guess we will have to look to north Queensland, which will mean that livestock-owners will be faced with enormous transport charges. There is virtually no suitable agistment land in Queensland. There is some scope for agistment south of Dubbo in New South Wales but, of course, the freight is expensive.

Drought is one of the natural disasters that seem to creep up on people. Nobody seems to take much notice of its effects until it actually happens. Cyclones and floods happen very quickly and gain media attention and sympathy for people affected by them, and so they should. However, drought has the potential to affect all of us one way or the other. Therefore, I believe it is in the interests not only of the primary producers in this State but also of all other Queenslanders that the Government develop some proper drought strategies, which can only be based on the experience that has been gained as times change, particularly when economic changes are forced on us from time to time. The position is that different sets of measures must be adopted to alleviate the problems that are upon us. In the short term, I believe it is of paramount importance to keep breeding stock alive; otherwise, the livestock industries in this State will find themselves in tremendous trouble. In the medium term, other industries—including small businesses in

rural and provincial towns—must be given assistance. As I mentioned earlier, grain-farmers in many areas have not received income for 18 months. Many of them have to service debts and have commitments in relation to machinery. One wonders how they will ever survive without assistance of some type to enable them to plant next year's crop. The Government will have to look seriously at seed credit schemes, etc., to keep many grain-farmers in the industry. Grain-farmers sometimes feel that they are forgotten in the provision of benefits in respect of drought relief, which seem to be aimed directly at livestock-owners. It should be remembered that the grain industry is very important to this State. Therefore, grain-producers must receive assistance that will provide them with positive support in the future.

The dairying industry is also experiencing problems. The cost of keeping quotas at a satisfactory level is enormous. Dairy-farmers have to meet the costs of water charges and the purchase of fodder, etc. Pork-producers also have to meet the cost of fodder, but they do not really gain much assistance from drought relief that is available, in spite of the fact that they, too, are affected adversely. Fruit and vegetable growers and honey-producers are also suffering. Across thousands of acres of land in this State trees are dying, and there is little likelihood of honey-producers being able to find blossoms to keep their bees alive, let alone produce honey. They are faced with enormous costs associated with transporting their hives to southern parts of Australia to try to keep the industry viable. In the long term, the Government must develop positive strategies to mitigate drought and ensure ongoing assistance for all rural industries to help them get back on their feet. There are also steps that the Government can take immediately. I continually hear of decisions that absolutely appal me. For example, a grazier in south-west Queensland recently applied to the Department of Lands and the Department of Environment and Heritage to have 450 cattle from his property agisted on Denevor Lakes, which is to be acquired as a national park. However, it has not as yet been declared. It has been used as a grazing property for many years. Surely, in the interest of keeping 450 cattle alive, one more season would not affect it? But what did the Minister, Mr Comben, do? He rejected the application. It seems ludicrous that Mr Comben is prepared to spend \$80,000 to save a whale beached on Peregian beach and yet—

Mr Turner: Was it an ALP whale?

Mr PERRETT: It certainly appeared to be an ALP whale, but the Minister saved the whale. What about the 450 head of cattle? If common sense prevailed, the farmers' cattle could be granted agistment on Denevor Lakes. This morning, I received a telephone call from a gentleman who was short of water. That gentleman applied to Water Resources for a permit to pump water out of a creek which runs through his property. He ran into all sorts of problems in getting his application processed. These are little things that just should not happen when people are suffering. All Queenslanders suffer drastically from the effects of drought. The Labor Government is now learning the reality of drought. For too long the Labor Government made out that drought was a National Party invented phenomenon, an excuse to give handouts to country people. It was only three weeks ago that the Labor Government even admitted that there was a drought in this State. Surely, too little too late.

Drought Relief

Hon. E. D. CASEY (Mackay—Minister for Primary Industries) (11.08 a.m.): The subject of drought is on the table and before Parliament here this morning. There are a few comments that I wish to make in relation to it. Drought is something that people can liken to a creeping cancer in the rural industry of Queensland. As with creeping cancer, there are difficulties in the initial diagnosis. Is it going to rain? How long will people hang on—

Mr Fitzgerald interjected.

Mr CASEY: The honourable member has done the same thing too, so he should not laugh. How long will people hang on to their cattle? How long will people wait until they sell off cattle that are in good condition? How long will people wait for further rain to see whether it will do something to their property? When the rain comes, for so many people it is too late. Sometimes tragedy has already overtaken people. Drought is always a matter of concern. That is why the previous Government in this State, in 1982, put in place a system of drought declarations ranging from individual properties to total shires. This Government has followed that procedure to the letter. Unfortunately and tragically, the National Party never learned the lesson of what happened to one of its previous Ministers for Primary Industries who was hauled over the coals by his own Public Accounts Committee over the way in which he handled drought relief in this State. One of the Public Accounts Committee members who presented the report to this Parliament criticising the way in which his own Government handled drought relief was the honourable member for Barambah, the very member who has just spoken to this House. This Government supported that recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee.

People on properties are confronted with the creeping cancer of drought and its effects. Things can change within a week in an area and a community. Hot, dry winds can blow onto the small bit of feed that has come through and destroy it within a week and there is no feed left. Drought is dependent upon a lot of things. It is dependent on feed, it is dependent on water availability, it is dependent on ground moisture, it is dependent on the state of the cattle, and it is dependent on a property's carrying capacity for cattle or sheep. Unfortunately and tragically, people from the National Party have been running around the State making statements that would indicate that they do not want this Government to follow the National Party's own procedure. They have been saying, "The Minister should do this", and "the Minister should do that." The declarations for drought must come from the local drought committee.

Mr Veivers: What are you going to do? People are going broke. You are just talking.

Mr CASEY: The honourable member talks about people going broke. There is nothing to stop any individual—

Mr Veivers interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Southport!

Mr CASEY: There is nothing to stop any individual at any time from applying for a local independent drought declaration for his property. That has been happening throughout the State. There is no need to carry on about the rorts that went on under the National Party.

Opposition members: What rorts?

Mr CASEY: There are a lot of rorts, and honourable members opposite know about them. They should go and talk to members of their own Public Accounts Committee. Those members will tell them what went on. This Government sought to follow the procedure recommended by that committee, and it has followed that procedure. The most important thing, is that, as in all times of hardship, this Government is displaying sympathy to people who are having trouble. It is providing assistance through the various procedures that are available and is in constant discussion with leaders in the grazing industry and the dairy industry.

Mr Veivers interjected.

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

Mr CASEY: Does the honourable member want to be critical of these people, the elected leaders of the grazing industry, the dairy industry, the grain-growing industry, the sugar industry and of the Queensland Farmers Federation? These are the people——

Mr BOOTH: I rise to a point of order. At no time have the leaders of the dairy industry or the grazing industry said that the Government is doing everything.

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

Mr CASEY: I have no idea what the honourable member is trying to talk about, but what I do know is that this rowdy mob of cockatoos opposite did not, during their period in office, do things in a proper way as this Government has. This Government not only has had discussions with the leaders of industries, but has put together a much better package of drought legislation than was ever thought of by the National Party. This Government has put together a package that directly meets the needs of people in a way not previously considered by the National Party. The first package that this Government put in place was of the old style but, after discussions with the various industry-leaders, this Government, and in continuing discussions at this very point in time——

Mr Veivers: Yes, discussions. Do something.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have warned the member for Southport under the Standing Orders. I now ask him to leave the Chamber.

Whereupon the honourable member for Southport withdrew from the Chamber.

Mr CASEY: What I would like to explain is that in this new package, for the first time ever, the Government is also assisting the agricultural industry. The package contains measures that can be supportive of both the grain industry and the sugar industry. When areas first came up for declaration, I acted immediately. At the moment, following advice from local drought committees, members of the drought secretariat are waiting downstairs for me to sign authorities to enable further areas of this State to be declared drought stricken. I know that members on the Government side are very interested in this. Even the Liberals are displaying an interest. But not the members of the National Party. They are showing no interest because there is no longer any politicking in this issue for them. That is all they have been doing. Members of the National Party have been engaging in politicking at a time of tragedy, when people are being affected by this cancerous scourge of drought, which has gradually crept up on the State.

Hopefully, within an hour, in addition to the 24 areas already declared as drought stricken in Queensland, I will have declared drought stricken the Shires of Banana, Beaudesert, Biggenden, Boonah, Gooburrum, Isis, Kilcoy, Kilkivan, Kingaroy, Kolan, Maroochy, Murgon, Nanango, Perry, Tiaro, Widgee, Woocoo, Wondai and Woongarra and the Cities of Maryborough, Caloundra, Bundaberg and Hervey Bay. Those areas in south-east Queensland are the areas where the effects of the drought are spreading most quickly. That is why the Government has put in place in that region its major package. South-east Queensland and the eastern Darling Downs in particular are usually referred to as the granary of this State. It is tragic that in most cases grain-growers have already missed two crops, with the prospect in some areas of perhaps missing a third. Queensland is desperately short of grain. That is why the Government has put together a package to obtain feed. There is no spare feed available in Queensland. This morning, the Government has been negotiating with places as far away as South Australia to arrange for boatloads of feed barley to be brought to Queensland where it can be distributed amongst those who are desperately in need——

Mr Turner: Tell us about the 20 per cent you are giving to dairy-farmers.

Mr CASEY: That includes the dairy-farmers in the electorate of the honourable member for Nicklin. Some of the areas in his electorate that I have already named

specifically will be declared drought stricken before the hour is out. These are the people who will be able to take advantage of this assistance. What the Government is doing is granting the freight subsidy from the point of production, not from the point of sale as was the case under the previous National Party Government. This will provide considerable assistance. Dairy-farmers will be treated in exactly the same way as everybody else. I do not know who put in the figure of 20 per cent. Somebody in the Toowoomba area put that figure in. The freight subsidy for dairy-farmers is 50 per cent, and that will continue to be the case.

Mr Elliott: It was 40 per cent, or 60 per cent.

Mr CASEY: The honourable member is talking about National Party schemes. I am talking about the Labor Party scheme. This Government is putting in place measures that the National Party would never have instituted. It is showing consideration for country people, which the Nationals never did. All the National Party wanted was the continuing support and votes of country people. That is why, over the last few weeks, the Nationals have kicked up the row regarding the drought. They want, leechlike, to suck the blood of those people. On this occasion, the Government will not allow that to happen. It will clearly show the rural industry of this State that in hard times it is much better off under a Labor Government. I am not interested in playing politics. I am interested in maintaining the breeding herds of the beef industry and production in the dairy industry.

Time expired.

Sir Max Bingham

Mr DUNWORTH (Sherwood) (11.19 a.m.): I rise to speak about a matter of public importance. Last week, in an extraordinary press conference, the head of the Criminal Justice Commission, Sir Max Bingham, was forced to publicly defend himself against a smear campaign. Sir Max said that some politicians and some police were seeking to undermine him personally and the work of the CJC—the body that Fitzgerald believed should carry on his work against corruption. In his letter, Sir Max said—

“I have seen two lines of attack on the CJC and what it stands for: one from a handful of people within the Police Service, the other from politicians.”

He went on—

“The elected representatives of the people of Queensland should set an example in the discharge of public office. It is one of the tasks of this Commission to help ensure they do, and we will not be deflected from that task.”

At the end of his report, Sir Max tabled pages 141 and 142 of the Fitzgerald report, which deal with news management, in which Mr Fitzgerald noted—

“The complementary techniques of secrecy and news management allow governments to exercise substantial and often disproportionate influence on what is published in the media.

The media is able to be used by politicians, police officers and other public officials who wish to put out propaganda to advance their own interests and harm their enemies.”

There can be little doubt from those comments that Sir Max was referring to the activities of Government politicians. I believe that both the Premier, Mr Goss, and the Police Minister,

Mr Mackenroth, have been up to their ears in this campaign of misinformation, seeking to discredit the work of the CJC. They were the two people who could have killed off immediately the press speculation last week about Sir Max's Tasmanian driver's licence. Instead, both the Premier, Mr Goss, and the Police Minister, Mr Mackenroth, continued to throw titbits to the press to keep the story going. In the Sunday press 10 days ago, Mr Mackenroth said that he had called for a full report on the matter, even though he had received a report two days earlier from the Police Commissioner.

After Cabinet last week, the Premier also dropped a little gem about a lost file—just enough to give the media something to run with. By last Thursday, Sir Max Bingham had had enough and started to point the finger. Unfortunately, Sir Max did not name the politicians he alleged were involved, but it was interesting to see the quick reaction from both the Premier and the Police Minister. Mr Goss immediately released a Crown law report that killed off the story, and Mr Mackenroth rushed around frantically praising Sir Max to any media outlet he could find. How the threat of exposure makes the Premier and the Police Minister jump! The Premier knows that, if he is fingered as being the politician who is ultimately responsible for a campaign of smear and intimidation against the CJC, it will be a shattering and perhaps fatal blow to his ailing credibility.

Government members interjected.

Mr DUNWORTH: Baying from the pound, all the cripples and the unwanted. Remember that the people of Queensland gave the Premier a mandate to fulfil his solemn promise that all he needed was three years to clean up Queensland. "Just three years", he said. Yet almost from day one of office, he has been working daily to undermine and destroy the authority of the CJC. The Premier and other Ministers have rubbished the CJC over its poker machine report and its investigations into SP book-making and prostitution. When he entered this House, the Premier was little more than a suburban lawyer funded by legal aid. He even had the cheek once to claim that Sir Max, a Queen's Counsel, had problems understanding the law. There is absolutely no limit to his arrogance. Honourable members may ask why the Premier is spending so much time rubbishing a permanent anti-corruption body about which he was so enthusiastic when in Opposition. It is because the CJC threatens the secretive and authoritarian structure of Government that has been set up by the Premier. Intimidation is the best word to describe the style of the Goss Labor Government. It is a regime in which major decisions are made by a small circle of unelected power-brokers, and fear and intimidation is used to push those decisions through Cabinet and caucus. There is no room for independent bodies that seek to question and make accountable those secret syndicates where power is concentrated in a few hands. And, of course, through its investigations of the travelling expenses of members of the previous Parliament, the CJC poses an immediate threat to the Government. There have been reports that up to three Ministers have been called to appear before the CJC to answer some serious questions about their use of public funds. Interestingly enough, at no time has the Premier denied that Ministers are involved. Instead, he has repeatedly misled the Parliament with claims that Sir Max Bingham has assured him that any Ministers involved will not face criminal proceedings. That statement is not true and the Premier knows it to be untrue. I challenge the Premier to table in this House any correspondence which substantiates his assertion that the CJC has ruled out criminal charges. Of course, he will not be able to, because no such correspondence exists. But it is a convenient defence against calls for him to stand down those Ministers. It is a far cry from the standards demanded by the Premier when in Opposition, when he was shouting for Ministers to be stood down every time they got a passing mention in hearsay evidence. The problem for the Premier is that at some stage he will have to receive a report on the past use of travel expenses by some of his Ministers. Clearly, if the integrity of those Ministers is questioned by allegations of the misuse of public funds, they should be stood down from Cabinet. The problem is that that does not fit in with the Premier's plans. The dismissal of two or three Ministers would wreck the stability of the Government. There would be a mad factional scramble for the new Cabinet vacancies that

would lead to an almighty brawl. But the most shattering blow would be that it would diminish the Premier's arrogant belief that his Government is beyond challenge because it is somehow morally superior. We all remember the Premier's repeated attacks on politicians whom he accused of having their fingers in the till. Remember that he was so concerned that he jumped in his car and went up to see the Governor to complain that the then Government was not standing down Ministers under investigation. If it is proved that his boys were tickling the till at the same time as he was pointing the finger at other parties, the Premier will be exposed as the political hypocrite of the century.

The people of Queensland will not tolerate one law for the ALP and another for its political opponents. The wheel is turning and that is why this Government is jumpy. Of course, the Premier is well aware of those political dangers and that is why he is masterminding the campaign to discredit the CJC. He wants to drag the CJC down so that, by the time the report into travel expenses is delivered, he will be in a position to ignore the document, claiming that it is of little credibility. We must remember that the CJC cannot prosecute; the ultimate decision must be taken by the Director of Prosecutions. So that is the game plan—keep up a guerilla war against the CJC in the hope that it will finally crack. It is a dangerous game, but I believe that it will continue until Sir Max flushes out those who are involved. I believe that the only way he can do that is by naming the politicians involved. Then, the glaring light of publicity will stop the sinister power games being played by the Government in its attempt to discredit the CJC.

Assistance for Maryborough Timber-workers

Mr DOLLIN (Maryborough) (11.28 a.m.): I am pleased to be able to report to honourable members that Maryborough has a bright future. Since Mr Fitzgerald handed down his report into the conservation, management and use of Fraser Island and the Great Sandy Region, it is fair to say that there has been a considerable level of concern and apprehension about the city's future because of that report's recommendation to stop logging on Fraser Island. For more than 100 years, logging has been an important industry in the Maryborough area. The news that it was to be phased out as a result of the Fitzgerald inquiry came as a shock to me and to many people in the Maryborough community.

I and many in my electorate were reassured by the personal assurances of the Premier that the Goss Government would stand by the timber-workers affected and ensure that their economic security and the region's economic development was not threatened by the cessation of logging on Fraser Island. It is unfortunate that some in the community, including the former member, Mr Alison, and Opposition members, tried to exploit the understandable community concern and whip up more uncertainty by a deliberate misinformation and fear and smear campaign, causing unnecessary concern amongst workers and their wives and children. Their campaign was purely politically motivated and indicated that they had no real interest in the timber-workers and their families. It was about furthering the political ambitions of a select few and the re-election campaign of Mr Alison.

As I predicted in this House a few weeks ago, the worst fears of the Liberal and National Parties have now been realised. The Premier and the Goss Government have kept their commitment to stand by the workers and families of Maryborough and have developed a range of measures that will not only ensure that individual timber-workers who are displaced will receive long-term support and alternative employment but also secure and enhance the region's economic development. As many members will know, earlier this month, the Premier visited Maryborough and Hervey Bay and talked directly to timber-workers about the special package of measures that the Government was putting in

place. The special \$38m growth and development package will create local tourism and industrial development activity, employment and investment in the Maryborough/Hervey Bay and Cooloola districts. It will also enhance the region's long-term economic development and, in doing so, secure its future.

The growth and development package provides for the World Heritage nomination of Fraser Island and the Great Sandy Region this year; a special workers' adjustment package providing dislocation assistance up to \$35,000, up to eight weeks' severance pay, income assistance, relocation assistance up to \$5,000, special mortgage assistance and priority in employment; the creation of 119 jobs through improved management and access projects, Maryborough heritage projects and in the timber industry; \$8m in tourism infrastructure projects; \$550,000 in business projects to further enhance and develop the region's long-term economic development to create a possible additional 50 jobs; the establishment of an interim board of management with strong local representation; and compensation for business directly and substantially affected by the phase-out of logging on Fraser Island.

Predictably, Opposition members have had much to say about the package, all of it critical. They have flown into Maryborough and predicted a disaster and an end to the economic development of the region. They said that this was going to be another Ravenshoe. I am glad to take this opportunity to tell honourable members the real story. Unlike when the National and Liberal Parties stopped sand-mining on Fraser Island, this Government has put in place real assistance and measures to secure the region's future. Under the National and Liberal Party Governments, and with Mr Alison as the local member, the workers affected got nothing—no compensation, no assistance and no real jobs. They were ignored and forgotten. Maryborough was given a showground, the loan for which is being paid off at \$250,000 a year. I am pleased to report that, contrary to the claims by members opposite, this special \$38m growth and development package has been very well received by the timber-workers affected and by the wider community. In fact, immediately after the package was released, a number of timber-workers came up to me and asked where they could sign.

The overwhelming feeling among timber-workers and their families is very positive. Last week, I visited the timber-mills again and spoke to many of the workers. They were generally pleased that the Government had done the right thing and stood by them and Maryborough. They expressed the view that they were not very happy with the lies that had been directed at them that they would receive nothing at all. The proof of the pudding was in front of them. They are now trusting us and not believing the scare-mongers. Contrary to what Opposition members are saying, timber-workers and the Maryborough community do not think this is another Ravenshoe or another disaster such as the one that occurred when the Liberal and National Parties stopped sand-mining. The reality is that there will be more timber-workers wanting to take the package than there need be. I am yet to receive from a constituent one complaint about the package. That is a real indication of how well it has been received by people in the Maryborough community.

I take this opportunity to publicly thank those in the Maryborough community who have helped me to get the best deal for the people of Maryborough. First and foremost, I thank the Mayors of Maryborough and Hervey Bay, Alan Brown and Fred Kleinschmidt, for their constructive and helpful work as joint chairmen of the Fraser Coast Coordinating Committee. Without their cooperation and assistance, the special package could not have been developed in the consultative manner that it was. They put aside politics and their own personal ambitions and needs and worked with me and my colleague Bill Nunn to get the best deal for Maryborough and the surrounding region. Their work and assistance was invaluable. I also wish to thank the other members of the Fraser Coast Coordinating Committee, who worked with the community's best interests at heart. Having this

community-based representative committee through which the Government could liaise made it much easier to develop this package in the limited time-frame that was allowed. Unlike some of my critics and opponents, many members of the Fraser Coast Coordinating Committee can take some of the credit for this package. They worked constructively, productively and positively to secure our region's future. They have succeeded in doing that.

Finally, I thank the Premier and the Cabinet for their commitment to the region and their tireless efforts to stand by the people of Maryborough. I have lived and worked in Maryborough for most of my life. It is a special part of Queensland. I am proud to represent the people of Maryborough in this place. The Fraser Island report presented us as a community with a challenge. At the outset, I said that I would fight for Maryborough and the workers and families in that region. Making sure that people in Brisbane know the needs and concerns of my constituents is vital. As many Ministers will verify, I have never hesitated to tell them to their face just what had to be done for Maryborough. As a result of Mr Fitzgerald's representations, with the Maryborough community I fought to get the best deal. It is a fight that I believe we won. The special \$38m growth and development package is a good one and it has been well received by the community. I believe it is a benchmark. It is probably the first time that workers have been considered first and foremost. We saw what happened in the past in relation to sand-mining. The Government at that time gave \$4.5m to the sand mine owners but gave nothing to the workers—not even two bob. They were given nothing. They were paid off. Let me assure Ministers and most importantly the people of Maryborough that I will keep on fighting for Maryborough for as long as I represent them in this House, and that will be for a long time to come.

Health Department

Mrs McCAULEY (Callide) (11.36 a.m.): The Health Minister is presiding over a disaster. His work force is in revolt over retrenchments and forced transfers. The Public Sector Management Commission review places academic theories above the real health needs of this State. The Minister is trying to match a totally inadequate budget with a bureaucratic nightmare of his own creation. He is desperately hoping that staff do not realise that the wages and salary budget for his department will dry up by April—three months before the end of the financial year. Perhaps these things explain a remarkable speech that the Minister made on 25 August to a group of his most senior administrators. That speech, which put the lie to a long campaign of deception directed at Health Department staff, contained two main points. The first was that the sackings and forced transfers were not going ahead fast enough. The second was that Peter Coaldrake and the academics in the Public Sector Management Commission know best in all things, like how to run a Health Department better than the professionals who have been doing it for many years. The Minister spent a very long time reassuring departmental staff that they had nothing to worry about. He has run a long campaign to lull them into a false sense of security.

I shall quote the Minister's own words that were published at his direction in his department's own propaganda sheet *Update*. In Bulletin No. 1, published on 9 August last year, the Minister said—

"First of all, I want to assure you that there won't be any redundancies. What there will be is a number of career opportunities for many of you. In making decisions on these appointments, we will be giving preference to people who are employed in the Department now. It should be pointed out that the majority of staff will not be affected and there will not be any substantial changes in day to day activities. There will be other changes involving the possibility of transfer to regions, if that's your choice."

The Minister said that very clearly. The softening continued in Bulletin No. 3, issued on 14 September last year. That issue printed supposedly frequently asked questions and the official answers, such as—

“Question: Will I be sent to work in another Region?”

Answer: There will be no forced relocation of staff.”

That should have settled people down, but it did not really, because they were already seeing Labor cronies pouring in to take their jobs. The campaign continued virtually with each edition of *Update*. In Bulletin No. 4, issued on 28 September, there is an answer to another question as follows—

“The Minister has given an undertaking and this has been reiterated by the Under Secretary, that there will be no forced redeployments.”

Crunch time arrived with that infamous speech on 25 August this year behind closed doors. The Minister was a sour and disappointed man when he stood up in front of his top people. He was sour because they were dragging the chain on getting rid of staff and forcibly relocating others. They were guilty of acting as the Minister had promised in his propaganda sheets they would act. Along the way the budget was showing the strain, with a lot of new politically appointed mouths to feed and the old ones still hanging around. The Minister was disappointed because he thought that he had brought in politically reliable toadies who were only too willing to do Labor's dirty work. Imagine his disappointment when at least some of the imports tried to do the right thing! The Mexicans, who Professor Coaldrake pretends are not here in great numbers, had let the Minister down. They were brought in from the south for one reason only, namely, to do a political hatchet job on the Health Department. But they lay down on the job. They even took their time doing Coaldrake's bidding. What about those Mexicans who were carefully selected by the Minister from the bankrupt and discredited Labor health systems in the south? I will list some of them for the information of the House. I might say that the public service has an even more extensive list covering all departments. Those people, who were imported to Health over the heads of well-qualified Queenslanders, were used to effectively block their career paths.

Peter Read, who is from the policy branch of the Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health, is now Executive Director, Policy and Planning. Diana Lang comes from the New South Wales system, which was ruined by the Wran Government. She is now Executive Director of the Public Health Services and Chief Health Officer. Ann Kern, who comes from the World Health Organisation, was Deputy Secretary in Labor's Commonwealth Department of Health. She is now Executive Director, Corporate Services. The Minister's own personal staff were rewarded with top jobs. The plum job of Director of Executive Support Services went to a former Brisbane journalist, David Butt, who served his time with Neal Blewett while that Minister was wreaking havoc on health services for the Federal Government. More recently, Mr Butt was this Minister's right-hand man as chief of staff and chief policy adviser. Geri Taylor, who was appointed Regional Director for the West Moreton region, had been the Minister's liaison officer after coming from the Commonwealth department. If the National Party had done that sort of thing, it would have been cronyism. Labor would have shouted from every media roof-top. It would have had the reform groupies doing the same thing. But when Labor does it, it is a different story. It is sold by Labor as getting the best, most qualified person for the job. Some people might even fall for that, but not me and not the public service. The other regional directors include a very liberal sprinkling of people direct from the sick jokes that they call health administrations in Canberra, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia.

Not all the Mexicans have failed the people of Queensland, but Health Department staff see them as the cause of their troubles, along with the Minister who forced them on the system. Quite clearly, the Minister is also having second thoughts. On 25 August when the Minister got up to speak, it took him about 20 seconds to launch into a bitter tirade. His first sentences set the tone—

“. . . frankly I am concerned about a certain lack of leadership and commitment to implement Cabinet's decisions about structural reform, and about pursuing the Government's health priorities.”

I ask members to note the reference to structural reform. That is the nice name that Labor reserves for taking an efficient, functioning organisation and tearing it apart. Structural reform is what Labor does when it wrecks an organisation and then rebuilds it along its own ideological lines. That process is no doubt familiar by now. It starts with giving the whole organisation a bagging, and it goes on with a publicity campaign on a new plan to give better service to users. The next Labor step is to move in the people with the ultimate qualification: good Labor connections. The new people continue to come into the Health Department, but the ones already there are not obliging Labor and sacrificing themselves to unemployment. They took the Minister's word that they would not be forced to go. So the Minister has to pay them along with his new appointees. That is why the budget is running out. The finance people in Health are forecasting April.

Let us return to that executive retreat. The Minister emphasised the importance of Public Sector Management Commission dictates about staff numbers and the moving of people to the regions. Then there was this—

“I expect that the Director-General, Executive Directors and Directors will move to implement these recommendations with a degree of urgency that is not so far obvious.”

Shortly after, there was this—

“. . . there are still of the order of 200 people within Central Office—both unattached and nominally assigned to regions—who are in excess of the nominated staffing levels.”

He talked about PSMC-dictated staffing of 389 at central office, but said that Budget constraints would cut that to 300. What joy figures like that must bring to staff who were promised job security by the Minister himself. Then came the threat—

“This whole process must be bedded down and I indicate to you on this occasion that I must have this process completed by Christmas of this year or, to be frank, some drastic action will need to be taken about those people in executive positions who find themselves unable to comply with Cabinet's requirements.”

I offer the House a translation of that little gem. “If you don't spill a lot of blood fast, I will spill yours to save my own neck in Cabinet.” The Minister even hinted where to start—with public servants who were in the Health Department before Labor came along. The Minister said—

“The reviews have been done, the Cabinet has made its decisions, but there remains a great reluctance from some to let go of the old.

I spoke of this in May at our first retreat—about how people needed to be wary of staff from the old structure who would try to rebuild the previous structure under the new. Yet indications are that there are those who are loath to stand up to many of the people who were the very focus of the PSMC's criticisms.”

Perhaps the Mexicans have discovered what we knew all along: there was nothing basically wrong with the Queensland health system. There was never any need for the Labor Party's public service wing—the PSMC—to destroy a perfectly good health

system. That system is now overstuffed with highly paid imports who are eating up the budget to the extent that there will be no money left to pay the people who are really trying to make health work.

World Heritage Listing of Fraser Island and the Great Sandy Region

Mr NUNN (Isis) (11.47 a.m.): Since the decision that was handed down by Fitzgerald after his inquiry into Fraser Island that the region should be nominated for World Heritage listing, quite a deal of discussion has taken place and misinformation has been spread. However, today is the day that Fraser Island and the Great Sandy Region are nominated for World Heritage listing. That comes at the end of quite a deal of debate which has carried on for some months. It is timely to note that the Great Sandy Region joins two other very attractive areas—the north Queensland rainforest area and the Great Barrier Reef—to give us three very distinctive World Heritage listed areas. That can only be of value to the tourism industry in Queensland, and to Hervey Bay and the Great Sandy Region in particular. In his report, Mr Fitzgerald stated that the area was of outstanding environmental value and one of the most environmentally precious places on earth. In other words, he said to the people of Queensland, “Here is part of your heritage, now protect it.” To me, that means that areas that I have been privileged to view in my life-time will still be there in the time of my grandchildren and, provided that they escape the attention of environmental vandals, will still be there in the time of their grandchildren.

Since the report was made public, an understandable level of concern has been expressed about what World Heritage listing actually means and what effect it will have on the region. How unfortunate it is that the opponents and critics of World Heritage listing chose to create confusion and fear. They did it in some systematic order, almost as though they were being directed by people in other places. They talked of foreign powers taking control and of handing over land to some international body. I will tell members about those people. They refuse to listen. When it is demonstrated to them that what they are saying is palpably an untruth, they take no notice. They insist on persevering with the doomsaying that has become their trademark. The reality is far from what they have been saying. Quite simply, World Heritage listing is the single largest national and international advertisement for the region that is possible. At least 21 nations will advertise the area. Geographic magazines will pick it up and run with it, and the beauties that we take for granted will be exposed to worldwide scrutiny. As a result, the tourism industry in that area will prosper.

World Heritage listing will assist in promoting and developing our already growing tourist industry. Figures from other World Heritage listed properties indicate that tourism booms as a result of World Heritage listing. We know that it does not happen on its own and that it must be given a hand by the people in the region and by the State and the Commonwealth. For instance, in the eight years since Kakadu was listed, the number of tourists visiting Kakadu has increased by 550 per cent. The Tasmanian Tourism Commission now claims that more than a million visitors a year go to Cradle Mountain. It claims that that is a direct result of the appreciation of the natural beauties of Tasmania, which have been presented to the world through the World Heritage listing of the Franklin River area. Baillieu Knight Frank, a major developer and tourism operator in north Queensland, gave as its main reason for Queensland’s very, very rapid recovery after the tourism recession the fact that there are two major World Heritage listed areas in north Queensland, namely, the north Queensland rainforest area and the Great Barrier Reef. Hervey Bay will receive a similar substantial boost to its tourism industry as a result of World Heritage listing, but it needs the support of the people. All they have to do is to grasp this great catalyst—World Heritage listing—which has the potential to boost their

tourism numbers. On top of this, all they have to do is grasp the \$8m tourism packages which have been included in the compensation package for the area.

Contrary to what my opponents have been claiming, World Heritage listing does not affect the ownership or control of the land. Control of the land is not passed to the Commonwealth or to any other international body. State and local authority laws will continue to apply and existing ownership rights will continue. The laws of local authorities will continue to apply through their development control plans. People have been told this over and over again. The opponents and critics of World Heritage listing continue to take no notice even after proof is shoved under their noses and down their throats. The World Heritage Committee does not and cannot have any legal rights over the area and it cannot dictate how we manage it. It has not happened in any other area and it will not happen here. The only sanction that the World Heritage Committee can impose is to remove the area from the list. I know that members opposite would love this to happen. They would like to have it taken off the list. God knows what opportunity might occur in the future for them to rape and pillage the fair island or to do some damage to the waterway. God knows what they have got in mind, but they certainly have an agenda of their own.

Mr Elliott: Do you support the closure of the road along the beach from the Ngrala Rocks up to the cape? Do you support that? Come on, do you support it? Tell us where you stand.

Mr NUNN: The proposals to upgrade and close roads will be addressed in the plans of management which Mr Fitzgerald has also recommended. There are five major plans of management and there are four minor plans. These matters will be addressed in the very near future. They will be advertised and public comment will be invited.

The area continues to be owned, managed and controlled by Queensland, and everybody knows this. Those people who have been trying to create confusion in the Hervey Bay community have quite deliberately lied about the boundaries of the area. Today, I wish to let honourable members know a little bit about those boundaries. I again state quite clearly what the World Heritage boundary is. Contrary to the misinformation campaign waged by some people, the boundary does not take in vast tracts of the mainland. The western boundary is generally the high-water mark, and some private property boundaries which are below the high-water mark have been excluded from the area. I state quite plainly that Hervey Bay and Maryborough are not in the World Heritage area. It is worth mentioning again that private property below the high-water mark, including lease areas, will not be included in the World Heritage listed area. This has been stated time and time again. The only mainland regions contained in the World Heritage area are the Cooloola national park, the Wide Bay military reserve and the Inskip peninsula. Much of this misinformation has been peddled on a political basis.

I wish to pay tribute to the Mayor of Hervey Bay, who has served on the Fraser Coast Coordinating Committee. As members will know, Alderman Kleinschmidt was a political opponent of mine at the last election. However, things have sorted themselves out and I am the member of Parliament and Fred Kleinschmidt is the mayor, which is how it should be. We have been working very well together for the benefit of the people of Hervey Bay. Honourable members must remember that it looks extremely likely that the whole of Hervey Bay and the City of Hervey Bay will be in my electorate after the next election.

Multicultural Education, Yeronga State High School

Mr FOLEY (Yeronga) (11.57 a.m.): I rise to speak of the great importance of multicultural education and in particular to pay tribute to the fine efforts of the students and staff of the Yeronga State High School in achieving during the recent Youth Week a truly spectacular result in the area of multicultural education. From that pithy work by

Hugh Lunn *Over the Top with Jim* I am reminded just how difficult it was for non-English speaking children in our local schools only a generation ago.

What a spectacular contrast it was to attend at the Yeronga State High School on 11 September this year to see the fruits of the \$1,000 grant from the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing towards Youth Week. The staff and students at that school enabled the money to go a long way. They were able to use not only a drama teacher from the Street Arts Community Theatre to help build confidence but also some of the resources of the Brisbane forest park to build confidence in non-English speaking children and to hold an international food fair. Most of all, they were able to use the opportunity to hold an international multicultural concert which provided the opportunity for those children—who in a past generation would have sat up the back of the class finding the English language difficult—to be on centre stage displaying the dances and culture of the Lebanon, India, El Salvador, Vietnam, Polynesia, the Maori culture of New Zealand, Aboriginal Australia, colonial Australia, Iran, Portugal and Brazil. Instead of being marginalised, these children were on centre stage enjoying the approval and cheers of their colleagues. What a great triumph it is to see that education in Queensland is moving in such a positive direction.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The time for the Matters of Public Interest debate has now expired.

SUPPLY

Committee—Financial Statement

Debate resumed from 5 September (see p. 895).

Mr COOPER (Roma—Leader of the Opposition) (12 noon): This Labor Government's 1991-92 Budget marks a second significant step down the precarious economic track that is well worn by the now failed State Labor administrations. It is a Budget that raids hollow logs to prop up Labor's big spending. It is a Budget that does nothing to help the private sector. It is a Budget that tries to feign urgency about job creation when the whole State knows that job creation has been the most outstanding failure of this Goss Labor Government.

Since Labor came to power in Queensland, an average of 626 people have been forced onto the dole queues every week. Over that 20-month period, some 50 100 people have lost their jobs, including 19 500 married men with children. According to the ABS economic indicators, in the 12 months ended May 1991, under the Goss Labor Government 16 800 jobs were lost in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industries; 500 people lost their jobs in the mining industries; some 23 900 people lost their jobs in the manufacturing industries; some 2 900 people in the electricity, gas and water industries lost their jobs; 3 600 people in the construction industry lost their jobs; 7 300 people lost their jobs in the communications industry; 3 600 people lost their jobs in the recreation, personnel and other services area. In addition, job vacancies declined by a whopping 38 per cent. The average overtime hours per employee were down 12.7 per cent. However, it should be noted that, in the first 12 months of the Goss/De Lacy Government, there were 5 200 more State employees in the work force. All I can say is: what a track record of economic wreckage! What an indictment on this do-nothing, dithering Government! Under Labor, the only employment growth area has been the public service. Late last year the Goss/De Lacy Government would not hear or listen to the combined voice of the Opposition, rural organisations and industry that a recession was developing. This Government did not want to know that people were hurting, that businesses were closing down, that jobs were being lost. In the very same way, it would not listen to the voices that

were saying there was a severe drought raging, and it would not listen to calls for drought assistance.

In November 1990, the Opposition urged the Government to set up a capital works program to hold down unemployment, which had, by then, increased to 9.2 per cent. Labor dismissed the proposal. At the time, Treasurer De Lacy said—

“Other Governments have tried to do that, particularly in Western Australia and Victoria. Stimulation of the economy from the public sector does not work . . . These 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.”

That is what the Treasurer said. In similar vein, the member for Caboolture, Mr Hayward, said—

“It (the proposal) is from an economic philosophy that has been tried, tried, tried and proved to be wrong, wrong, wrong.”

That was Labor’s attitude and view of the matter while in Government, but what about its attitude to capital works programs when members of the Labor Party were in Opposition?

On 20 November 1984, the former Opposition Leader, Neville Warburton, branded the major special capital works program in the 1984-85 Budget as a “fraud”. In September 1988, Mr Goss said—

“Both the Bjelke-Petersen and Ahern Governments have indulged in large scale and unnecessary public works programs which do not add to the efficiency of the State’s economy, but instead represent a misallocation of scarce public resources.”

Is it not amazing how times change? Labor’s do-nothing formula in Government was not working, so it had to eat its words and take action in a capital works area. This was belated, and such delays will negate much of the beneficial economic effect. I will have more to say on the capital works subject later.

Last December—a month after the Treasurer had discounted the need for capital works projects—the Premier announced the Goss/De Lacy Government’s own package, but it was too late to significantly affect the State’s unemployment level in 1991. While this State Budget relies on the fiscal legacy of previous conservative Budgets—low debt, low taxes, low cost public services and a fully funded public sector superannuation scheme—the hallmark of Labor Governments everywhere is starting to show; that is, in big spending. The record of Labor Governments across Australia is spendthrift. Prior to the last election, this did not bother the Premier, Mr Goss, when he championed the Cain Government’s track record. He stated—

“Just as business has prospered under the economic stewardship of John Cain in Victoria and John Bannon in South Australia so too will business prosper under a Goss Labor Government in Queensland.”

That is the prime problem with this Budget. Labor is taking Queensland down the Victorian path. It is raiding hollow logs, despite the Treasurer’s recent denial in this Chamber that he was doing so. Two glaring examples are the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund and ambulance services.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There are too many conversations occurring in the Committee presently on both sides of the Chamber.

Mr COOPER: On 3 September, only two days before the Treasurer’s Budget Speech, in answer to my question in this place the Treasurer denied that he was dipping into hollow logs to prop up his second Budget. Clearly, either the Treasurer was not aware of his own Budget or he chose to mislead the House because Budget Paper No. 3 clearly

shows funding of \$43.6m being ripped out of the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund to help meet Justice Department programs. In the previous year, Labor dabbled in that fund to the tune of some \$814,000 only. In relation to ambulance services, it seems that the Queensland Ambulance Service Trust Fund is now in the firing line. A back room juggling exercise with ambulance funds will mean an estimated \$67m will be identified in program funding sources coming from the Queensland Ambulance Service Trust Fund.

Recently, for no other reason than political expediency, the Goss/De Lacy Government took a swipe at the Victorian Labor Government's financial incompetence. In the past, it was the practice of the members of the Queensland Labor parliamentary wing to praise the financial policies of all Labor Governments and denigrate the financial conservatism that applied in Queensland—the very policies which they now try to embrace so dearly. The irony is that although criticising the Victorian Labor Government, the Queensland Labor Government is following a similar high-spending budgetary pattern in the same policy areas. Labor's spots are showing in Queensland. The hallmark of all Labor Budgets is simply—big spending. This is the second big-spending Goss/De Lacy Budget. It is, however, a Budget which basically maintains the status quo, in line with this do-nothing, dithering Government. The Budget document "Economic Management" clearly illustrates this situation. It states on page 12—

"The 1991/92 State Budget outlays are estimated to grow by 8 per cent. Almost the entire increase in outlays over and above the impact of inflation is accounted for by the impact of national benchmark award wage increases for nurses, teachers and police and the Government's accelerated capital works program".

Queenslanders should understand that the spending in this Budget is mostly on salaries, not on programs or services to advance such things as education or health needs. Current outlays on general Government services are forecast to increase by 11 per cent, compared with 13.2 per cent for 1990-91. This is big spending—two very big-spending Budgets. Total outlays, including capital spending, will be up 12.4 per cent, compared with 12.2 per cent for 1990-91. For the public sector as a whole, total outlays are expected to rise by 11.9 per cent, compared with 11.6 per cent in 1990-91. These figures suggest that the Goss/De Lacy Government wins the medal for the largest spending increases of any State in Australia. The big spending areas are health and education with outlays increased by 9 per cent that, according to the supplementary budget paper, reflect the impact of new awards and, of course, the special capital works program which recorded a 35 per cent increase in the hope of boosting employment. It must be emphasised that the spending is on new awards, not on education and health services.

In terms of spending on itself—general Government services—there is not much difference between the two Goss/De Lacy Budgets—11 per cent for 1991-92 and 13.2 per cent for the last financial year. They are significant for their similarity—high spending. The inevitable consequence of continued high spending is higher taxes and greater indebtedness. That is the result of Labor's stewardship of State Budgets in other States. By dipping into hollow logs such as the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Fund, from which \$43m was captured in this Budget, the Government can survive another Budget, but much damage will have been done in the process. In crass terms, this Goss/De Lacy Government is squandering the sound financial legacy that the previous Government had built up. Already, the 1991-92 State Budget is under stress. The Treasurer had not even finished selling it before the Premier was saying that its surplus would be eroded because of the drought. The Treasurer, on the other hand, contradicted the Premier, saying that the drought factor had been built into the Budget. I maintained at the time that the Budget was "built on the bleached bones of the bush". I stand by that statement today.

One of the curious aspects of this Budget is items which are conspicuous by their absence. Over the last 18 days, we have seen some \$56m worth of programs announced outside of the Budget. The first is the Great Sandy Region development package. There is no reason why the total figure for that package could not have been included in the Budget. The Federal Government budgeted for its contribution, but the Goss/De Lacy Government chose to handle the package in a highly secretive, unaccountable manner, obviously for political reasons. The second aspect is the drought package. Just 14 days ago, according to the Minister for Primary Industries, Mr Casey, south-east Queensland was experiencing, in his words, "a dry". Now it has grown out to be a drought, or in the Treasurer's words, an "extreme drought". Just when a drought becomes "extreme" is something which only the uninitiated would attempt to define, but in Labor's case, I suggest that it became extreme when the Government realised its drought assistance measures were not worth a cracker. The shortcomings of such measures, which Labor helped to erode during its Opposition days, coupled with a sudden realisation of the potential for massive adverse economic impacts on Queensland, has forced this Government to scrape together another \$17m for drought relief, bringing the total package to \$33m. To date, the drought has cost the State \$600m. In his Budget Speech, the Treasurer did not mention the word "drought" in his opening comments, nor in the section headed "The Economic Context of the Budget", nor in the section headed "1990-91 Budget Outcome", nor in the section headed "Revenues", nor in the section headed "Conclusion". There was one brief mention of what was termed "Emerging drought" in the section headed "Regional and rural Queensland". This comes at a time, and I quote from the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics in its quarterly review of 24 September, when rural prospects are "particularly bleak" and "by many measures farm incomes in 1991-92 are expected to be the lowest on record"—and the Government could not give a damn.

The irony is that the Opposition has been trying to tell the Government for the last four months that low commodity prices, the recession, the failure of the winter rains to arrive, and the Government's regionalisation and adverse rural policies were creating a serious economic environment for the rural sector. Opposition members were accused of being whingers. It is clear that the Premier's special rural task force should be disbanded, as it is totally ineffectual. If it had been doing its job, it would have been supporting the Opposition and all the rural organisations which were trying to make the Government listen and understand. It is unbelievable that a drought of the proportions currently ravaging Queensland could be so advanced that the Government of the day did not know it existed or understand its severity. Quite frankly, at the time we had the Premier running around trying to blame people in the Department of Primary Industries for not telling him.

Mr Littleproud: Tony McGrady could not have been doing his job.

Mr COOPER: No way. The poverty of the Government's understanding of what is happening in rural and regional Queensland can be exemplified by its initial response—to establish a rural communities office in the Cabinet Office under the control of the Premier's personal adviser, Mr Rudd. The drought package should have been unveiled or foreshadowed in the Budget. No money was allocated. Again, there was only a public relations response.

Boosting employment—special capital works program

I have already outlined the disastrous record of this Government in terms of increasing the number of Queenslanders without jobs. I will now outline how this Government has embellished its capital works program to help sell an otherwise lacklustre product. A hallmark of this Budget was that before the Treasurer uttered a word in this Chamber, virtually the entire Budget had been systematically and deliberately leaked with the blessing of the Premier and the Treasurer. In fact, the Treasurer actually wined and

dined key political journalists before the Budget, quite separate from the Budget lunches that were hosted by his minders, to explain debt and the capital works program. One senior television journalist, talking about the ruthless Goss media management style, said—

“The State Budget was the best example where they put out controlled leaks on specific topics to specific outlets expecting a favourable run with those particular topics. We chose not to run ours and they made it very clear that they were displeased that we didn’t run our leak. They are very thin skinned.”

It was really a pathetic attempt at public relations and media manipulation, which does go on under this Government.

Mr Borbidge: And then they ran away from Parliament.

Mr COOPER: And then they ran away from Parliament. Labor’s whole attitude shows a total and blatant disregard for Westminster principles, and this includes an arrogant disrespect for Parliament. The Government has mistimed the capital works program. The Goss/De Lacy Government should take note of what Federal Treasurer Kerin said—

“In recent years, both in Australia and overseas, one common mistake in economic policy has been to fail to see that a recession has passed. Too often, Governments have delivered a stimulus to the economy at just the wrong time—just as the economy was on the mend.”

Like the belated recognition of the drought, the Goss/De Lacy Government recognised too late the State’s dip into recession, the loss of jobs, the bankruptcies. It panicked and rushed in the December 1990 Accelerated capital works program and, finally, the Special capital works program.

In the worst example of pump-priming, this Government is now trying to do two things—buy investment and buy jobs, because it has failed to stimulate investment through private enterprise. There are no private-enterprise cranes on the skyline, so the Government is trying to buy them. The capital works program is a financial sleight of hand. It is a fraud. Rolled into this capital works program is the roll-over of the funding of the accelerated capital works program of December 1990, the normal funding for the capital works program for 1991-92 and seemingly the normal capital works program for 1992-93, plus a solid contribution of Commonwealth funds and borrowings.

The Treasurer has said that direct funding from the Budget for capital works will rise by more than 30 per cent, or around \$1 billion. The true position is that capital outlays for general Government works increased by 19.3 per cent, but capital outlays on behalf of public trading enterprises increased by a whopping 47 per cent. The bottom line is that the Government has used public institutions where the user-pays system will help finance capital works. The Government’s own input is in fact very mediocre. It must also be pointed out that big ticket items within the capital works program such as \$500m for housing and \$890m for transport are in fact ongoing. When one makes allowance for these, it comes back to a very basic capital works program.

Budget Related Papers

In his Budget Speech, the Treasurer referred to Budget Related Paper No. 1, “Economic Management”. The Premier, during the controversy over the cut in funding to the CJC, referred to the same papers as if they were a part of the official Budget papers. This set of 10 papers was not tabled in the Parliament. Therefore, they are unofficial documents. Members on the Opposition side of the Chamber did not receive them, but the media did, as did people who attended the numerous briefing sessions. They all received them free of charge. Government members received copies. They were delivered to their

electorate offices free of charge. Opposition members received none, nor were they told about them. The Leader of the Opposition received one set, and one set only, because his office had the front to ask for a set after seeing the media strewing their sets around like confetti. If more sets were required, the Government gave the Opposition a bill for \$28. Opposition members did not get any copies, and, if they did want a set, they would certainly have to pay \$28—that is, if they knew about them. It is shameful that this Labor Government should hide so-called Budget Related Papers from the scrutiny of the Opposition and the Parliament. The Goss Labor Government is running the Government not for Queensland and Queenslanders but blatantly for the Labor Party.

Mr Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr COOPER: Babes in the wood, compared with you lot.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Archerfield and the member for Lockyer will cease interjecting across the Chamber.

Mr COOPER: Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Assistance to the productive sector—land tax

The centrepiece of the second Goss/De Lacy Budget is supposedly its assistance to the productive sector under the heading "Creating an investment climate". This allegedly hinged around reducing taxes, reducing debt and making the public sector more efficient. The Treasurer said that there were no new taxes and that there were substantial concessions for business in the areas of payroll tax, land tax and rental charges for Crown industrial land. He had not finished delivering the Budget Speech before the flaws in the investment climate strategy became apparent.

The land tax reform was labelled a cruel lie by the Australian Small Business Association and dismissed as fundamentally cosmetic and not addressing the inequity of the land tax system by the Land Tax Review Committee. The Brisbane Development Association and the Leader of the Liberal Party said that it was Mickey Mouse. Between 1989-90 and 1990-91, land tax revenue increased from \$136.7m to \$197.2m, which is an increase of 44 per cent. The Government received a windfall of an extra \$7m more than it estimated in its first Budget. In this financial year, the Budget estimates are that land tax will reap \$215m, an increase of \$18m, or 9 per cent, which is about three times the inflation rate. This is after the so-called slash of 14 per cent—worth \$40m—in the land tax rate and other exemptions worth \$3m. This means that, without the slash and the exemptions, land tax for this financial year would have been an estimated \$258m, or a huge increase of 31 per cent.

Allowing for the cut in land tax and the exemptions, over two Labor Budgets, land tax has risen by 57 per cent. Without the 14 per cent cut and the exemptions virtually forced on the Government by outcries from small business and religious and charitable institutions, the rise in land tax receipts would have been 88 per cent. So much for the Goss/De Lacy commitment to low taxes! A 57 per cent increase in land tax over two years and during a national recession cannot be construed as creating an investment climate. It is certainly well above the CPI rate which was promised as the ceiling for Labor increases in taxes and charges. The long-term impact of increased land taxes in these recessionary times is inevitably an increase in bankruptcies and unemployment. As well, because of the inflationary effect on the cost of products and services, there is an increase in the cost of living. In the 12 months ended 30 June 1991, in Queensland bankruptcies increased by 835, or 51 per cent, which was marginally higher than the national average. That is not a good advertisement for Labor's investment climate strategy. In the last quarter of the 1990-91 financial year, there was a 58 per cent increase, which again was higher than the national average. When the Budget was delivered was the time to make

the hard decisions and make a real contribution to the productive sector. Instead, the Goss/De Lacy Government fiddled around the edges, leaving the financial burden squarely on the business sector.

The Treasurer said that, because of the cost of land tax concessions for 1991-92, no real increase in revenue from land tax would occur this year. That is not what an analysis of receipts suggests. It seems that the Government will do very nicely in real terms. The Goss/De Lacy Government commitment on land tax exemptions is most interesting and is worth more than a cursory assessment. The duo says that the exemption from land tax will be provided for religious and charitable groups and retirement villages. That is wise and it is supported, but the question must be asked of the Labor Government, "Do trade unions have an exemption status?" Does that mean Trades Hall at Peel Street, South Brisbane, where the Labor Party has two floors, is free of the land tax bogey? It means that the ALP, with some \$20m in assets in Queensland, is not paying land tax. Why does it not pay land tax? Under section 13 of the Land Tax Act, all land owned by, or in trust for, any trade union is exempted. The strict application of the user-pays policy of the Goss/De Lacy Labor Government, which underpins the entire Budget strategy, suggests that trade unions should have to pay their share of land tax despite their special relationship with the Government. In view of the Government's user-pays policy, Messrs Goss and De Lacy should explain to land tax payers why trade unions still maintain their exempt status and the rationale for that exemption. The Deputy Premier said that it was a fat-cat tax. In that case, why does Trades Hall not pay its bills?

During the preparatory process of the State Budget, the Queensland Land Tax Review Committee wanted to discuss the Government moves to quarantine landlords from passing the land tax on to tenants. For its trouble, it copped an abusive letter from Treasurer De Lacy, the style of which epitomises the style of the Goss/De Lacy Government—abusive and arrogant. The Parliament should hear the pertinent points of that letter. It was addressed to the committee chairman, Warren Lennon. The Treasurer wrote that he had no intention of meeting with the self-appointed committee as—

"You and your committee disqualify yourselves from the land tax debate with your outrageous and dishonest misrepresentation of my Government's record on taxation generally and land tax in particular. Your whole campaign has been marked by a breathtaking intellectual dishonesty which has done a disservice to the cause of those who you claim to misrepresent."

The Treasurer continued—

"You can also be assured that your self-appointed committee's intellectually dishonest campaign for the abolition of land tax will prove to be a totally irrelevant consideration in any decision in the Budget about land tax."

That self-appointed committee is not one of the 90-odd Goss/De Lacy Government-appointed committees but is a private-enterprise committee and has on it representatives from the Building Owners and Managers Association, the Queensland Property Council, the State Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Brisbane Development Association, the Gold Coast Development Association, the Australian Small Business Association, the City Heart Business Association and the Cairns Chamber of Commerce. It is a committee that should not be dismissed with such high-handed pomposity. The Government's own people are on it. If the Treasurer had not been so arrogant and conceited about his own intellectual capacity, he would have been gracious and listened and may have learned by meeting with the committee. At least he would have been warned that the intention to prohibit the passing-on of land tax under all leases would result in the land tax element being included in the base rental and increasing stamp duty. It would have saved the

Treasurer from a Budget blunder, but the Treasurer already has a reputation for being accident prone.

The Budget provides, nevertheless, for the introduction of legislation to ban the transfer of the land tax charge to tenants and has been slammed by the Queensland Land Tax Review Committee and the Queensland Confederation of Industry. It seems that the intention is to prohibit the passing-on of land tax under all leases, not only those coming under the Retail Shop Leases Act but also residential and commercial leases. Real estate commentators and property experts have rejected the plan, pointing out that landlords would simply pass on any increase by adopting a gross rather than net rental format. Legal advice to hand is that that will have the effect of increasing the base rental element and, should operating expenses be totally abandoned in favour of a higher base rental, the tenant will pay substantially higher stamp duty on leases. Legal advice is that landlords always had built their fixed costs into the rental structure either as part of the base rent or as an outgoing, and land tax was no exception. Land tax has emerged to be the tax problem of the nineties, just as death duties emerged as the tax problem of the sixties and the seventies. A National/Liberal Government will abolish land tax. Land tax in the nineties is an anachronism, discriminatory and a penalty on the productive sector. After being in recession mode, business needs a circuit-breaker. The abolition of land tax would send an important signal to business and stimulate job creation and investment.

Access Economics has estimated that business investment in Australia will decline by 6.5 per cent in 1991-92, and this follows an 11.25 per cent fall in 1990-91. The Goss/De Lacy Government response to the low investment level so far has been completely inadequate. It has reinstated a 1950s-style industrial relations system and has allowed land tax to skyrocket, and many development projects which would have created jobs have been lost. A move to abolish land tax now would be welcomed by the productive sector. In one of his less abusive letters, Treasurer De Lacy referred to the commitment to abolish land tax as a joke. I know for certain that the small-businesspeople who pay land tax do not think it is a joke. At 30 June 1989, about 28 000 assessments were made and the average land tax paid was \$4,900. This does not allow for the 4 000 which were deemed totally exempt or received some form of special exemption or reduction. I suggest that, on those figures, the joke is on the Treasurer.

Obviously, the Government naturally would greatly appreciate knowing how we intend to abolish land tax and still balance the Budget. I can tell it now that this will not be outlined until we get closer to the State election next year or maybe the end of this year. The main ingredients are, firstly, that there has to be the will, the commitment, to end land tax. Secondly, through a range of measures involving restructured Budget priorities, genuine cuts to red tape in the public sector and privatisation initiatives, we know it will be achieved.

I turn now to payroll tax. The second element of the Government's tax reductions was increasing the payroll maximum exemption level from \$500,000 to \$550,000. From 1 July 1992, it is to be increased to \$600,000. We support this belated measure. In 1989-90, payroll tax returned \$726.6m and was estimated to have provided revenue of \$790m at the end of the 1990-91 financial year. Actually, the amount received was \$762.4m, some 3.5 per cent below the amount estimated. This indicates the impact of the national recession but more importantly shows that the premise on which the Goss/De Lacy Government based its 1990-91 Budget was wrong and was to give no assistance to the business sector except lip-service. In bringing down his first Budget, the Treasurer said—

"Firstly our commitment (is to give) Queensland significant tax advantages over other States."

As honourable members will recall, the tax advantage was to do nothing but to rest on the laurels of the former National/Liberal Government's unblemished economic reputation. The lower payroll tax return for 1990-91 shows quite clearly that the business sector retrenched staff. At 30 June 1991, there were 36 000 more Queenslanders without jobs. In its June 1990 survey, the Queensland Confederation of Industry was right in that it found that Queensland businesses would retrench staff and were pessimistic about the next 12 months. The March and June 1991 quarterly surveys found that 52 per cent of companies performed below expectations. The Goss/De Lacy Government ignored the June 1990 economic forecasts and, apart from giving no assistance, told businesses throughout 1990-91 to "get off their butts and perform" as they had the best State tax situation of any State in Australia. For sure, Queensland has had the reputation of being a low-tax State and having a sound economy, but with no thanks to this State Labor Government. Payroll tax relief should have been provided in the 1990-91 State Budget to ensure that the advantage given to business over previous years was not lost.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics catalogue, "Average Weekly Earnings—States and Australia May 1991", the annual change for full-time adults with ordinary-time earnings was 5.7 per cent, which incidentally was higher than the national rise of 5 per cent. Given the increase in wages and the recession which the nation's economy was entering at the time of preparation of the 1990-91 State Budget, payroll tax relief should have been provided in the 1990-91 State Budget to offset the wage increases and their contribution to unemployment. The fall in payroll tax receipts below the estimated amount, the increase in unemployment and the rise in wages say precisely that the Goss/De Lacy Government misread the negative impact of the recession on the State's business sector. Furthermore, the "get off your butt and perform" attitude shows a total lack of practical understanding of business management. More and more, the Treasurer is sounding like an economic student who has learnt the theory by rote and burbles it out in Keatingesque fashion. The "get off your butt and perform" phrase is a favourite with this present crop of Goss Government Ministers. Only the other day, the Treasurer and the Minister for Primary Industries said this to drought-stricken farmers, extolling them to lift their game and be more competitive. Since then, they have found the so-called dry has turned into an extreme drought and a natural disaster. The Goss/De Lacy Government should lift its game and start doing something positive instead of creeping unannounced around the backblocks abusing people. Although the payroll tax initiative announced in the Budget is most welcome, its weakness is that it does not come into effect until 1 January 1992 and 1 July 1992. The payroll tax relief should have been effective from the date of the Budget instead of 1 January 1992 or four months later. The exemption is needed now.

The latest Queensland Confederation of Industry pulse survey states that the business sector anticipates further increases in unemployment in the next six months. It also states—

"Current business conditions in Queensland have been described by 67% of respondents as 'poor' or 'very poor', while only 7% of participants rated the economy as 'good'.

Not one respondent described the Queensland economy as 'very good'. The current climate for investment in Queensland was described by 51% of respondents as 'poor' or 'very poor', while 23% regard the environment for investment in Queensland as 'good' or 'better'."

It is quite clear that the business sector needed relief.

Mr De Lacy: Why don't you keep knocking Queensland?

Mr COOPER: I am telling the Treasurer now that it is quite clear that the business sector needed relief and that he was not in a position to provide it. He should have done it. It is appreciated that administratively it would have been difficult to introduce the benefit as from the date of the Budget, but the administrative headache is minor compared with the ongoing pain in the business sector.

Mr De Lacy: Whining, whingeing knockers.

Mr COOPER: This Government is doing nothing for the people out there. This is all a great public relations exercise. What is more important is that the people have seen through it.

The QCI survey found that the "Queensland economy remains in the grips of recession and that one in three companies are experiencing continual downturn in their performance capacity." Once again, the Goss/De Lacy Government has misread the business economic scene. A conservative Government would have continued to lift the payroll tax exemption. Thus, the maximum level at 1 July 1992 would not have been \$600,000 but closer to \$700,000.

Capital guarantees equal new taxes

The rhetoric of tax cuts in this Budget is lightweight after considering the payroll tax and land tax policy announcements. It becomes extremely hollow when the fine print is examined. The Goss/De Lacy Government pioneered the capital guarantee fee tax—a new tax—with the Queensland Electricity Commission. This Budget sees this tax extended to all Government departments and authorities which represent the Crown, and the tax is estimated to return additional revenue for 1991-92 of \$2.6m. This Labor Government has been too smart by half. It has imposed a tax on itself, hoping that taxpayers will not see through it as a new tax on taxpayers. It is a new tax—albeit a camouflaged tax—a new indirect tax on the taxpayer. Quite clearly, the Labor Party through the Goss/De Lacy Government has broken its election promise. The departments and authorities are not going to absorb this tax themselves. They are quite simply going to pass that tax on to the Queensland public through the user-pays principle. That tax on departments and authorities is equal to \$1 for every Queenslanders.

The capital guarantee fee is Queensland's version of a financial institutions duty. It is a new tax coming in the back door, the difference being that it is carefully camouflaged from the view of the State taxpayer. The Premier's and Treasurer's rhetoric about their no-new-tax promise does not stand up to scrutiny. The capital guarantee fee is in fact a new tax. The efficiency dividends are expected to return \$155m, or \$60 per person in this State. Efficiency dividends are a way of saying that users of Government services will pay for it. At the end of the day, all departmental charges on an item or service will be passed on to the taxpayers, who are already paying them through normal taxes and charges. Now, the Government is hitting them again. It is a double whammy. The efficiency dividends represent a new charge—another broken Labor promise. Thus, another element of the Labor Government's strategy—namely, reducing taxes—is a failure. The alleged land tax cuts have been described as a cruel lie. The payroll tax cut should be effective now, not as from 1 January 1992. The momentum gained by successive conservative Governments with payroll tax exemptions has been lost. Under the efficiency dividends, taxpayers will have to pay a further \$60 per head in Government charges.

Reducing debt

In 1989, the Treasurer of Australia, the Australian Bureau of Statistics and State Budget papers each pointed to Queensland's low State debt and total debt. In March 1990, the Treasurer said that he would explode Queensland's low-debt myth. However, the new Queensland Treasurer, who was still learning his economic theory, decided to

give Parliament a lesson on debt and, in particular, to tell the people of Queensland the true level of debt. He said—

"I want to set the record straight on Queensland's public finances, starting with the State's debt. For many years now National Party Governments have worked to create the illusion that our debt was only a little over \$4 billion. That is simply not true.

In fact, it totals \$13.45 billion. That is a formidable sum. The gross liabilities of the State sector in Queensland work out to more than \$4,750 for every man woman and child."

Not once did the previous Government deny the total State debt. In fact, that Government had a propensity to round it off from \$13.45 billion to about \$15 billion. The figures were in the book. As to State sector debt only—in 1989, the former Government said it was about \$4 billion. The embarrassment for the Treasurer was acute, especially when his performance was equated to a cricket duck, and the press and the Opposition gave him the full details as per the 1989 State Budget papers. If the Treasurer had turned over the page he would have found that the figure was there. Humiliation was increased for the Goss/De Lacy Government when the Premier tried to rescue his Treasurer following an editorial in the *Courier-Mail*—for heaven's sake—which pointed out that the Labor Government had bungled and got it wrong. I wonder how many times the Government has got it wrong since then, and again in this Budget.

It is interesting to look at this Government's handling of State debt. Suddenly, gross liabilities are out with the Goss/De Lacy Government and net liabilities are in. As at June 1989, per capita State net debt was \$1,500, far short of the \$4,750 revealed by Treasurer De Lacy. Per capita State net debt for the financial year ended 30 June 1991 was \$1,331. What a difference to economic theory and political thinking being in Government makes, particularly when the Government wants to score off its own Labor mates in the south and make itself look like a good economic manager. This Government is simply living off the good economic management of a succession of National/Liberal Party Governments.

It is fair to say that, in view of the reporting of State debt in the 1991-92 Budget papers and in the untabled Budget Related Paper No. 1 "Economic Management", the March 1990 statement of Treasurer De Lacy with its outlandish claims that the per capita debt was \$4,750 should be noted for its breathtaking intellectual dishonesty. It is observed that, since then, the Treasurer has reshuffled the personnel in his office. Where did he send those fellows he sacked or blamed for making mistakes? The Treasurer sits there and blinks. He made his former staff take the rap for his own lack of knowledge and what was primarily his own mistake. The current Budget papers show that the Government has reduced the net debt by some \$400m. This looks good, but State Budget Paper No. 4 suggests that the rhetoric which the Treasurer has been able to weave is not quite correct. The main contributor to the Government's net debt decline by \$428m comes from the Electricity Commission making payments of \$389m over two years, \$314m in the last financial year, and the Queensland electricity supply industry not undertaking any new borrowings. This Government claims the cut in the electricity debt as a credit to itself. It is the prudent handling of the electricity industry by conservative Governments down through the years which has allowed this Labor Government to make the bold boast that it is reducing debt. The Labor Government's policy of not borrowing for social assets, thus keeping debt down, is a decision that it has made itself. Whilst it sounds wise, the Labor Government has offset that policy decision by drawing on Trust and Special Funds in a way in which previous Governments did not. The raiding of hollow logs began with the Wran Government and became an art form with the Cain, Bannon and then Burke Labor Governments until nothing was left. Now, the Goss Labor Government is going down that path. After the hollow logs comes the need to borrow and that leads to debt.

Fortunately or unfortunately for Queensland, the impressive financial performance of previous conservative Governments will allow the raiding of hollow logs and will allow for big-spending Budgets for quite some time before the indebtedness of the kind that has wrecked southern States under Labor Governments hits Queensland. This should serve as a warning to all Queenslanders. To risk another term of Labor will further jeopardise the financial soundness of the State's Trust and Special Funds. Careful, conservative financial management has been forsaken as Labor plunders the State's liquid assets. The National Party in Government would restore prudent management to the State's finances—the quality management which built this State's financial security.

Public sector efficiency

The third element of the Government's strategy is making the public service efficient. The Opposition supports that aim, but the Goss/De Lacy Government has created such disorder and disarray that a National/Liberal Party Government would have to commence at the foundations to restore an apolitical and professional public service. Public service efficiency overseen by the ambitious but inept Public Sector Management Commission head, Dr Coaldrake, has been to spill all senior positions. So-called Labor reform has been to replace an experienced, apolitical, professional service with persons known to the commission as being on side with the Labor Party philosophy and policy. Labor's so-called appointment on merit really stands for "Mates Employed Regardless of Intellect or Talent". The reputation and the morale of the public service under the Goss/De Lacy Government has declined to an all-time low. It will not be a difficult process to restore confidence and professional pride in the public sector after the tyranny of the Coaldrake Public Sector Management Commission and the rule of terror emanating from the Premier's chief adviser, Mr Rudd. In November, I will release the National Party public sector policy.

Efficiency in the public service or streamlining the public sector is another way of saying: all positions will be spilled, people will be sacked and southerners who are on side with Labor Governments will be appointed. The word is that Dr Coaldrake and his lynch team are moving into the Transport Department, where they are awaited with fear and trepidation. Despite the list of micro-economic measures in the untabled Budget Related Paper No. 1, the Goss/De Lacy Government has been reluctant to get into the tough area of industrial relations. According to the Queensland Confederation of Industry—

"Micro-economic reform in Queensland is by any measure abysmally slow. Of the 1 134 State awards and agreements, approximately 700 have not yet commenced any genuine reform process. It could be argued that micro-economic reform commenced in the other 400 awards and agreements has not resulted in any dramatic improvement in economic output.

The majority of restructuring initiatives are limited to broadbanding exercises or similar administrative reform. They will not deliver a significant economic turn-around. Included in micro-economic reforms should be an increase in initiatives aimed at more innovative methods of working and breaking down of the traditional attitudes to such things as weekend penalty rates; shift premiums; etc.

In short, the State Government must become more supportive of real work place change in Queensland, setting a precedent for other Australian States and encouraging new industries to set up in Queensland instead of encouraging Queensland industry to move overseas."

The test of the commitment of this Labor Government—the Goss/De Lacy Government—to micro-economic reform can be determined by the progress of the review of regulation within the Transport Department. I have a copy of an internal memorandum from W. G. Upton, Executive Director (Transport Services) dated 18 October 1990. The

memorandum advised that a steering committee had been established to develop and implement an action plan along the following lines: a 50 per cent reduction in operational regulation to June 1991; remaining operational regulation to be simplified and, where relevant, consistent with national standards by June 1991; agreement with industry and users on enforcement policies and practices; early economic deregulation of less sensitive areas, for example, licence to hire and some aspects of aviation; and a program of review of economic regulation in other areas, which, given sensitivities, will require careful handling. Note carefully the qualification on that particular action plan. This suggests that there is no overall strategy of review of economic regulation, and that steering committee should not get too smart or it will get itself into trouble.

The questions to be asked are: were those goals reached? What progress has been made on those important matters, particularly in view of the fact that W. G. Upton is a Labor Government appointee from Canberra? I challenge the Minister to advise the House if the June 1991 deadline was achieved and, if not, why not? Inquiries about progress have resulted in the following advice, "Not much progress has been made." The officers who gave that advice also pointed out that they had received letters warning them about making public comment on Government policy. The Minister for Transport, with his personal staff of 19, will probably come back with a document itemising achievements, but I can tell the House that the true situation is that not much progress has been made.

Mr Littleproud: The truth is that he's not up to it.

Mr COOPER: No, he is not. None of them are. They are not in control of their own departments, and we know that because they have had to bring in these underlings to do their work. There is no commitment to micro-economic reform from this Government. This can best be determined from one of the Government's first decisions which was to sack Alan George as chairman of the Port of Brisbane Authority. For almost two years, the Goss/De Lacy Government has fed the media and Queenslanders a diet of theoretical waffle on the important issue of micro-economic reform. The micro-economic reform linchpin of the public service is the corporatisation of Government-owned enterprises.

As a clearer understanding of the Goss/De Lacy management style emerges, many doubts emerge about Labor's corporatisation policy. In fact, it is not Labor's policy at all. Corporatisation has the imprimatur of the gaggle of advisers and academics the Premier surrounds himself with, much to the chagrin of the Labor rank and file. Corporatisation under Labor, which promised greater accountability, has in fact meant less accountability. The Government has inserted its own faceless men to control major public corporations which do not have to answer to the public for the large number of programs that they run. There is no performance criteria for the programs. The Queensland Treasury Corporation, the QEC and the railways operate largely out of the public and parliamentary eye and produce only a glossy annual report which is limited in circulation and which provides a usually vague outline of what is being done. Corporatisation is taking over from the Budget in terms of information about programs and accountability, and this is not a healthy sign.

Micro-economic reform

The Goss/De Lacy Government will not attempt the hard matters of micro-economic reform. It is clear that its endeavours are directed towards winding back the clock rather than progress. One only has to look at the restrictions under the Industrial Relations Act and the dictatorial style of the Public Service Management Commission to determine that a new age of red tape has dawned. If one looks at the proposed conservation legislation outlined recently, in the near future this situation will be reinforced by "green" tape in great abundance. One of the great success stories of micro-economic reform was the electricity industry, that is, until this Labor Government abolished the legislation which had made it the most efficient electricity industry in Australia. This was done on the advice

of the unions. The regressive policies of the Labor Party are still eroding the efficiency of the industry. The regional electricity generating boards have received letters advising them that when jobs are being filled preference must be given to applicants with union tickets. Back to the old days!

Creating an investment climate is an important element of this second Goss/De Lacy Budget. The elements on which it is based—that is, reducing taxes and debt and making the public service efficient—are worthy aims in themselves. The question is: does the Budget data support the aims? The answer is that it falls far short of delivering the result that will create the investment climate that is needed to get the Queensland economy up and running quickly. The reason for its failure is that it does not fulfil the equation. This Goss/De Lacy Government has been so busy ditching its own economic ideology, embracing the economic policy settings of the previous National Party Government and learning the theory that it has forgotten the purpose of such policy settings. Low State taxes, plus low State debt, plus an efficient public sector, equals jobs, growth and development. The Goss/De Lacy Government has not worked towards obtaining jobs, growth and development. The foreign investment policy of the Queensland Labor Party, the Queensland Government and the statements from the Queensland Treasurer have done more to frighten foreign investment away from the State than the recession and high interest rates.

Golden development and job-creating opportunities, such as the space base, the steel-mill and the MFP, have been missed because the Premier's chief adviser gave the orders that the Goss Labor Government would be a "hands-off" Government and that there would be no unseemingly chasing of investment and jobs. That would be too much. The result is that, despite its economic edge, Queensland has not powered ahead the way it should and has virtually ground to a halt. A conservative Government would give the leadership that this State needs in this difficult time, working with the private sector instead of castigating it. For the last 20 months of this Labor Government, mining companies have been arguing that rail freights should be reduced; but, despite Labor's pre-election nods and winks, the cuts have not been granted. Yet another broken Labor promise. The National Party was in the process of granting rail freight relief when the Government changed. Now it is clear that Labor has betrayed the mining industry.

Government members interjected.

Mr COOPER: Honourable members can ask them.

Alternative Strategy

At this time, I do not intend to elaborate on each departmental sector. This will be pursued by the respective shadow Ministers, but I will outline the alternative strategy and comment in a few key areas. The alternative Budget strategy is centred on productivity and jobs. As I said at the outset, the sad legacy of 20 months of Labor Government has been the loss of 50 100 private-enterprise jobs in Queensland. Labor has got the formula wrong. It made the wrong moves from the start in key areas such as industrial relations and foreign investment. These have been compounded by its inability to read the economic signs, its reluctance to embrace major projects and its own adverse regionalisation and rural policies. The next conservative Government has to get the foundations right again. Firstly, we need to get back to the success formula—low taxes, plus low debt, plus public sector efficiency equals jobs, growth and development when linked with private enterprise. Labor got it wrong, because its public sector reforms have run off the rails.

Sitting suspended from 12.58 to 2.30 p.m.

Debate interrupted.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR**Mr T. A. Fischer, MHR**

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Hollis): Order!! The Chair recognises in the public gallery the Federal parliamentary Leader of the National Party, Mr Tim Fischer, MHR.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

SUPPLY**Committee—Financial Statement**

Debate resumed.

Mr COOPER: As I said before the luncheon recess, Labor has got it wrong because it made the wrong moves from the start in key areas such as industrial relations and foreign investment. This has been compounded by Labor's inability to read the economic signs, its reluctance to embrace major projects and its own adverse regionalisation and rural policies. The next conservative Government has to again get the foundations right in the way it got them right before. Firstly, Queensland should get back to the success formula; that is, low taxes, plus low debt, plus public sector efficiency which, when linked to private enterprise, equal jobs, growth and development. Secondly, there is a need to overhaul industrial relations legislation. A conservative Government will reintroduce voluntary employment agreements; it will end compulsory unionism; and it will put incentive for both employers and employees back into the equation. Thirdly, a conservative Government must return to Queensland the fiscal discipline which preserves trust and special fund reserves. We have a track record that is second to none in that regard.

As part of the Budget process, a conservative Government will take a step further and provide forward Budget estimates to facilitate planning. The New South Wales Greiner Government was the first State Government to introduce forward estimates for periods five years ahead as a guide for both the public and private sectors. This has merit for planning purposes, and I believe it would benefit Queensland. As I said earlier, we will abolish land tax. We will also lift payroll tax concessions to keep Queensland employers the least burdened of any in the nation. Most importantly, we will return Queensland to a State with flair and vigour—a turnaround from the timid province it has become under this Labor administration which turns its back on major developments. We will reintroduce the north Queensland enterprise zone concept that has been scrapped by Labor. We will reactivate impetus for the electrification of rail lines north from Mackay, as previously planned. The Tully/Millstream project is another example of the need for Government initiative. We will ensure that the north has adequate electricity for future growth. History has proven that when Governments give a lead and create a climate of confidence, it flows through to the private sector. We will continue to back the Cape York spaceport proposal with a positive attitude and will be facilitating conclusion of the various studies needed, in stark contrast to this Government's back-seat approach.

As I indicated earlier, we are examining privatisation and Queensland's prospects in this regard. We will ensure that the State's essential services—health, education, police, emergency services, family welfare, assistance to primary industries—are funded and resourced so that they can serve a truly decentralised State, not one that is split into just a few regions. At a time when the crime rate has never been higher, we will not see the Police Service constrained by overtime cuts that have made policing a 9-to-5, Monday-to-

Friday job in many areas. Labor trumpets its increases in operational police numbers, but ignores the real situation which is characterised by low morale as the driving force behind a high resignation rate.

The Health budget was increased by \$221m, or 12 per cent. On examination, however, it can be seen that whereas nurses' wage increases will consume \$87m of that increase, the Health capital works program will consume just over \$80m. Previously, capital works came out of the Administrative Services budget, so the alleged increase in the Health vote is rubbery, to say the least. It leaves the real increase in the Health budget at \$53.6m, which is nowhere near enough to upgrade the State's public hospital system. Members will recall that last year public hospitals had to cut their budgets by 7 per cent. The result is that hospital services are beginning to run down, and outpatient clinics are closing or charging fees. If the Federal Government adheres to its proposed \$3.50 Medicare fee, there seems little doubt that the State will levy this fee on public outpatient clinics also. The ominous comments that have emanated from this Government since the Medicare changes were mooted in the Federal Budget indicate that, under Labor, the end of Queensland's free hospital system is not far off. The \$3.50 Medicare rebate cut, coupled with proposed increases in doctors' fees, indicates that Medicare is terminally ill, but the symptoms hit everybody's hip pocket. There is a need to allow people to take out private insurance for GP consultation, and this should be considered at the Federal level. The National Party realises that regionalisation is not working because it is not providing the services that are required. We will rearrange the Health Department to ensure that service to the people is put first by ensuring that local input guides services, rather than a public servant who is operating under instructions from Brisbane.

Rural productivity

No sector has been hit harder under Labor's policies than rural Queensland. The prolonged high interest rates, cut-backs in services, reduced commodity prices, and now drought, have all sapped Queensland's once vital rural sector. Although commodity prices are subject to the vagaries of world markets, rural services and support are initiatives that are controlled directly by the State. The next conservative Government will rejuvenate the flagging priority of primary industry in this State. The Department of Primary Industries has been gutted by Labor. We will re-establish it in its proper role as a vital service to Queensland's most productive sector. We will overhaul drought aid and start by seeking the urgent support of the Federal Government—through the Premiers Conference, if necessary—to have drought aid returned under the cover of natural disaster relief arrangements. We will reinstitute measures to implement effective drought relief which will be based on the seven-point plan that was outlined recently by the Opposition spokesman, the member for Barambah. Key emphasis will be on development and coordination of a drought fodder bank, and more realistic assistance with the freight of drought cattle, including a subsidy on moving cattle away from a drought-declared property to agistment—in other words, giving help when it is needed most. We would also seek the Federal Government's help in planning to cope with future droughts.

In this regard, there is a need to examine and overhaul the tax treatment of developments that help producers to mitigate drought; for example, water resources, land development, storage of fodder and income equalisation deposits. Producers must be given the incentive to plan and prepare against drought. Tax write-offs over 10 years are no incentive because of the cyclical nature of rural income. If a farmer or grazier has a good year and wants to sink some funds into projects which mitigate against future droughts, there should be incentives in the tax system to do so. These are aspects which a future conservative Government would take up directly with Canberra or through the Premiers Conference agenda, if necessary. There is also a need for a more realistic and flexible approach to financial assistance available under drought relief. The current

situation where those producers who are operating at their credit limits are declared unviable—and therefore can only be assisted out of the industry—needs reappraisal. People with a genuine desire to work and manage the land are a dwindling number across this country, and those who wish to do so should be encouraged, provided that they have displayed a degree of competence in the task in the first place. Even the best manager's strategy can buckle under the adverse blows rural industry has copped over recent years. That is why this drought situation has such disastrous potential for this State and this nation.

Education

My colleague the shadow Minister for Education, Mr Lingard, has previously detailed in this Chamber the havoc that Labor has brought to the Education Department, making it, arguably, the most politicised section of the public service. I would like to mention one aspect of the education budget which typifies the growing arrogance of this Government and the direction of its Left Wing philosophy. I refer to the callous and abrupt treatment private schools have received with capital assistance grants. On the day of the Budget, the Education Minister wrote to independent schools advising them that, unless applications for building subsidies had been approved by 2.30 p.m. on that day, their applications would be rejected. The irony of this abrupt action is that, regardless of whether tenders had been sought, architectural fees paid, and money raised by the schools, it was the Government which had the ability to delay approval of the projects until after the Budget deadline. The Government's move to needs-based funding is a direct swipe at the private education sector and will inevitably mean increases in school fees. A conservative Government will have no choice other than to assess the damage inflicted by Labor's measures and then take action to ensure that the option of private schooling is not priced out of the reach of average Queenslanders.

There are many other aspects to this Budget. The conservative speakers on this side of the Chamber will address those matters and the effect of them on their respective shadow portfolios. I reiterate that this second Labor Budget is, in fact, a big spending Budget which takes us a step further down the Victorian road into "hollow logs" and should serve as a warning to Queenslanders who value this State's record of prudent financial management.

In conclusion, I move a formal amendment to ensure that the appropriate debate procedures are followed. Accordingly, I move—

"That the sum nominated in the motion by the Treasurer at the beginning of his Financial Statement to the Committee be reduced by an amount of \$1."

Mr HAYWARD (Caboolture) (2.40 p.m.): What is disappointing about the response delivered by the Leader of the Opposition is that it fails to recognise the positive climate that this Budget provides for all Queenslanders, especially business. There are no new taxes and no tax increases above the rate of inflation. This Budget also concentrates on reducing debt, and through the benefits of increased economic activity—because it becomes more competitive to be in Queensland—that income that is generated is then used to increase the social infrastructure for the benefit of all Queenslanders. It is important that people such as the honourable members who represent decentralised areas should understand how important that is in Queensland. I am talking about schools, teachers, police and police stations. It is just so very important, and this very positive Budget that creates that positive climate is just not recognised by the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition is content to just pick away and make some small points because—if people were not convinced before—he has now developed and completely fallen into the culture of Opposition.

Let me examine some of the points made by the Leader of the Opposition. He said that Labor has raided some hollow logs. That is just not true. The example used by the Leader of the Opposition is the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund, and he referred to some \$43m that he says has been transferred from there. For the information of the Opposition Leader, I point out that that money has been transferred to fund housing programs, which is now known as the community housing partnership program, following recent legislative amendments.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr HAYWARD: If Mr Fitzgerald, the member for Lockyer, has any objections to that, surely he should be concerned about the funding of nursing homes and retirement homes through religious and charitable organisations. Has the honourable member some problem with the Blue Nursing Service running retirement and nursing homes? That is what that money is being used to fund. Mr Cooper used one example, and he got it wrong. He said that Labor has a poor employment record. If he turned to the Budget papers he would see, quite simply, that employment in Queensland has increased by 21 per cent over the last 12 months, compared with 14.8 per cent for Australia as a whole. So it does not matter how one looks at it: Queensland is performing better by far than any other State in Australia. The point that really emphasises that the Opposition mentality has taken over the Leader of the Opposition, and that he has been completely engulfed by it, is the point about abolishing taxes. What was he going to abolish today? He was going to abolish land tax. I think I recall that the Minister was going to abolish payroll tax and eliminate the capital guarantee fund.

How will the Leader of the Opposition fund these new programs? I think the honourable member for Yeronga said that he is specialising in voodoo economics. There are no costings for the extra things that, in Opposition, he is promising Queensland. Nevertheless, he may adopt the system used by his colleagues in New South Wales, who have decided that any programs in that State will be funded through borrowings. Is that how the Leader of the Opposition is going to do it? Is he going to fund it through borrowings? Why does he not tell honourable members how he is going to fund these programs that he promises when he says that he is going to eliminate or abolish these various taxes that existed for years under the previous National Party Government? What the Leader of the Opposition is proposing to do is increase borrowings so that the children and grandchildren of this State will have to carry the burden for what the honourable member for Yeronga clearly described as his concept of voodoo economics.

Let us look at the Queensland record. I am reminded by the honourable member for Yeronga of what is so important about how this State funds things, how things get done in Queensland. It has a negative net financing requirement. This year, that negative net financing requirement is \$11m. I invite the Leader of the Opposition to compare that with the position in New South Wales. This year, the Government in New South Wales is going to borrow. It has a financing requirement of \$1.956 billion. It is as simple as that. How is the Government going to fund that? That Government says that it is going to solve that problem by selling the Government Insurance Office for \$1.75 billion and therefore it will have a financing requirement of only \$250m. Talk about hollow logs! That is unbelievable. What the New South Wales Government is suggesting—and the Opposition in this State supports what it is doing—is that it dispose of the Government Insurance Office. It is going to do that by raiding yet another hollow log.

The Leader of the Opposition said that the Capital Guarantee Fund should be abolished. He also said that rail freights should be abolished. He did not talk about any new taxes. What is the Leader of the Opposition proposing? He is probably proposing to do exactly the same thing as the New South Wales Government is doing. Some of those things will probably include selling the Gladstone Power Station for a reduced or

inappropriate price. This is all because of the voodoo economics that the Leader of the Opposition is prepared to continue to support. He also spoke about the accounting standards, the reporting standards. The reality is that those reporting standards, those accounting standards, are the same accounting standards as are used in every State Budget in Australia. To suggest otherwise is simply to criticise the professionalism of the Treasury officers of this State who work so hard. The Leader of the Opposition spoke about the abolition of land tax. He made some petty point about exemptions, and he focused on the trade union movement. I think he mentioned that the Trades and Labor Council in South Brisbane is exempt. If he had been honest and did not have the Opposition mentality, he would have said that employer and employee organisations are in fact exempt. It is wrong to use those kinds of arguments, because they have no reality and no bearing on the true situation.

When he presented his Budget Speech on 5 September, the Treasurer emphasised that economic recovery is beginning in Queensland much sooner than in the rest of Australia. While it is expected that this financial year there will be a moderate recovery in economic activity nationally of 1.5 per cent, Queensland's economic growth is expected to be 2.3 per cent. That will be reflected in stronger construction and consumer spending in Queensland than in the rest of Australia. Over the last five years, Queensland has recorded an average population growth of 2.5 per cent, principally due to net migration. As at 31 December 1990, Queensland's population was 2.9 million people, and those people comprised 17.1 per cent of Australia's population. But what is important about that statistic in these growth figures is that the median age of all interstate migrants who came to this State was in fact 26 years. Half of those people were aged between 25 and 44. Those migrants have come to Queensland for one simple reason, that is, there are improved job and economic prospects in this State. What they have done by coming to Queensland is provide further stimulation for economic growth, particularly by way of the additional infrastructure demands that they create. I am talking about schools, hospitals, police stations and roads. As members of the Opposition should understand—and obviously as members of the Liberal Party obviously do not understand—those infrastructure demands are increased more widely because of the diverse and decentralised population in Queensland.

Honourable members need only read Budget Related Paper No. 6 to gain an understanding of those capital works infrastructure demands. That Budget Paper provides a summary of the capital works expenditure to be undertaken by the Government during 1991-92. That is estimated to cost \$3,000m, which is \$781m, or 35 per cent higher than in 1990-91. Perhaps the main criticism of that capital works program has come from the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, Dr Watson, in an article titled *The Wrong Budget Tabled at the Wrong Time*. When Dr Watson speaks later in the debate, he may explain exactly what his confused focus seems to be in this article. He seems to be of the opinion that the taxpayers of Queensland should have contributed more money out of their pockets towards capital works expenditure in this State.

I raise two other matters. Firstly, the Budget provides for the State's largest ever capital works program. Secondly, it contains the largest ever direct funding contribution, which amounts to \$969m. The member for Moggill stated that the capital works program announced by the Treasurer is full of questionable accounting practices. That comes back to a concern that has developed through the Opposition culture: if one cannot find a criticism, blame the messengers—the people from the Treasury office. The simple fact is that there are no questionable accounting practices. In the past two years, the Budget papers have been acknowledged by Dr Watson to be the most readable papers that he has ever seen produced in this State. The Treasurer and I remember only too well the sorts of criticism levelled by Dr Watson. They are typical of those in Opposition. There are

no solutions in his statement and no answers; only carping criticisms. There is no credit where credit is due. And credit is due, because in this Budget there are no new taxes and no increases in taxes above the rate of inflation. As well, the amount of debt is reduced.

The capital works expenditure is important. It will provide major economic benefits throughout Queensland, generating 34 000 years of full-time employment. The capital works program takes advantage of spare productive capacity which is currently available in the Queensland economy. Last year, when the Treasurer and I made the point that their claims about prime-pumping the economy were wrong, the member for Burdekin and the Leader of the Opposition failed to understand that point. I stand by what I said on the subject. Contrary to what Dr Watson was talking about, this capital works program takes advantage of the spare productive capacity that is available and of the economic circumstance that the efficiencies are provided to make those decisions. The Government and the Treasurer deserve congratulations on the capital works initiative and its impact on regional Queensland. Later in the debate, we should hear from members opposite who come from regional Queensland. Government members are aware of the benefits that are being derived by regional Queensland from that program. If Opposition members were truly honest in their perspective, they would also acknowledge the benefits.

I take the opportunity to make further comments about the economic content of the Budget. The June quarter outcome of minus 1 per cent GDP was the fifth negative quarter out of the last seven in Australia. That result confirms that in 1990-91 the Australian economy has experienced one of the most severe recessions in the last 30 years. Australia's real gross domestic product declined by 0.9 per cent during that period compared with a real growth of 3.6 per cent in 1989-90. However, it is important to understand that in Queensland the gross domestic product fell by only 0.2 per cent compared with a 3.8 per cent growth in 1989-90. In dollar terms, in 1990-91 Queensland's growth in gross domestic product was \$39.237 billion. As I previously said, Budget Paper No. 5 reveals that the State's economic growth is expected to be 2.3 per cent during this year. That compares with an Australian average of 1.5 per cent. When honourable members criticise what this Treasurer and this Government are doing, it is obvious that they are wrong. They should acknowledge that we are achieving better than any other State in Australia. Recovery is most evident in the housing construction, tourism and manufacturing areas. Unfortunately, during 1991-92 business investment will remain weak. In 1990-91, business investment was down by 3.3 per cent compared with 9 per cent growth in 1989-90. However, it is important to understand that, in Queensland, growth in business investment will be stronger than the national average, which again will be down by 7.8 per cent. It is a serious problem, because weak business investment is a response to falling business profitability and lower levels of demand. Other influences which will flow through in the next 12 months will be the lagged effects of high interest rates, lower asset prices, cash-flow problems which are faced by some businesses and, very importantly, the level of business and consumer confidence. Because the Treasurer and I have been in Opposition, we know what it is like. I am talking about confidence. When one is in Opposition, one seems to go out of one's way to do whatever one can to dampen any sort of confidence. That is the point that concerns me about the culture of Opposition, the mentality that has developed. Because of the lengthy period it takes to implement an investment decision, confidence is important.

Today, I wish to emphasise the circular nature of the business investment cycle and the way each element feeds into each decision. For example, if we have lower asset prices, that increases relative company debt levels and results in reduced money available to invest and, through that, lower net wealth. That has a direct impact on business confidence. Unfortunately, the effect of reduced asset values will be felt in the

economy for several years. That was a major impact in 1991, where the prices of the three major asset series—equities, dwellings and offices—fell in real terms. Those figures are available in the Budget papers to anyone who wishes to examine them. In response to falling asset prices, financial institutions tighten credit availability and that acts to depress business investment and further reduce business confidence. However, contrary to what the Opposition expected, despite the bad news—how sad for the Opposition—Queensland's share of private investment spending nationally has continued to edge higher during the year. This year, Queensland's share comprises 13.8 per cent of the national total. Of that share, mining comprises over 25 per cent of private new capital investment in Queensland.

As the Treasurer said in his Budget Speech, the Queensland Treasury has identified major mining, manufacturing and tourism projects in Queensland worth \$14 billion. For those knockers opposite, namely, the members of the National Party and the Liberal Party on the cross benches, I point out that next year Queensland will attract 26 per cent of total planned foreign investment. Some 104 investment proposals involving \$6.1 billion came before the Foreign Investment Secretariat in Queensland. It is important to understand that only four of those projects, worth \$362m, were opposed by the Queensland Government through the secretariat. So much for the Opposition's view in this Chamber and that of the members on the cross benches that this Government is anti foreign investment!

Mr Rowell interjected.

Mr HAYWARD: Budget Paper No. 5—if the member for Hinchinbrook chose to read it, or could read it—shows that 19 of the 104 proposals related to the value-added sectors of manufacturing services and resource processing and involved \$1.4 billion coming to Queensland. It seemed obvious to me, sitting in this Chamber and listening to the Leader of the Opposition talk about the lack of business activity in Queensland, that he cannot read or he has not read the Budget papers. Tourism generated 21 referrals worth \$1.2 billion. As everyone in this Chamber should know, Queensland has an economic structure with a relatively greater orientation towards agricultural and mining activities. It is important to understand that Queensland accounts for over 20 per cent of the agricultural and mining production in Australia. However, Queensland's population growth has led to this State gaining an increased share of the manufacturing sector. The important point about that—and I spoke before about the increase in consumer spending—is that not only does Queensland have an increased share of the manufacturing sector nationally but also it generally has a less-protected manufacturing sector. It is important that all of us understand that.

During 1990-91, agriculture was worth \$4.7 billion to Queensland. But for many reasons, this year will be as difficult as the previous year. One reason is that the continuing strength of the Australian dollar against the US dollar—and that is certainly holding—will reduce export incomes. During 1991-92, rural commodity prices are expected to fall another 14 per cent. World trade will be distorted by the protectionist policies of Europe and the USA. The important but sad point about this—and it is something that is not recognised by the Opposition but it is recognised by the Government—is that, because of the protectionist policies of Europe and the USA, efficient Queensland producers are being penalised.

Mr Rowell interjected.

Mr HAYWARD: It is interesting that the honourable member should say that, because I have never heard an Opposition member rise in this place and recognise that and talk about it. That is a serious concern. That has occurred because members opposite are absolutely imbued with the Opposition culture. With the collapse of the

Soviet Union in its present form, agricultural output may expand in the future. That is another thing that all of us should think about. That will place further pressure on agricultural product export potential. That should be recognised and consideration should be given to it.

Mr FitzGerald: You're right.

Mr HAYWARD: I cannot believe that I heard that. Will the honourable member repeat that?

Mr FitzGerald: You're right.

Mr HAYWARD: Right. As all of us know, sadly, droughts are continuing in Queensland. This Government has responded to that crisis by providing some new drought aid packages, more than doubling its commitment now to \$33.7m. The latest edition of the *Queensland Fruit and Vegetable News* states that the new plan includes "an extra \$5.3 million for the Rural Adjustment Scheme and \$2.7 million of concessions on land rents comprising low interest waivers of interest charges". It continues that there will be "up to \$1.1 million in rebates for water charge increases" and "deferral provisions for electricity charges and the suspension of the fixed charge provision for irrigation power tariffs". It is important also that a special 008 number has been set aside and a drought information centre is being established. These things are important because they provide contact facilities for people in very, very desperate circumstances. It is also important that \$200,000 will be set aside for non-Government organisations for emergency relief for rural communities. People who represent their electorates can clearly understand the sorts of services that can be provided by those non-Government organisations. Generally, they do not require a lot of money to do what they want to do; they merely require some money to set themselves up.

During 1990-91, mining was worth \$4.9 billion to Queensland. During that period, minerals as well as agriculture experienced generally poor prices, with coal, which is Queensland's major income-earner, earning \$3.59 billion. As I said earlier, there will be strong growth in private new capital expenditure in Queensland next year, particularly in the coal industry. An example is the Gordonstone underground mine, which involves capital expenditure of \$550m. Because of the world economic pick-up, Queensland can expect to benefit from an increased value of mineral production this year. This will lead to increased volumes in coal, lead and zinc production.

As the Treasurer said, this Budget has a definite strategy, unlike the confused points made earlier today by the Opposition Leader. This Budget strategy is clear. Firstly, it will boost employment. That is very important. Secondly, it will create a favourable investment climate by reducing taxes, reducing debt and improving public sector efficiency. This Budget continues the commitment not to introduce new taxes or increase taxes and charges above the rate of inflation. This commitment has put in place a strategy that future Governments will find difficult to break. Members should ask themselves—and the Federal Leader of the National Party, who is in the gallery, should ask himself: what Opposition would go to an election campaign promising to introduce a new tax? It would have to be mad. The Liberals, perhaps the Nationals, and certainly the Federal Nationals are prepared to go——

Mr De Lacy: This mob are supporting them.

Mr HAYWARD: I did not know whether they were or were not.

Mr De Lacy: Mr Fischer is supposed to be here and he's——

Mr HAYWARD: Right. I was not sure whether they were or were not. I thought that they really had that Opposition mentality whereby they opposed all taxes and were going to remove any sort of tax, but never provide the funding or support to replace it. The

Federal Opposition is going to an election promising to introduce a new tax. Wonders never cease!

This Budget puts the ball squarely in businesses' court. The setting has been made. No taxes will be increased above the inflation rate, and there will be no new taxes. Surely that is the best support that a Government can provide for business. Queensland is a low-tax State. That differential with other States is widening. For example, the Liberal coalition Government of New South Wales has a payroll tax rate of 7 per cent, compared with a payroll tax rate of 5 per cent in Queensland. Additionally, and more importantly, Queensland's exemption level remains the highest of any State in Australia. This Budget provides for total receipts of \$8.9 billion, comprising Commonwealth payments of \$4.2 billion, State taxes of \$3 billion and other State revenue of \$1.8 billion. Revenue from State taxes and charges is expected to be 6 per cent higher than that of the previous year, reflecting—contrary to what Mr Cooper was alleging—an expected pick-up in economic activity in Queensland.

Two significant tax concessions are introduced in this Budget. The payroll tax exemption level will increase from \$500,000 to \$600,000, and the tapering provisions will increase to \$2.4m. During 1991-92, land tax collections will not grow in real terms. I am pleased that the Treasurer has recognised the extremely vulnerable position of tenants in relation to land tax. Tenants have been forced to pay land tax commitments that bear no relationship to the actual amount of land tax that would be payable on a particular property. Tenants currently face the problem of a land tax liability that depends on two major factors, namely, the structure by which a landlord owns a particular property—for example, through a company structure with an exemption level of \$40,000, or an exemption level of \$160,000—

Time expired.

Dr WATSON (Moggill—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (3.11 p.m.): It gives me a great deal of pleasure to enter this debate this afternoon on the 1991-92 Budget proposals.

Mrs Bird interjected.

Dr WATSON: At least I will not be putting honourable members to sleep quite as quickly as did the member for Caboolture. In fact, his speech was so bad that it sent members from the Chamber. I intend to address some broad issues on the economic management of this State. Later today and over the next few days and weeks, my colleagues will discuss the details of their particular areas of responsibility and some of their general concerns.

Right from the word go I should put on the record that this was a very disappointing Budget which began the process of squandering the inheritance that this Government received when it came to power. That inheritance was the result of 32 years of strong Liberal and National Party fiscal management. It is unfortunate that this was perhaps the first Budget of a Labor Party that will put Queensland on a footing that is likely to lead it down the same road as that travelled by Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia. This Budget and this Government are in the process of killing investment opportunities in this State. If it were not for the favourable geographical location of Queensland, we would be in exactly the same position as this Government's Labor mates in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia. Only because of Queensland's favourable geographic location is the development of this State being encouraged. More importantly, this is the wrong Budget at the wrong time. There is no question about that, and I will refer to it again later.

This Budget was brought down in tough economic times that have been inflicted upon this country by this Government's Labor mates in Canberra who deliberately imposed this recession not only last year but the year before and the year before that.

Mr McGrady: Something original, come on!

Dr WATSON: It is important to understand this. This tight economic environment was inflicted upon us by Labor. The unfortunate part about it is that Labor assumed that Australia was not going to be subjected to any external shocks or natural shocks; that somehow it could impose a straitjacket on the Australian economy and not have anything else happen that might affect it. But what happened? Since Keating deliberately raised interest rates to choke the Australian economy, what has occurred? Firstly, we have had a major downturn in commodity prices, which is a shock that a vibrant country could absorb. In the past, we were always able to absorb it. However, this time it is very tough because 18 months ago Labor deliberately ran the economy into the ground. Secondly, we now have a drought in Queensland which is impacting upon this State and this country far more graphically than it would have done if we had had a vibrant economy.

The problem with the position of Labor both federally and in this State is that Labor deliberately ran the Australian economy into the ground and the economy was then subjected to shocks which it would normally be able to absorb but could not absorb because of the mess that Labor had made. That is the problem. That is why unemployment is going through the roof. That is why the number of bankruptcies is going through the roof. That is why farmers are going to the wall. The economy that we inherited from Labor and that all of us must live with has been run into the ground by Keating, and now by Kerin, and Hawke, and we must address it. That is the environment in which the Budget came down. It is interesting to look at the predictions in the Federal Budget, because they are relevant. One point that comes out of that is the high unemployment, which I have already addressed. In the Budget, unemployment in Australia was estimated to be 10.5 per cent for this year, peaking at 10.8 per cent. The figure will be higher in Queensland. In December and in January and March next year, young students entering the job market will be faced with a bleak future. The kids at school know it. They are concerned about it and they will react against Labor. The other problem that came out in the Federal Budget—and it is a very depressing problem—is the fall in private investment in this country. The member for Caboolture got it wrong, because the Federal Budget papers show that private investment—capital investment in plant and equipment—is expected to fall another 8 per cent this year after falling 10.6 per cent last year and 2.2 per cent the previous year. In addition, business investment in this country is expected to fall 10.5 per cent this year after an 11.9 per cent fall the year before and a 0.1 per cent fall the year before that.

It is a tough economic environment—an environment in which a State Treasurer might not like to bring down a Budget. However, a tough economic environment also provides opportunities. It provided opportunities for this State to show that it can manage its affairs better than any other State. It provided an opportunity for the Treasurer in this State to show that he knew more than the rabble in Canberra—his Federal Treasurer, Kerin, and before him, Keating. It provided an opportunity for the State Treasurer to show that he had learned from some of the problems that have been experienced elsewhere. Unfortunately, the answer was very disappointing. The Treasurer has not learned anything. The Budget that he brought down a couple of weeks ago fell into the same mould as the tired old Budgets of the Labor Party federally and the Labor Party in every other State.

It is about time that we looked at the issues in detail. The expenditure in this year's Budget was forecast to rise by 10.5 per cent from \$8,141m in 1990-91 to \$8,996m in 1991-92. The interesting thing is that in Queensland we are very proud to be running a balanced

Budget, and we have done so for a number of years. It follows automatically that, if expenditure is to increase by 10.5 per cent, revenue must also increase by 10.5 per cent. The Government cannot have a balanced Budget with one item increasing by one amount and the other items increasing by another amount. It makes absolutely no sense to say, "We will increase outlays but, on the other hand, we will not raise Government revenue." What do we see in the detail in the Budget papers? Firstly, a large percentage of revenue comes from a similar rise in Federal Government funds, which provide 45 per cent of the Queensland Budget. Federal Government funds this year also increased by 10.5 per cent over last year. That accounts for about half of the Budget, but it is the other 55 per cent that is important—all of the State finance. The Treasurer likes to run around and say, "We have kept State taxes and charges low." The Budget shows that State taxes and charges have increased from \$3,804m to only \$4,210m—a rise of 5.9 per cent. That is fine, but money does not grow on trees. If the Government has a balanced Budget, it must get the money from somewhere. There is only one place that it comes from. It comes from Queensland taxpayers, businesses and consumers.

The other part of the Budget is other State revenue, which has increased from \$1,491m to \$1,787m—a rise of 19.8 per cent. The Government has kept some State taxes and charges low—and that is the part which is defined in the Budget—but total State revenue has increased by the amount that outlays have increased, 10.5 per cent. The Government must be absolutely naive if it thinks that it can increase Government revenue and say that that will not affect taxpayers and businesses in this State. The Labor Government would like to say, "We are going to increase revenue in this section by 20 per cent but it will not be passed on to the taxpayer and it will not be passed on to businesses." That is absolute nonsense. Anyone who thinks that the effect of those charges on the cost structure of Government departments or Government statutory bodies or whatever will not be passed on to businesses and taxpayers is absolutely naive. No-one out in the community believes that. People know that there is only one place where revenue comes from—from them. If the Government wants to raise revenue, it has to get it from taxpayers one way or another. There is another way of looking at this. I made some brief calculations to try to find a way of looking at this in terms of some kind of standard. I looked at the gross State product.

Mr Welford: GSP.

Dr WATSON: The GSP, the gross State product. These calculations are based on the latest figures available from the ABS, together with the increase estimated for the real growth rate and inflation. I worked out that last year the gross State product was \$56.42 billion and in 1991-1992 it will be approximately \$59.45 billion in nominal terms. If one expresses outlays as a percentage of gross State product, in 1990-91 it comes to 14.4 per cent and in 1991-1992 it is 15.13 per cent. I would not want to stake my life on the preciseness of these figures, but the order of magnitude is right. It clearly demonstrates that outlays and expenditure as a percentage of the wealth that we produce in this State have increased substantially between 1991 and 1992. This is what gives rise to people saying—and I think the Leader of the Opposition said it earlier—that we are in the process of going down the Victorian, South Australian and Western Australian routes. It is clear: one can get an accurate estimate of the situation. The question the Liberal Party wants to raise is: is this the appropriate way of structuring a Budget? Is it appropriate to increase the degree of hurt on the taxpayers of this State at a time of recession, or is there a better way to go? The combined opinion on this side of the Parliament and out in the community is that there is a better way to go. I will address that better way in a moment.

It is important to go back to my initial comments on unemployment and investment. I do not think there is any better contrast of the difference between our approach and the Labor Party's approach than on these two issues. I turn to the issues of employment and

unemployment. In the last year there has been a growth in this State's public service of something like 7 500, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. When the Liberal Party first accused the Government of this, the Treasurer and Premier said that we were wrong and that there were problems with the Australian Bureau of Statistics. When one looks at the Budget papers, one sees the increases in areas such as education. None of us would complain if those increases were in teacher numbers. That has been the argument, but there are not 6 500 new teachers in this State. In fact, we would be lucky if there were 1 000 additional teachers.

Mr De Lacy: You know your figures are wrong, don't you? They destroy your argument.

Dr WATSON: I am simply taking the figures out of the Treasurer's Budget. Honourable members can add them up. That is where the increases are. They are out of the Treasurer's book. If the Treasurer does not know what the Minister for Education is doing, perhaps he had better find out. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why this Government has had to increase its outlays. There are thousands of extra people running around in departments. We would not have any problem with these figures if they were all teachers, but there has been no indication or no accounting by the Minister for Education as to where these people are going. The fact is that the number of public servants in this State has increased substantially over the past 12 months. At the same time the policies adopted by the Labor Party at both the State and Federal level have resulted in 64 000 jobs being lost in the private sector in Queensland. A total of 24 000 jobs have gone in manufacturing. I notice that when the member for Caboolture was speaking about economic indices he did not talk about the rise or potential rise in manufacturing because it is not there. In the last year, 24 000 jobs have been lost and more will be lost in the next 12 months. A total of 17 000 jobs have disappeared in the agricultural, mining and fishing industries and 8 000 jobs have been lost in the communications industry. In addition, 6 500 jobs have been lost in the construction industry, 3 000 in the electricity industry and 500 in the mining sector.

Mr Coomber: And more to come.

Dr WATSON: Yes, there is more to come. Job vacancies are down 38 per cent and overtime is down by something like 12 per cent. As I indicated a moment ago, it does not end with what has gone on in the past. The question is: what will happen in the future? When one looks at the future, it does not necessarily give one any reason to be confident about the way the Queensland economy is going under this Labor Party management.

Mr Dunworth: Mismanagement.

Dr WATSON: Mismanagement, as the member for Sherwood said. He is probably more accurate than I. In September, in the report of a quarterly survey of manufacturers in Australia, the Confederation of Australian Industry and Westpac came out with some very interesting results. Manufacturers expect average selling prices to fall again in the September quarter. This will squeeze profit margins still further. What does that mean? A fall in selling prices and a squeeze on profit margins translate directly into falling investment. I will address that matter in a moment, but this means that there will be less of a rise in employment and a further rise in unemployment. Just as importantly, the report indicated that firms expect to reduce their capital expenditure. In the 12 months from 1 October of this year to 30 September next year, a large percentage of firms expect their capital investment to fall. That was the result indicated in the survey.

Mr Dunworth: This is what Keating did?

Dr WATSON: It is exactly the same result as Mr Keating achieved. Instead of using monetary policy, as Mr Keating did in a broader context, the Queensland Treasurer has used the State's fiscal policy. There will be falls not only in the capital expenditure

area but also in the plant and equipment and construction areas. This is bad news for job-seekers and for students who will leave school at the end of this year. It is bad news also for the economy right through 1992 and, of course, for the fiscal period 1991-92, which we are discussing.

Where are these great indicators of economic recovery? They are not to be found in the manufacturing industries in Queensland because there has been a major decline in that area, which will continue. More importantly, when the Australian Confederation of Industry examined the manufacturing firms on a State-by-State basis, it was revealed that the most optimistic forecast for the next six months came from Tasmania, followed by South Australia, New South Wales and Western Australia. Victorian manufacturers were pessimistic, but the most pessimistic forecast came from Queensland. Manufacturers in Queensland expect conditions for their businesses over the next six months to get worse. That is why members of the Liberal Party argue that the Budget is misplaced.

After examining the Federal figures on unemployment and investment and the evidence that is available for this State on unemployment and investment, we argue that something should have been done to help businesses in this State cope with the economic situation and get on with producing jobs. The Liberal Party understands that the majority of jobs in this country are produced by the small-business sector, which is where the greatest stimulation in employment takes place. Sure, large businesses will contribute; sure, there may be some extra employment in certain State Government areas; but the major employment opportunities are in small business, which accounts for 80 per cent of jobs. This is the area that the Budget should have addressed, and it is why the Liberal Party is concerned about land tax and is saying to the Treasurer, "If you are framing a Budget, rather than ripping out more revenue, the Budget should be directed at reducing the costs borne by business." Land tax is one of those costs.

Mr Coomber: It is nearly the biggest expense today.

Dr WATSON: With the squeeze on profits, it is probably the biggest cost as a percentage of profits for most small businesses. The member for Currumbin, whose electorate is on the south coast, knows all about this because he has a large number of small-business operators in his areas who are hurting.

Mr Coomber: They are struggling.

Dr WATSON: They are struggling, and part of the reason would certainly be the land tax burden. That is why members of the Liberal Party are concerned about issues such as the cost inputs imposed on business and that is why we are concerned about using resources—which, admittedly, are limited—to address problems such as land tax. That is why the Liberal Party advocates the abolition of that tax, especially when it is obvious from the Budget that the resources exist. The Liberal Party recognises that small businesses must be encouraged. Their profitability must be increased if investment is to increase, and investment has to be increased if future employment opportunities are to be created. This is the major social issue confronting Australia—an issue that was recognised by Paul Keating in Perth recently. This State Labor Government should have taken heed of at least something said by Keating that was right, which is that unemployment is a major social problem. He said that Governments should direct their attention to encouraging employment opportunities to be created in the private sector.

What is this Government's position in the Budget? The Treasurer decided not to try to lower the input costs to business. Although he made some token gestures in relation to land tax and payroll tax, he did nothing substantive. He decided to put funds into capital works, and that was a major feature of the Budget. In fact, the Treasurer pointed that out a number of times during his speech. He stated—

"Indeed, a feature of this Budget, across all portfolio areas, will be a major boost in capital works expenditure.

The total capital works program will rise by 35 per cent to over \$3 billion."

Later, in his concluding remarks, he stated—

"We have directly addressed the impact of the recession, primarily through new training initiatives and a major boost to capital works."

Capital works is a very important aspect of the Budget, and it was the strategy decided upon by this Government. It is not a strategy that members of the Liberal Party believe is right, and I have explained the reasons why. Even if it was a good strategy, in my opinion, the Treasurer got it wrong. The approach is a typically Keynesian justification for increased Government expenditure. The member for Caboolture referred to *Business Queensland*, but he appeared to be unable to read it properly.

Mr Dunworth: Or understand it.

Dr WATSON: I do not know how he ever got his degree.

Mr De Lacy: He certainly could not understand that story of yours.

Dr WATSON: The figures are there.

Mr Dunworth: Couldn't the Treasurer understand it?

Dr WATSON: No. He would not understand it. When one examines the Budget papers and the figures contained in them, one can see that last year's capital works program fell below the expected expenditure level by \$106m.

Mr Coomber: Underspent!

Dr WATSON: The Government underspent, and when one looks at the negative net financing requirement in the Budget, one sees that last year it was supposedly \$30m, but it turned out to be \$649m.

Mr De Lacy: That was this year, too.

Dr WATSON: That was last year. What happened? Last year, the Treasurer underspent on capital works and pulled more money out of the economy to pay off the State's debts. It is interesting to look at this Government's Treasury analysis set out on page 18 in Budget Paper No. 5, which states—

"Treasury analysis suggests that the State economy troughed in the September quarter of 1990 . . ."

Later, it is stated—

". . . it appears likely that State GSP (Gross State Product) has not only troughed in the first half of 1991, but that a reasonably broadly based recovery has commenced."

Last year, as the economy began to decline, what the Treasurer did contracted it even more. If he had any effect on Queensland's economy last year, it was to impose a greater recession on the community than was necessary.

Mr Dunworth: It is a bit hard for him to understand.

Dr WATSON: That was in the *Business Queensland* article. That is what the Minister did. He has contracted State expenditure. What has the Minister done this year? This year, of course, he has done the reverse. Capital expenditure has been increased to over \$3 billion while at the same time the Government is reducing, at least according to forecasts, the actual negative financing requirement. In other words, it is going to fall from the actual of \$649m last year to \$11m this year.

A Government member: The estimates for this year and last year are much the same.

Dr WATSON: We are talking about Budgets. The actuals can be compared next year when we see them. The effect of the Budget—and this is the Budget this year relative to the Budget last year—is to stimulate the economy, because there is a relatively less tight fiscal policy this year and a major capital works program. If the economy did trough in the September quarter of 1990, as the Labor Budget Paper No. 5 indicated, and the economy is in an upturn, as the Labor Government keeps trying to tell the people of Queensland, then what is that likely to do? The only thing it is likely to do is to cause problems in areas that are already expanding fairly quickly. One of those areas, because the Labor Government targeted it, is housing. In fact, in an article on economic strategy in the latest *Business Queensland* Michael Knox talks about the rise in housing. So, what the Labor Government aims to do, if it is going to do anything, is to stimulate certain sections of the Queensland economy. The member for Caboolture said that there was spare capacity, but the indications are that Queensland is already running out of that capacity in the housing area. So this Budget is likely to again stimulate that area and then raise the prices for lower income people wanting to get into the housing market. That is the problem. The Labor Government says one thing, but its policies end up hurting exactly the kind of people whom it claims it is trying to support. This is typical of the Labor Party. The rhetoric is one thing; the reality is something completely different.

An honourable member interjected.

Dr WATSON: The evidence to date does show that. All the evidence, as I have just pointed out, indicates exactly that.

Mr Elder: That is where you have been wrong for the last half hour. That evidence has not been demonstrated in the market place.

Dr WATSON: That is the evidence. If one actually ends up having a policy, and if one tries to influence the economy—I do not know that this Government has actually tried to do that, but it has claimed it has tried to do it both last year and this year—the timing is precisely wrong. The Government did the wrong thing last year by contracting the economy and, at least partially in some areas, it is doing the wrong thing this year because it is trying to expand it at a time when the capacity may be running out.

This Budget is not a Budget for today's times. It may have been a Budget, in part, for last year. The Liberal Party indicated last year that it thought there should have been expansion of capital works in particular areas. In fact, I actually put that into a *Business Queensland* article last year before the Budget was brought down. It was a year too late, if it was anything. This is a Budget that all Queenslanders are going to pay for. People are going to pay now, or they are going to pay in the future as those cost increases are passed through into consumer prices, or into other Government charges and taxes. People are going to be paying for it now, and for many years to come.

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central) (3.41 p.m.) It gives me a great deal of pleasure today to rise and participate in this debate on what is clearly one of the most responsible Budgets brought down by any State Government in the last decade. It is a Budget that balances economic responsibility and economic management with the commitments given by the Goss Government to education, health, police, the environment, social justice, justice and safety, Queensland women, and social justice generally. Gone are the days when the conservatives in Australian politics in the National Party and the Liberal Party could argue with any credibility in the electorate that the Labor Party is not a party of economic management. This Budget confirms the Labor Party's credentials—its credibility on the issue of economic management. I will look at the Government's track record and at what this Budget provides. Firstly, I will look at the area of taxation, which

has been given a lot of attention in this Assembly. Queensland, through this Budget, has been maintained as a low-tax State. Significantly, the Budget provides for no new taxes, no increases in existing tax rates, and no increases in charges above the CPI. More significant is the fact that there will be payroll concessions involving a 20 per cent increase in the payroll tax exemption level to \$600,000 benefiting 6 000 employers managing enterprises with 100 employees or less. In addition, at 5 per cent payroll tax in Queensland remains the lowest of any State. I have not heard anything from Opposition members about these figures during the debate. Further, an extensive package of land tax reductions, exemptions, and concessions for business, religious and charitable groups, and retirement villages costing \$40m gives Queensland the second lowest set of land tax rates in Australia. There will be no real increase in land tax receipts in 1991-92. If that is not enough, because of economic circumstances facing Australia, there has been a deferral by 18 months of scheduled Crown land rental increases for commercial, industrial and tourism properties at a cost of almost \$10m. In summary, not only is Queensland maintained as a low-tax State but also significant advances have been made in the area of land tax and payroll tax to help business through the current economic decline.

I was one of the many members of this Parliament who were approached by businesspeople about land tax. As all honourable members are aware, my electorate of Brisbane Central includes the central business district of Brisbane and Fortitude Valley. A number of people were hurting because of land tax. Those people have now indicated to me that they have been pleased about the initiatives taken in the Budget to reduce land tax. They acknowledge that, in these tough economic times, the Government went as far as any responsible, sensible Government could go. They were not prepared to swallow the poppycock that comes from the National Party and believe promises to make significant changes which cannot be justified financially and which would cause significant economic difficulties for this State. The Nationals do not care about the long-term management of finance in this State. They are prepared to promise anything in a desperate bid to win votes. It gives me pleasure to point out that as a result of this Government's first Budget—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: Members of the Opposition can interject, but I suggest that they listen to what I have to say. I would like to hear the member for Lockyer deal with this issue when it is his turn to talk about the Budget and economic responsibility. As a result of this Government's first State Budget, there has been a \$400m reduction in the State Government's net debt. That was achieved in 1990-91. A further reduction is expected in 1991-92, thereby reducing significant debt-servicing costs and freeing up funds to keep taxes down and boost essential services. I have not heard a great deal about that so far from the Opposition. It is about time that that achievement was acknowledged. In addition, in the area of micro-economic reform, in 1991-92 the return from Government enterprises will increase by almost 60 per cent to some \$155m. This year, the requirement for dividends and payments in lieu of tax was extended to Suncorp, Queensland Treasury Corporation, Queensland Investment Corporation and the Queensland Electricity Commission.

There has been some discussion about unemployment, so I will say something about that. It gives me great satisfaction to be able to say that in the area of employment opportunities there has been a 35 per cent increase to \$3 billion in the State capital works program, which will generate an additional 8 000 jobs in 1991-92. When the honourable member for Moggill, Dr Watson, was talking about these projects not once did he give any acknowledgment to the impact that this speeding up of capital works will have in the area of job creation. Not once did he acknowledge the fact that 8 000 jobs will be created in

1991-92. The simple reason is that he could not care less about the unemployment level in this State. He wants to come into this Chamber and nitpick but he will not acknowledge that that State capital works program will generate an additional 8 000 jobs in 1991-92. The program includes \$884m for housing, including a total of 12 000 jobs. The overall capital program will generate 35 000 jobs in 1991-92.

Hand in hand with creating jobs is a key Budget initiative in the area of training. It is designed to ensure that one of the State's most important resources, that is, its work force, has the skills and training required by modern industry. This has meant that a record \$405.5m has been provided for vocational education, training and employment initiatives in 1991-92. That is an increase of 21 per cent. Over the next three years, TAFE participation rates in Queensland are expected to increase from 20 per cent below the Australian average to at least the Australian average. This Government inherited a dreadful legacy in regard to TAFE participation rates, but it is doing something about it.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: Under the previous National Party Government this State was 20 per cent behind the rest of Australia. That is the legacy left to this Government. Over the next three years, the TAFE participation rates in this State will be brought up to the Australian average. The previous National Party Government had a disgraceful record in that regard. The member for Lockyer can scream and shout. That does not overcome the difficulties that were left to this Government. However, the Government is doing something about those difficulties.

A sum of \$13.3m has been allocated in 1991-92 for 9 400 new training places, including \$9.8m for an extra 8 200 places, additional vocational skills, advanced vocational skills and associate diploma courses. Places will be allocated throughout Queensland with a specific focus on the 15 to 19 age group, the unemployed and key industry needs. An amount of \$3.5m has been allocated to provide training opportunities for 1 200 young people who are seriously disadvantaged in the labour market and to employ permanent employment coordinators. In addition, \$750,000 is being provided as seeding funds to stimulate the establishment of enterprise training and to provide industry with a skills audit service to identify specific training needs. There has been an increase of \$14m, in conjunction with the Commonwealth, for capital works to establish new TAFE facilities and refurbish existing facilities. The increase will create 2 400 extra seats in the TAFE system. There is also an increase in recurrent funding of \$6m to provide staffing and resources to fully utilise facilities completed recently or soon to be completed. What we have as a key part of the economic strategy is specific assistance to business in terms of slashing land tax rates from 2.1 per cent to 1.8 per cent and corresponding reductions—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: Opposition members may groan. They do not like the fact that this Government got to the heart of the problem and did something about it. Land tax rates have been slashed from 2.1 per cent to 1.8 per cent, with corresponding reductions in other rates down the progressive scale—a reduction of 14 per cent for each rate. There has been an increase in the liability threshold for land owned by companies, trustees and absentees from \$35,000 to \$40,000; an increase in the statutory exemptions for land owned by individuals from \$150,000 to \$160,000; an increase in the minimum assessment of land tax to \$100, and so on. That is coupled with a major economic strategy providing for low taxes generally, hand in hand with employment-creating schemes, supplemented by specific training programs. In a nutshell, that means sound economic strategies for Queensland's future. However, as I said before, that is not all. In the social area and in the area of environmental education, there are specific initiatives to assist people.

There is a continuing commitment to support the changes recommended in the Fitzgerald report. It is appropriate for me, as chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice, to make some remarks about the budget of the Criminal Justice Commission. I will do that at length. The budget for the Criminal Justice Commission for 1991-92 is \$17.54m, based on a \$12m grant from consolidated revenue and \$5.4m from the opening bank balance and receipt of interest and other income. Expenditure is budgeted as follows—

Salaries and labour-related costs	\$13,222,000
Administrative costs	2,930,000
Consultancies	521,000
Plant and equipment	523,000
Accommodation	344,000

Salaries account for 75.4 per cent of the budget, with the major portion of the salaries budget—51.1 per cent—covering the Official Misconduct Division, in particular the complaints and investigative sections. The functions of those sections are resource and labour intensive. The establishment of the Criminal Justice Commission is 263, with 93 of those being designated police positions. Approximately \$5.051m of the salaries budget is attributed to the police establishment. That includes overtime necessarily incurred in carrying out activities such as the witness protection program, which is a labour-intensive area and very expensive. Provision is also made in the budget for an intelligence computing project. The administrative costs budget is \$2.93m and includes travel and operational expenditure incurred in the carrying-out of investigations. Expenditure by the commission during the 1990-91 financial year totalled \$17m out of the \$20m appropriated by Parliament. The result was achieved by strictly monitoring expenditure via internal management reporting and a responsible attitude prevailing with expenditure. It must be noted that 1990-91 was the establishment year of the commission. Recruiting was occurring during the entire year, with many staff not commencing until very late in the financial year. During 1990-91, 44 per cent of total expenditure was attributed to the Official Misconduct Division and its activities. I table a document which sets out the figures that I have related for the information of the Chamber. I do so because there has been some public comment which, unfortunately, has not accurately reflected the budget of the commission. I believe that it is my responsibility, as chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for Criminal Justice, to draw to the attention of the Chamber the accurate picture, which I have now done.

I move on to education. I will deal firstly with the important increases in the education area. The Government gave a commitment that, in its first term, it would spend an additional \$250m on education in Queensland. That commitment has been met in the first two years of the Government. This year, \$2.1 billion has been allocated for the Education Department, the largest allocation in Queensland's history and an increase of 9.8 per cent on last year's allocation. It will provide an additional 472 teachers in Queensland schools. In my electorate, all the parents and all the people involved in p. and c. associations and p. and f. associations are delighted with the fact that the Government has given a clear commitment to provide additional teachers. For the first time in Queensland's history, \$100m has been allocated to deliver a long-awaited benchmark pay standard. Almost \$9m has been allocated for teacher housing and \$158.4m for school capital works. There has been a doubling of funds for foreign languages, including the appointment of an additional 100 specialist teachers. Financial aid has been provided for parents and p. and c. groups through more than \$21m for school text book allowances and more than \$40m for school grants. An amount of \$7.1m has been allocated for development of the new student education profile that has replaced the TE score, and \$5.1m has been allocated

to improve literacy and numeracy in schools. An amount of \$3.8m, an increase of 26 per cent, has been allocated to expand computer education, and additional funds have been allocated to boost education in rural and regional areas. An amount of \$1.7m has been allocated for new and upgraded environmental education centres and \$152m allocated for non-Government education, including an increase of 10 per cent in funds for per capita grants and 53 per cent in interest assistance for capital works. There has been an initial provision for the extension of the school dental scheme for Years 8, 9 and 10. They are the facts and I am delighted to say that, for the first time in many years, the schools in my electorate of Brisbane Central are getting the attention they deserve.

Considerable amounts of money have been spent on schools such as the Kelvin Grove State High School, the Kelvin Grove State School, the Brisbane State High School, the Brisbane Central State School, the West End State School and other schools such as the Petrie Terrace State School, which have been neglected by successive National/Liberal Party Governments over many years. Baroona Special School has been ignored for a long period. I am absolutely delighted that it has been given specific attention. I am not saying that more work is not required. As the Minister for Education and the Minister for Administrative Services would know, in recent times I made specific representations on behalf of a number of schools, including the Kelvin Grove State School, the Kelvin Grove State High School, the Brisbane Central State School and the West End State School. I will continue to make representations on their behalf. However, based on the previous support that this Government has given, and the Budget allocations to which I have referred, the students attending those schools, their parents and the p. and c. associations can rest assured that this Government is finally doing something to assist those schools that have been neglected over a long period by previous National/Liberal Party Governments and National Party Governments.

I move on to the area of women. I was particularly pleased to see that the growing problem of sexual violence against women has been addressed in the Health part of the Budget. An amount of \$750,000 has been allocated for a much-needed initiative, that is, the Women's Sexual Assault Program. Women who have been sexually assaulted continue to suffer shame and humiliation and their needs have been neglected under previous administrations. Unfortunately, Queensland has a high rate of sexual assaults. In 1988, 2 847 cases of sexual assault were reported to the police, the highest figure for any State or Territory that year. The Government recognises the impact of sexual violence on the Queensland community and is addressing this issue by providing appropriate programs as part of its policy commitment to providing social justice to Queensland women. Those women suffer serious physical, emotional and psychological trauma, and a comprehensive program is needed to help those survivors of sexual violence. The Women's Sexual Assault Program will be a joint Government/community initiative. A working party will be formed to look at the medical and legal protocols for people working with those who have been sexually assaulted as well as appropriate locations for additional centres. The working party will be looking at such issues as increasing the number of women Government medical officers who examine women who have been sexually assaulted and reviewing the procedures for those medical examinations. The Women's Sexual Assault Program will include the following: firstly, it will enhance existing services through the provision of further resources and extra staff; secondly, it will continue to provide limited-hours services through programs already funded by the department and further establish services to provide a rape crisis/sexual assault service; and, thirdly, it will develop a Statewide program of community education/awareness to counter sexual violence and provide information on how and where Queensland women can access these services. Queensland Health takes a broad view of the issue of sexual assault against women. The need for total health care, which means preventive——

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: Is that not typical of members of the Opposition? They do not really care about the welfare of Queensland women. All they want to do is take cheap shots. They do not really care about women who are the victims of violence. Quite frankly, I think that is a pretty despicable standard.

Mr FitzGerald: You are on TV talking about it all the time. That's all you can talk about.

Mr BEATTIE: The honourable member does not care about Queensland women. All he is interested in is getting into the gutter. Is that not typical? Let me rise above the low standard of the Opposition, which continues to denigrate women in this State. It does not care about the family, or about women and children.

As I said, Queensland Health takes a broad view of the issue of sexual assault against women. The need for total health care, which means preventive, self-help, community support and rehabilitation programs, is included. The emphasis will be on continued physical and psychological support for women who have been sexually assaulted. I should also mention that the Queensland Health budget has topped the \$2 billion mark for the first time and totals \$2,023,427,000, an increase of 12.3 per cent, with the total health funding growing by \$221m over last year's budget. This \$2 billion allocation represents a massive increase in recurrent funding of 7.2 per cent in real terms. As the electorate of Brisbane Central includes some of Brisbane's major hospitals such as the Mater Hospital, the Royal Brisbane Hospital, Rosemount Hospital, St Andrews Hospital and the Holy Spirit Hospital, honourable members can appreciate why I am so delighted with the increase in expenditure in the Health budget. Some of the major components of the budget are wage justice for Queensland nurses, in the form of the new Nurses Award and career structure at a cost of \$87m, \$80m in capital works and \$17m in new and enhanced services. As a member who has received a number of delegations from nurses, I am delighted that an allocation of \$87m has been provided for a new Nurses Award and career structure. In the area of health workers, a total increase of 910 has been budgeted for. Quite a number of those workers will be nurses. I think we will be seeing not only an increased monetary allocation for nurses under the Nurses Award but also an increase in the number of nurses, which I think is important as well.

I turn now to the issues of justice and safety, which are obviously important. The State Government has recognised that the personal safety of all Queenslanders is a high priority. This has meant an allocation of an 11.7 per cent increase in expenditure to \$423m to fund extra police and build more police stations. The issues of justice and safety have been the subject of a considerable misinformation campaign by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Russell Cooper, who put a column in the *Westside News* distorting the facts about police and law and order. Let us look at the facts, not the political rhetoric, about law and order. They are as follows. Firstly, a record \$423m has been budgeted for police, including \$44.389m or an 11.7 per cent increase in expenditure primary to fund extra police. Secondly, this Budget further increases police numbers in order to meet the Government's commitment to increase the operational strength of the Police Service to 1 200 in its first term. Thirdly, there is additional funding for capital works, which will see a record number of police stations and facilities upgraded or constructed throughout the State. Fourthly, there is the provision of \$500,000 to establish a Household Security Advisory Unit, which will work in conjunction with the private sector to address the increase in break-and-enter offences. Fifthly, there is an additional \$500,000 to substantially improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the present breath-analysis activities of police with the purchase of breath-testing equipment. Sixthly, for the first time the invaluable service performed by police chaplains will be recognised with the

allocation of \$190,000 to fund payment of expenses incurred by police chaplains during their support role for police.

I would like to deal briefly with the column by Mr Cooper in the *Westside News*. Mr Cooper's numbers in that article are plucked from thin air and are wrong. We promised 1 200 extra operational police in the first term. Already, 600 extra police have been appointed over and above those who have retired or resigned for whatever reason. In December this year, another 300 police will graduate from the Police Academy after completing the tertiary course which the Government introduced, as recommended by Commissioner Tony Fitzgerald. The police have received an interim 5 per cent pay increase, which they probably would not have achieved so quickly without the Government helping the union prepare its case. The full wage decision is expected within weeks. Police have also been granted a 38-hour week. Mr Cooper is wrong in his claim that Mr Fitzgerald recommended that up to 1 000 police could be freed for street duty by putting public servants into clerical and communication jobs. We have put 223 public servants into such jobs, freeing police for crime work. I think that adequately deals with the comments made by Mr Cooper. I do not intend to spend any more time on those today. I would hope that we can take the politics out of dealing with crime and look again at what is in the community interest.

I turn now to the matter of environment and heritage. I am pleased to see that a record \$98.257m has been allocated for the Department of Environment and Heritage, representing a 24 per cent increase on last year and a rise of 103 per cent since December 1989. As Brisbane Central contains many of the heritage buildings in this State, I believe it is imperative that they be given priority and I am delighted to see that this is being furthered by the Minister. The sum of \$11.5m has been allocated for new national parks, taking the Government closer to its goal of doubling the area of national parks in its first term. That sum represents a 15 per cent increase on last year's acquisition budget. A 14 per cent increase has also been provided in the Budget for funds for the management of national parks. Some \$2.9m has been allocated to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority towards the management of the Great Barrier Reef marine park. Some \$19m has been allocated for management and infrastructure in north Queensland's wet tropical World Heritage area, including 6.9 per cent of State funds. The sum of \$2m has been allocated for pollution control and recycling, including \$638,000 to introduce new environmental legislation, policies and guidelines. Some \$1m has been allocated to establish the Coastal Protection Strategy and more than \$1.2m to fund the Queensland Heritage Program. The sum of \$150,000 has been made available in grants to conservation groups, a 50 per cent increase on last year's allocation. That is something that those groups will receive very warmly.

The sum of \$100,000 has been allocated to coordinate Brisbane River management. That matter is of particular interest to me and my electorate of Brisbane Central. Last week, when I visited Perth with Tom Burns' local government and housing committee, I took the opportunity to conduct a short study of the use in Perth of the Swan River. Quite frankly, Western Australia is light years ahead of us in the use of the Swan River, which has become a natural resource and charm for that city.

Mr FitzGerald: It is a little bit wider than the Brisbane River.

Mr BEATTIE: Yes, sure, it is a little bit wider. Nevertheless, there is still enormous potential for the Brisbane River. I believe that we can utilise that potential a lot more than we do. Because my electorate borders the river in a significant way, in the future I will be taking an active role to see that some of the measures adopted in Western Australia are used here. As I said, \$100,000 has been allocated to coordinate Brisbane River management. I welcome that very warmly. The sum of \$607,000 has been allocated to fund the administration of environmental impact assessments, including the development

of legislation, and \$340,000 has been allocated for environmental education. The list goes on and is very impressive indeed.

I turn now to social justice. I am delighted that Queenslanders—regardless of their personal, social or economic circumstances—will be able to enjoy equality of opportunity through a fair distribution of resources and access to services. For example, \$620m has been allocated to be provided under the Government's HOME program and HOME Share program to assist 8 000 Queensland households to own a home of their own. That is fundamentally important to their quality of life. The sum of \$14.5m has been provided under the Community Housing Partnership Program, representing an increase of \$5m on funds available in 1990-91. A \$4.5m family package of initiatives to provide a range of services in city, rural and remote areas has also been initiated. A total of \$13.4m has been allocated to fund and resource child-care services in Queensland. Again, that is very important. There has been an increase in the maximum subsidy under the Pensioner Rate Rebate Scheme from \$160 per year to \$180 per year, benefiting 144 000 Queensland pensioners. A total of \$750,000 has been allocated to establish an Anti-discrimination Unit, and \$330,000 has been allocated to establish an Equal Employment Opportunity Unit. I applaud and welcome those initiatives.

There are a couple of other matters that I wish to deal with briefly. I was disappointed that the honourable Leader of the Opposition attacked the Government's decision to use funds from the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund, in which \$90m has been sitting for some time. Earlier this year, a Bill specifically on this matter went through the House. If I remember correctly, the costs involved with that fund are about \$1m per year. This Government opened up the use of that fund. Indeed, that money can now be used for housing, instead of sitting around doing nothing. It is not a matter of taking money out of a so-called hollow log. The purposes for which the fidelity fund was established have been outgrown by the fund itself. Therefore, it would be not only naive but, quite frankly, stupid to leave \$90m sitting there when the outlays for that fund are \$1m a year. I believe that the use of that money by the Treasurer and the Government for housing is constructive and positive. For the life of me, I cannot understand why anyone would deny that.

I have one disappointment with the Budget, namely, it contains no allocation of funds for an inner-city rail loop. I know that in these times of economic restraint and economic difficulty during a recession, that is understandable. However, I indicate very clearly that I will be working as hard as I can in conjunction with my local community to bring about support for an inner-city rail loop. I understand that the SEPTS study was released today. Although I have not had an opportunity to read it, I understand that it does not take a favourable attitude to an inner-city rail loop and advocates a greater use of buses. That is fine. I have no great problem with that, except that Brisbane has a resource—the Exhibition line—that is not being used. I believe that SEPTS is wrong. I hope that the Government will not follow the SEPTS recommendation and will, instead, consider the greater utilisation of that inner-city rail loop that would look after the Kelvin Grove campus of the QUT and provide transport for people going to the Royal Brisbane Hospital, the two grammar schools, St Joseph's College, the Kelvin Grove High School and the Kelvin Grove State School. I am a firm supporter of the inner-city rail loop. I hope that in time the Government will allocate funding for that.

I conclude my contribution on the Budget—

Time expired.

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (4.12 p.m.): In supporting the Leader of the Opposition in this debate, I wish to make a number of basic points. In some cases I shall reiterate the comments made so forcefully by the Opposition Leader, because I believe that they require particular and further emphasis. It is not my intention to delve into the specific line

items of the Budget. That will be the focus of Estimates debates. Rather, I seek to highlight several specific areas of concern and to draw further attention to the shift of budgetary emphasis being entrenched in Queensland.

In the first instance, I acknowledge that regardless of who structures a Budget there are certain elements that will be correct, just as there are a large number of Budget items that are automatic in requirement. It would be churlish of me to claim that the 1991 State Budget is all wrong. It is not. However, the signalled intent is all wrong. That is the key issue. The 1991 Budget is distinctive in a number of areas. Most notable is the clear, signalled intent to follow the well-trodden path of Labor administrations elsewhere in Australia. This entrenchment will be by embedding populist fiscal policies into the economy. Those policies become particularly difficult to correct in terms of their impact on the work force, and even more difficult to correct from a weak State financial base. This is the case in every Labor-run State in Australia and will be the millstone around the Greiner Government's neck for years to come as it struggles to return New South Wales to solid and practical management processes.

The delivery of the 1991 State Budget was a total farce in that every single item of note had been selectively leaked to the press. The Treasurer's speech was merely a reaffirmation of those leaks. This pattern has obviously been faithfully copied from Canberra. I reiterate the Opposition's concern, and particularly my concern as the shadow Treasurer in this Parliament, that a number of Budget related papers were not supplied to me as shadow Treasurer or to Liberal and National Party members. That is a sad reflection on this Government's claim of open and honest government, and something for which all Government members should hang their heads in shame. The delivery of the Budget Speech did, however, highlight the direction of the Goss/De Lacy management strategy, a strategy that illuminates that intent as clear as day, in that there is to be a continuing change in the balance of allocation of the State's financial resources away from the income-earning sector to the service sector. Daily, we are seeing the modus operandi of the Goss Government more clearly exposed. Daily, we are seeing the shallowness of experience. Daily, we are seeing a heightened degree of panic in the Goss Government as the realisation sinks in that the community is starting to wake up that all that glitters is not gold. The gloss is starting its inevitable tarnishing. The difference is that the backflips and management mistakes are gradually working their way on to the front page. They are impossible for even the most faithful media observer to ignore. They are starting to bite the community and to be recognised for what they are—the results of inept Government inaction.

It is worth while noting that, although the people of Queensland clearly voted for a change of Government in 1989—and I acknowledge that—they did not vote for a change in the way in which the State was run. In other words, they voted for a personality change, not a management change. That is the mistake now being entrenched in our book of accounts. This Government manages by opinion polls and looking backwards. Let us consider a few facts. In his classic expose of the real state of financial affairs, our worthy Treasurer claimed to have uncovered a massive cover-up of debts. He claimed that the State net debt per capita was three times greater than what had been actually stated. That expose was seen for what it was and was dealt a speedy death blow by one and all. I again endorse the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition today when he said that it was adjudged a duck—a golden duck—and that it will come back to haunt the Treasurer again and again and again.

A few months later, the same Treasurer was lauding the outstanding state of fiscal affairs pertaining to Queensland. Not one person other than the Treasurer believed that that position had been achieved in a few short months by his so-called disciplined and responsible new financial order. What rot! As any person in business knows, financial

security can only be built up over many years and there are no fast tracks along the way. That applies to Governments, and Queensland is in a position of security only because of decades of conservative rule. To claim, as the Treasurer does, that this position was achieved in 20 months is ridiculous. The past few weeks have seen a continuing series of backflips that further serve to highlight the frightening prospect of Labor management of the State's affairs. We have seen the Government discover the drought—something that the Opposition had been highlighting for many months. However, the awakening is too late for many unfortunate primary producers and their livestock. The Government is starting to realise that drought aid is not roort aid, but a vital component of economic stability. However, I will deal with that at a later stage.

We have all seen the belated recognition of the need for an accelerated capital works program. As the Opposition Leader said, that initiative was sneered at by the Treasurer and his would-be replacement but adopted a few short weeks later—too late again. It is worth noting some of the statements of the Premier. In September 1989, Mr Goss said—

“The spending priorities of the next Labor Government will be funded by the elimination of waste and a reduction in the unnecessary capital works expenditure such as, for example, the \$120m of taxpayers' money that was spent on the State socialist Gladstone-Wallumbilla gas pipeline.”

In relation to roads, he said—

“We will not content ourselves with the pathetic approach of simply railing against the Commonwealth authorities.”

We all know that the opposite of that is now starting to take place. On 27 September 1988, he stated further—

“Both the Bjelke-Petersen and Ahern Governments have indulged in large-scale and unnecessary public works programs which do not add to the efficiency of the State's economy but, instead, represent a mis-allocation of scarce public resources. The Nationals continue to be the party of big government.”

That says a great deal. In this House, on public radio and in the media generally, the Treasurer certainly heaped scorn and indignation on my suggestions that we need an accelerated capital works program. As the Leader of the Opposition said, when the Government finally woke up, it was too late. As Federal Treasurer, John Kerin, has often said, the problem is that many of these bandaid measures are applied when the economy starts to grow and the wrong signals are out. We have seen the reluctant recognition of the impact on rural communities of the removal of services—too late again. Later, I will highlight a specific instance of a small town in the west. The town is not in my electorate but I happen to know a little about it.

In general public terms, we have yet to see the impact of the removal of local boards in a number of areas of the community. The Opposition is aware of what that change will mean to those parts of the community. One day, perhaps the Goss Government will wake up but, again, it will be too late. I refer to the hospitals boards, the fire brigade boards and all of those sections of community that kept the Government of the day in touch with what is really happening so that Ministers—

Mr FitzGerald: At bargain prices.

Mr STONEMAN: The Government was getting those people for nothing, but their years of expertise, dedication and commitment to the community were wiped out in one fell swoop. Sooner or later, that will be recognised by the Government but, as I say, it will be too late. People will say, “No longer are we prepared to be wiped out.” Today, we saw another prime example of the Government's over-the-shoulder management—the

discovery of the daylight-saving problem and the decision to hold a referendum. It is too late again, and it is a mistake that will cost the people of this State \$6m or so. We have seen the birth of a new silver bodgie in this State in the form of the Premier who is increasingly fronting the public in a confessional way—admitting his mistake and begging forgiveness.

Mr Littleproud: And cried.

Mr STONEMAN: The honourable member is right, but the difference is that this silver bodgie does not have the compassion to cry and there is a smaller public pot to fund his mistakes. All of these mistakes are being noted by the community and paid for by the community, particularly the rural and commercial communities, who are the first victims of any Government policy change.

A major omission from the 1991 State Budget was recognition of the severity of the impact of continuing high-level interest rates. The income-generating sector has had to pay dearly for the dominance of the ACTU at the Federal level which gave birth to the infamous Accord. This bill was paid for through high interest rates and an inflated Australian dollar—the two things which have the greatest impact on an exporting nation such as Australia. Despite this background, the impact of the 1991 Budget is most heavily directed against the income-producing sector which, in the end, supplies the greatest bulk of Government income. The continuing thrust of conservative Governments over three decades of management was to maintain low taxes and State debt so that jobs, growth and development were naturally created. The Leader of the Opposition referred to that matter in particular. The 1991 State Budget ignores that equation and, whilst it has given lip service to such phrases as “discipline and tight management”, the end result is that we are witnessing a massive shift in spending priorities with a massive increase in service sector spending.

I draw to the attention of honourable members an article appearing in *Australian Business* for the week ending 2 October 1991. It contains a map of Australia showing unfunded liabilities of major public sector superannuation schemes. The figures are as of 30 June 1990 and are shown in billions of dollars. As all members are aware, Queensland's scheme is fully funded, which is something that we on this side of the Parliament are particularly proud of and something that Government members should be grateful for. However, I am sure that this is the commencement of a whittling process that could change this position dramatically. Western Australia has been run by a Labor Government for a number of years and has a \$3.9 billion public sector superannuation scheme debt. South Australia with the mighty John Bannon—who was the President of the Labor Party—has a superannuation scheme debt of \$2.8 billion. New South Wales has been in the hands of the conservative parties for only three years, but it has a \$14 billion debt, and Victoria—the State of Cain and the model for Wayne Goss and the present Queensland Government—has a \$15.6 billion debt in terms of public sector superannuation schemes. Tasmania has a debt of \$1.8 billion and the Commonwealth—which has had the silver bodgie for all those years of development, thrust, job creation and “no child in poverty”—had \$33 billion of indebtedness in public sector superannuation schemes as at 30 June 1990.

Mr Welford: We are doing very well, aren't we?

Mr STONEMAN: Yes, we are doing well, because the Labor Party has had its hands on the tiller for only 20 months. The fearsome signals are that that is changing. This is exactly the same recipe for disaster used by Labor Governments throughout Australia. Queensland will be able to absorb the impact for a while, simply because of the strong reserve base that I have referred to. However, in the end that base will be eroded as the pace of job creation, growth and development slows. Signals are being sent to the private

sector by way of statements in the Budget such as, "We want you to spend. We want to tax you, but we will not give you unequivocal support." There is no reference to support for the private sector in the Budget. I do not say for one moment that there should not be increased spending in some areas of the service sector, but we have to cut our coat according to our cloth. There is no way in the world that this situation can continue without dragging the State down, as has happened to the Commonwealth and the other States.

Initiatives are being depressed or set aside. Vital decisions at Government level are not being made. If one goes to local authorities, businessmen or any sector of the community that is not involved in the service sector, one finds that no decisions are being made like the decisions that used to be made. All of this adds up to opportunities lost a daily. As the Leader of the Opposition noted, bankruptcies in this State are now slightly ahead of the national average. Business cannot afford any more negative signals and yet the 1991 Budget statement is just that—a negative signal. The impact of land tax has been well documented by the Leader of the Opposition. However, I wish to comment further on a significant aspect of the land tax debate. In his Budget Speech the Treasurer stated—

"I will be introducing into Parliament later this year legislation to prohibit the passing on of land tax by landlords to both residential and commercial tenants. That prohibition will apply prospectively to leases executed after 1 January 1992."

Most commercial property-owners require their tenants to cover part of their building operation expenses in addition to their rental payments. Section 12 of the Retail Shop Leases Act states that property-owners who follow the practice must furnish their tenants with detailed and audited outgoing estimates. Presumably the Government intends to amend the section to prevent property-owners incorporating the tax into the estimates. During the last few years the New South Wales, Victorian and South Australian Governments all revised their land tax systems. The New South Wales and Victorian reviews recommended against preventing property-owners from passing on the tax. In contrast, the South Australian review urged its Government to ban the practice. I will look at the instances in New South Wales. The New South Wales task force touched on the tenancy issue in its 1988 review of the State's tax system. However, it concluded as follows—

"Merely because land tax is separately itemised as a component of rents does not mean that the ultimate burden of that tax is on the tenant of the building concerned."

In October 1990, the Victorian Government commissioned the Honourable Robert Fordham, MP, to review the operation of land tax in that State. Mr Fordham concluded that it was inappropriate for the Government to intervene further in the relationships between landlords and their tenants. He stated—

"Over time, if a legal impediment was introduced to prevent the passing on of land tax to tenants, it could be assumed that landlords would pass the burden of land tax payments on to tenants. In the interim, there could be significant lags, which would affect the landlord's financial situation."

The South Australian Government set up its land tax review unit in March 1990. It was recommended that the Government prevent property-owners from passing on the tax to their tenants and stated—

"The Review Group (. . .) is under no misapprehension that, in practice, the landlord would over time attempt to pass on the land tax and in many cases would be successful in that endeavour. However, the passing on would be delayed until the lease expired and came up for renewal. The attraction of the legislative proposal is simply that it would transfer the burden of uncertainty about land tax increases to the landlord, with the obligation of the tenant being fixed at the beginning of the rent period."

The South Australian Government implemented the recommendation in late 1990 by amending the initial Landlord and Tenant Act. I ask all Government members to listen to what was said by the Minister for Finance, the Honourable Frank Blevins, MP, said in his second-reading speech—

“The lessor will naturally try to ensure that the level of rent payable by the tenant is sufficient to cover expected land tax increases as well as a return on investment consistent with market conditions. In periods of high demand, this may lead to tenants paying in aggregate more than under the present system.”

Although I have much more information on that point, I believe I have stated my case clearly. I believe that this issue will come back to haunt the Government and the Treasurer. As the Leader of the Opposition said, it will result in another Government backflip. Along with payroll tax, land tax is a significant cost to business. In both instances, there will be additional calls on fewer payees. At the end of the day, it must be remembered that when the Government speaks about reductions in rates and so on, all costs are factors that must be taken into account in making investment decisions. This applies to payroll tax and land tax, regardless of any legislative attempt to direct otherwise. The proposed legislative constraint on land tax is window-dressing and a sop to the tenant that cannot be applied. Following the State Budget, there will be more tax extracted from the same number of businesses, or fewer, than was the case last year, and there is no way of avoiding that situation.

Another area of major impact that was not acknowledged in the Budget is interest rates. As the commercial and rural sectors are now discovering, Queensland no longer has a buffer between it and the Federal Hawke Government. It has a Government that is determined to squeeze every dollar out of the community by implementing so-called efficiency drives that in the end result will be counter-productive. A wave of well-documented increases in fees has occurred since the election of the Goss Government, and all those charges add to the interest bill which, by itself, is crippling the community. Much has been made by both State and Federal Governments of the problems of home-owners being unable to meet interest and redemption payments, and I am not saying that it is unreasonable for Governments to comment on that problem and be concerned. However, I ask: why do we not hear more concern expressed by both levels of Government over the impact of high interest rates on the business community, on jobs and on economic growth? The high level of interest rates is the fundamental problem underlying all bankruptcies, job losses, lack of growth and stifled development. When those problems are added to the negative signals emanating from changed budgetary processes, the problems multiply.

The Leader of the Opposition noted in his speech that the word “drought” was not mentioned in the Treasurer’s Budget Speech, yet a couple of days later there was a sudden flurry of activity when the Government at last woke up to the problem. The same could be said with equal emphasis in respect to the commercial sector and the normal operations of the rural community. In the face of record interest rate levels and an artificial dollar value, the Treasurer still saw fit to impose additional costs through land tax and payroll tax. Neither was reduced in real terms, and collections will be much higher this year than they were last year. The operational procedures of many Government agencies and instrumentalities have been commercialised at a time of the greatest financial stress. For example, why would a Government-controlled unit such as the QIDC not be directed to more appropriately acknowledge the problems being encountered? Under the present circumstances, why would a Government not screw down the purchases of huge areas of land for national parks?

I draw the attention of the Committee to part of the submission made by the Queensland Confederation of Industry which refers to the environment in paragraph 12. The submission states—

"The environment remains a highly contentious issue. It was extraordinary that with unemployment over 10 per cent and our current trade deficit, that the Commission into Fraser Island and the future of logging should conclude totally in favour of the conservationists.

The Government must be aware that by accepting the recommendations of the Fraser Island Commission that it could set a precedent on logging in other areas within the State. Towns like Maryborough already know that unless new industries are created to meet the needs of the resident population, they will not survive.

It is facile for government to state that people made redundant by Fitzgerald's Report will be retrained and employed in new industries."

The next point is an important one—

"If it was so easy to solve our employment predicament, why haven't we been able to apply this simple dictum to the national unemployment dilemma.

The Government must ensure a balance between conservation and industry. Queensland cannot afford another Fraser Island decision."

I make the point that this year's Budget provides for 4.2 million acres of productive Queensland countryside to be absorbed into the national parks program. I would be one of the greatest supporters of the environment and the flora and fauna of this State.

Mr Welford: Ha, ha!

Mr STONEMAN: Well may the honourable member laugh, because he would not know what he is talking about. Over the years I have been a member of Parliament, and prior to that, I have demonstrated a practical commitment to the environment. The point I make is that land cannot be locked away and the Government cannot create a conservation-minded community. People cannot do that. There has to be an educative process, and I acknowledge that more is needed to be done in this area. This process is not achieved by tying up and locking up good productive land and it is not done by spending large amounts of money in times of stress in locking away that country. I do not believe that a responsible Government would do such a thing. Therefore, one would have to draw the conclusion that this Government is not being responsible. This Government talks about future generations. It is creating a milestone for future generations. Why would a responsible Government not recognise the need to support the people who provide the capacity to make such purchases a priority? Why would a Government that understood the extremes facing the business sector close down sawmills, stop development and dampen the investment climate? A Government would not even contemplate such a direction, yet people see a determination of this Government to return to the strategies that even the Federal Hawke Government is recognising are a disaster. Increasingly, Federal Ministers are saying, "We have to change the order. We have to get back and develop, and develop responsibly, not this lock them up and throw the key away syndrome." Around the nation, there is a growing recognition of the need to stimulate growth and investments as the prime method of creating jobs; yet, under this Government, the dole queue in Queensland has grown at the rate of nearly four people per hour for every day and night since 2 December 1989. While the Opposition Leader spoke, another six Queenslanders joined the dole queue—one every 15 minutes—six people who either have a family to support or who are part of a family—six people who have been joined by another six since the Leader of the Opposition concluded his speech, which makes 12 people who have the cloud of uncertainty hanging over them and who will be joined by another six by dinner-time tonight. The most important thing a Government can

do for present and future generations is to provide a climate conducive to creating investment growth and, therefore, jobs—jobs for those 12 people. By this time next week, that number will grow to 620 or 630. This week, the people of Queensland have seen the problems of organisations such as Expo Furniture, which is situated in the Premier's electorate. Yesterday, scores of people who had lost their jobs took part in a march. It is absolutely vital that this Government—

Mr Borbidge: They are not allowed a voluntary employment agreement under their laws.

Mr STONEMAN: That is exactly right. Under this Government's legislation, which has turned back the clock between 40 and 50 years, people who are desperate for jobs and who are desperate to enter into agreements to salvage their jobs, to save the operations of people such as the principals of Expo Furniture, are not allowed to enter into that type of agreement.

I want to conclude with a couple of remarks about the Treasurer's predictions about growth. Last year, the Treasurer had it wrong by 2.7 per cent. This year, he is indicating that it is going to be one and a half per cent above the national average. For the sake of all the people of Queensland, I just hope and pray that that is the situation. When one looks at the growth of taxes, fees, fines and all of those other areas, one area stands out particularly in this excellent book which was produced by the Parliamentary Library and which covers the 12 months ending the March quarter, 1991. If one looks particularly at licences and permits, one sees that it is a major growth area. In 1988-89, in round figures, almost \$150m came from this area. In 1990-91, it was \$570m. Taxes, fees, fines and gambling are all processes on which this Government is budgeting its structure and its directions into the future. The Government cannot substantiate its actions and must move away from that area. Stamp duty is a prime indicator of the operations of the business sector. It indicates the rate of building construction, which is tuned to the investment climate. In fact, under the previous Government, stamp duty receipts were going up. They stopped dead and are now declining at a rapid rate. The Federal Treasurer has indicated that, in building terms, the housing sector is not the sort of indicator that one should use in making a judgment of the direction in which the economy is heading.

Mr DAVIES (Townsville) (4.42 p.m.): This Budget has been described by the various media outlets, such as the *Toowoomba Chronicle*, as a Budget for jobs; by the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, as a Budget to be envied; by the *Courier Mail*, as a "helping hand" Budget; by the *Townsville Bulletin*, as a Budget for the workers; by the *Australian*, as cutting debt and delivering an \$11 million surplus; by the *Sun*, as a winner for women; by the *Cairns Post*, as a "shot in the arm for the North"; by the *Bundaberg News-Mail*, as a boost for the city; and by the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, as a remarkable Budget.

Mr Welford: It has universal acclaim.

Mr DAVIES: That is correct. When one sits here and listens to what has been said on the other side, one has to say that either the media are completely wrong or what honourable members on the other side are peddling is just tripe and they are just opposing for the sake of opposing. It would be nice if people on the other side of the Chamber would—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DAVIES: The member for Moggill and the member for Burdekin would acknowledge that this is a great Budget. It is not just a good Budget, it is a great Budget. This Budget has been described by the Treasurer as the Budget the other States wished they could have produced, and the Minister is dead right. This is the Budget that the other States wished they could have produced.

Mr Stoneman: Some of those recommendations have got them into some pretty serious situations.

Mr DAVIES: As I understand it, the State of New South Wales has a deficit of about \$1,738 per head of population.

This is a good Budget because of its commitment to the environment, to education, to social justice, to the public service, to the reform process, to Queensland women, to rural areas, to training and, finally—as I come from the area—to north Queensland. I will identify some of the key initiatives in each of those areas. However, before I do that, I cannot resist the temptation of making some comments on the contribution by my southern neighbour the member for Burdekin, Mr Stoneman, who is the Opposition Treasury spokesman. That vicious attack that Mr Stoneman made on the Treasurer must have left the Treasurer shaking in his boots.

Mr Smyth: Like being hit with a wet sock.

Mr DAVIES: I will take that interjection for the record. Mr Stoneman says that the direction that this Government is taking is wrong. But one of Mr Stoneman's pet projects is the accelerated capital works program. He cannot have it both ways. The Accelerated capital works program is a central plank of this Budget. Mr Stoneman is actually criticising himself.

Mr Stoneman: I didn't criticise the capital works program; I said you were too late.

Mr DAVIES: There is a saying in life that it is never too late. If Mr Stoneman believes that he is right about the accelerated capital works program, the Government is right. It is as simple as that. Mr Stoneman also mentioned daylight-saving. I really do not know what that has got to do with this Budget debate. He went on about how much a referendum is going to cost. The honourable member says that a referendum should be held. He has been saying that for ages. His leader has been saying that for ages.

Mr Stoneman: You should have had it with the local government elections. That is what I said.

Mr DAVIES: That would confuse people more. The honourable member should talk to the Local Government Association and suggest that it should have been held at the same time.

Mr Borbidge: Tell us how you got rolled by Geoff Smith.

Mr DAVIES: Mundingburra is not a bad seat. The Opposition Treasury spokesman talked about members of this Government having their hands on the till. All I have to say to that is at least they have not got their hands in the till. Members of the National Party Government had their hands in the till. Up to \$30m worth of political advertising came out of the till. At least members of this Government have not got their fingers in the till, and at least they have not taken any brown paper bags. I note that the honourable member for Burdekin is leaving the Chamber. He is not even going to listen.

Mr Stoneman talked about land tax. I can recall sitting in this Chamber during last year's Budget debate when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—and it is good to see that he is in the Chamber—was questioned by way of an interjection about what the rate of land tax was in this State, and he did not know. He did not know that at that stage it was 2.1 per cent. He could not answer the question. This Government has at least done something about land tax. Despite what the member for Moggill said earlier, this Government has at least recognised that people are hurting, and it has reduced the rate from 2.1 per cent to 1.8 per cent. The Opposition Treasury spokesman also talked about Fraser Island. He shows that he is absolutely ignorant of the benefit for tourism of listing areas as World Heritage areas. The Daintree, the Kakadu national park, the south-west

part of Tasmania and, last but not least, the Great Barrier Reef bear testimony to that. Why does the honourable member think people go to those areas?

I want to speak briefly now about some of those areas I mentioned earlier. This year, a record \$98.257m has been allocated to the Department of Environment and Heritage. That represents a 24 per cent increase on last year's figure and a rise of more than 103 per cent since Labor came to power in December 1989. In addition, \$11.5m has been allocated for new national parks, taking the Government closer to its goal of doubling the area of national park in its first term and representing a 15 per cent increase on last year's acquisition budget. The funds for management of national parks receive a 14 per cent increase. The sum of \$19m has been allocated for management and infrastructure in north Queensland's wet tropics World Heritage area, including \$6.9m in State funds, and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has been allocated \$2.9m towards the management of the Great Barrier Reef marine park. Pollution control and recycling receive \$2m, including \$638,000 to introduce new environmental legislation policies and guidelines, and a coastal protection strategy is established with an allocation of \$1m. More than \$1.2m is allocated to fund the Queensland heritage program. Other environment and heritage initiatives include \$607,000 to fund the administration of environmental impact assessment, including the development of legislation; \$340,000 for environmental education; \$80,000 towards assistance for local authorities for coastal management projects; \$200,000 for an integrated catchment, environmental planning and management study of Pumicestone Passage; \$150,000 in grants to conservation groups, which is a 50 per cent increase on last year's allocation; \$100,000 for a secretariat to coordinate Brisbane River management; and \$80,000 for research and conservation planning studies in south-east Queensland. The Goss Government is delivering on its environmental policies, which were taken to the people in the lead-up to the December 1989 election.

I turn to education. In two years, the Goss Government has met its first-term commitment to spend an additional \$250m on education in Queensland. The allocation of \$2.1 billion for the Education Department is the largest allocation in Queensland's history and an increase of 9.8 per cent on last year's figure. As the honourable member for Brisbane Central said earlier, an additional 472 teachers will be provided in Queensland schools. For the first time in Queensland's history, a long-awaited national benchmark pay standard will be delivered, and \$100m has been allocated for that purpose. Teacher housing receives almost \$9m. The remote area incentive scheme for teachers receives \$3.2m. School capital works receives \$158.4m. Funding for foreign languages has been doubled, including the appointment of an additional 100 specialist teachers. Financial aid for parents and p. and c. groups has been boosted through more than \$21m for school textbook allowances and more than \$40m for school grants.

The Education budget includes \$7.1m for development of the new student education profile to replace the TE score; \$5.1m to improve literacy and numeracy in schools; and \$3.8m, an increase of 26 per cent, to expand computer education. There are extra funds to boost education in rural and regional areas, including—

- the establishment of school support centres at 45 locations across Queensland;
- \$2.1m for facilities at Schools of Distance Education; and
- \$1.3m for development of the open learning network in rural and remote areas.

University education receives a boost through—

- \$17.6m for 2 000 university places at Queensland institutions;
- \$15.9m for 2 700 nurse education places; and

\$2m for creation of new study opportunities through the Queensland Tertiary Education Foundation.

The Government has allocated \$1.7m for new and upgraded environmental education centres. Non-Government education receives \$152m, including an increase of 10 per cent in funds for per capita grants and 53 per cent in interest assistance for capital works. There is an initial provision for the extension of the school dental scheme to Years 8, 9 and 10. Once again, the Goss Government is delivering on its education policies.

The Government's commitment to social justice is evident in this Budget. An amount of \$620m is provided under the Government's home ownership programs, HOME and HOME Shared, to assist 8 000 Queensland householders to own a home of their own. The allocation of \$14.5m under the Community Housing Partnership Program represents an increase of \$5m on funds available in the previous year. A \$4.5m family package of initiatives is included to provide a range of services in city, rural and remote areas. There is a massive and record \$405.5m for vocational education, training and employment initiatives—an increase of 21 per cent. Child-care services in Queensland receive a total of \$13.4 for funding and resourcing. As the member for Brisbane Central said earlier, the pensioner rate subsidy scheme receives an increase in the maximum subsidy from \$160 per year to \$180, which will benefit 144 000 Queensland pensioners. An amount of \$4m is to be spent upgrading basic living conditions and environmental health of people living on Aboriginal communities. The \$2.011 billion Health budget represents an increase of 12.3 per cent.

Mr FitzGerald: You are taking line for line out of the speech.

Mr DAVIES: The truth is hurting the member for Lockyer. This is the best Budget that has been delivered for 34 years. There is also \$750,000 to establish an anti-discrimination unit and \$330,000 to establish an equal employment opportunity unit. Again, the Goss Government is delivering on its social policy agenda.

Mr Littleproud interjected.

Mr DAVIES: Just as an aside, I am quite confident that we will win convincingly all three seats in Townsville.

Mr De Lacy: And further up, too.

Mr DAVIES: And win them well.

Mr McGrady: With an increased majority.

Mr DAVIES: I would not be so brash as to say with increased majorities. As honourable members are aware, a new pay and classification system has been introduced to the public service to provide greater flexibility, facilitate job redesign and provide improved career structures and opportunities for employees. Introduction of the Q Super superannuation scheme with wider coverage is giving more flexible benefits for employees and reduced administration costs. Other initiatives in the public service include \$330,000 for an equal employment opportunity program and \$150,000 for senior executive and middle management training programs. It is also proposed that the present round of departmental reviews will be completed by December 1991. The Goss Government is delivering on its public service policies.

The reform process is well and truly carried on in this Budget with a record \$423m budget for police, including \$44.389m, or an 11.7 per cent increase, in expenditure primarily to fund extra police. This Budget further increases police numbers in order to meet the Government's commitment to increase the operational strength of the Police Service to 1 200 in its first term. Additional funding for capital works will see a record number of police stations and facilities upgraded or constructed throughout the State. A household security advisory unit which will work in conjunction with the private sector to

address the increase in break-and-enter offences has been allocated \$500,000. An additional \$500,000 is provided to substantially improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the present breath analysis activities of police with the purchase of breath-testing equipment. For the first time, the invaluable service performed by police chaplains will be recognised with the allocation of \$190,000 to fund payment of expenses incurred by the police chaplains during their support role for police. An extra \$2m from the Police budget has been allotted for the Criminal Justice Commission, the independent body established as a result of the Fitzgerald inquiry to deal with reform of the criminal justice system and to fight corruption. In the same context, there is also an extra \$500,000 for the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission, the independent body which this financial year aims to publish 10 reports, including one relating to the redistribution of Legislative Assembly seats, to which some honourable members alluded earlier. The Goss Government is delivering on the Fitzgerald reform agenda.

I turn now to matters relating to Queensland women, who are big winners in this Budget, with a range of initiatives such as \$750,000 to establish the Queensland anti-discrimination commission. There is also the provision of \$11m to fund a range of programs dealing with domestic violence, rape crisis, sexual assault, and safety for women and girls. As I said earlier, \$13.4m has been budgeted to fund child-care services throughout Queensland. Unlike predecessor Governments, this Government realises the importance of Queensland women. Queensland women will also benefit from the provision of 3 305 extra child-care places and the construction of seven new child-care centres. They will also benefit from total State and Commonwealth funding of \$4.5m for the further development of breast and cervical cancer detection services; from funding of \$2.25m, in conjunction with the Commonwealth, for ongoing support of three women's health centres, a telephone network and crisis support group for survivors of child sexual abuse, and five mobile women's health services. They will also benefit because their career choices will be increased with the provision of substantial funds for training opportunities and employment prospects, including \$330,000 for the Public Sector Management Commission to implement, monitor and evaluate equal employment opportunity in public sector employment. In addition, they will benefit from the \$799,000 which has been allocated for gender equity programs to ensure that girls participate to their full capacity within the education system. They will benefit from the \$132,000 which has been set aside for the establishment of a women's consultative council, which will be a link between the Government and women in the community. The Women's Policy Unit, which receives \$1.14m, will benefit them also in ongoing funding to advise the Government on status-of-women issues and the Women's Infolink, a shopfront women's information and referral service. As well, they will benefit from the Women's Sports Advancement Unit, which receives \$100,000 in ongoing funding. As I said earlier, the Goss Government is delivering on its commitment to Queensland women.

Those living in rural areas will also benefit from the fact that, firstly, there are no new taxes and, secondly, there is no fuel tax in Queensland. More than 17 000 jobs will be generated by more than \$1.5 billion in capital works in rural Queensland. Rural Queensland receives \$434.5m in direct rural industry support through the Queensland Department of Primary Industries, including allocations of \$3.7m for integrated catchment management; \$61m for irrigation project infrastructure; \$33.2m for forestry capital works; and \$9m for new rural research projects. The allocation to the Rural Adjustment Scheme has been doubled to \$16m. The sum of \$22m has been made available through the Primary Industries Productivity Enhancement Scheme to improve farm viability. Rural Queensland will also benefit from a new rural communities unit to coordinate and monitor the delivery of State Government services in country areas; the return of more Government services to rural Queensland through regionalisation of departments; a 14 per cent increase in funds for the management of national parks to \$8.2m; and significant education initiatives.

Those initiatives include, as I said earlier, \$3.2m for the introduction of a remote area incentive scheme for Queensland teachers; the provision of \$2.1m for Schools of Distance Education; and the provision of \$1.3m to fund the Open Learning Network, which will improve access to tertiary education by external students. Rural Queenslanders will also benefit from \$5.4m which is budgeted for the Department of Lands to improve its service to clients. This Budget will also include the development of a charter for the State's Land Information System and a strategic plan. Rural Queensland will also benefit from the provision of a single Statewide database incorporating the titles register, lease register, miners' homestead leases, tenure creation and tenure management. That will be of benefit to regional and rural Queensland, as will the \$2.7m for a new integrated land valuation and sales system. The \$6.1m to develop urban Crown land throughout the State and the \$2.9m towards plant and animal control throughout the State, combined with the \$1.2m for the dingo barrier fences and \$1.3m on research projects, will also benefit rural Queensland. There are also special initiatives for rural and regional areas under a new \$4.5m package.

Aboriginal health services in Queensland are to be expanded by \$1m. Some \$6m is to be provided under the joint Commonwealth/State Aboriginal Health Program. Special initiatives are provided for rural women in the areas of health, education, information and personal safety. An extra \$500,000 has been set aside to commence rural health training units and a rural health, education, training and research network. As with the other initiatives in this Budget, the Goss Government is delivering for rural and provincial Queensland.

This Budget provides a record amount of \$405.5m in 1991-92 for vocational education, training and employment initiatives—an increase of 21 per cent on that provided last year. A range of other initiatives is included in this Budget, one of which is \$13.3m which will produce 9 400 new training places.

As I am running a bit short of time, I would like to spend some little time on the Budget as it affects north Queensland. North Queenslanders will benefit from the State Government's regionalisation strategy to deliver more services and to deliver existing services more efficiently. This year's Budget contains a capital works program for north Queensland of \$403.5m. It might hurt Opposition members to know that this Government is able to implement these programs in a recession. Nevertheless, full credit goes to the Treasurer.

Mr FitzGerald: What about Tully/Millstream? What are you going to do there?

Mr DAVIES: All will be revealed in the fullness of time. More than \$33m will be spent on public housing projects in north Queensland, plus \$8m on land for future use.

Mr De Lacy: What makes you think we have any say over Tully/Millstream?

Mr FitzGerald: You don't even have an opinion.

Mr De Lacy: When you people were in Government, those places were World Heritage listed—not while we were there—and we don't have any control.

Mr DAVIES: I am quite happy to take the interjection from the Treasurer. As I said, more than \$33m will be spent on public housing projects in north Queensland, plus \$8m on land for future use. More than \$30m is allowed in this Budget to continue the north Queensland program. Regional police headquarters will be established in Townsville and Cairns. New or additional police facilities will be built at Aurukun, Cooktown, Rollingstone, Mossman, Normanton, Weipa, Smithfield, Mackay and, importantly, on Magnetic Island. The total cost of those projects is estimated to exceed \$60m.

The \$18m to \$20m Townsville Entertainment Centre becomes a reality under this State Government with a contribution of \$7m. Leading up to the election in December 1989

of the State Labor Government was the infamous \$3m Claytons guarantee, which was laughed at. At that time, all that the then Premier—now the Leader of the Opposition—could offer the Townsville community for the Townsville Entertainment Centre was a \$3m Claytons guarantee. In other words, that is the guarantee one gives when one is not giving a guarantee. Further, that guarantee was worth nothing. This Government has delivered, and matched the local government contribution of \$7m. The Breakwater Island Trust has contributed the land, making the total cost of the project around \$18m to \$20m. The flow-on effects for the Townsville economy through that injection of \$7m from the State and \$7m from the local authorities, together with money from the Breakwater Island Trust in the form of land, will be enormous. It will act as a catalyst to provide employment not only during that construction but afterwards in the form of extra activity that will be generated in the area and the further employment that I am sure will come from conventions that will be hosted in that city.

This Budget contains a special \$8m injection—a 66 per cent increase—into the QTTC for promotion and marketing of the State to capitalise on the emerging tourism recovery. That will directly benefit north Queensland, which is recovering from, firstly, the pilots dispute; secondly, the Gulf war; thirdly, the recession; and fourthly, interest rates. In that context, I find it incomprehensible that the Federal Liberal Party Opposition can contemplate a goods and services tax that will basically knock the Queensland and north Queensland tourism industries for six. There are 400 000 jobs in the tourism industry in Australia. Approximately 100 000 of those jobs are located in Queensland. It is estimated by the Inbound Tourism Organisation of Australia that 10 000 jobs will be lost to the tourism industry through such a tax. The matter of the proposed goods and services tax also concerns very much the Australian Tourism Industry Association, which has written to the Federal Opposition Tourism spokesman, David Jull, expressing its serious concern.

Mr Elder interjected.

Mr DAVIES: With the goods and services tax, the Liberal Party will remain the Opposition in the next Federal Parliament.

Time expired.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.12 p.m.): It is a disgrace that, more than three weeks since the Treasurer delivered the Budget, this is the first opportunity that the Parliament has had to scrutinise its contents. So much for parliamentary reform, so much for scrutiny by the Parliament and so much for making Ministers accountable to the people! Once again, that has proved to be the rhetoric of a Government that has promised so much but delivered so little. Never before in my time in this place has an Opposition been forced to wait for over three weeks before the opportunity was given to it to present a Budget reply. It was usual practice that the Opposition replied within a week of the delivery of the Budget or, at the most, two weeks, but not three weeks.

This Government and, in particular, its Premier and Treasurer, preferred to jet around the countryside drumming up support for the Budget and the ALP at a series of breakfasts and dinners, with a bit of fund-raising as they went around. They jumped in their jet—the new Westwind jet with a leather toilet seat—and took off to all corners of the State in an attempt to continue the pre-Budget public relations campaign and to hide from the scrutiny of Parliament. That series of breakfasts and dinners reinforced this Government's preoccupation with the politics of public relations that are designed to hoodwink reality. Quite aside from making money for the Labor Party, there were other reasons for delaying public scrutiny of this Budget.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: I ask the Treasurer to be patient and listen. As time goes on, and as this Budget document is placed under more scrutiny, he is being caught out. Quite simply, the Government did not want the Opposition to scrape the paper-thin gloss from what is a substantially deficient document. It did not want to answer questions on the land tax con job. It did not want to answer questions on the Claytons \$8m to the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation, which we were led to believe—the Parliament was told—was a loan but which turned out to be nothing at all. It did not want people to know that it had cut funding to the Criminal Justice Commission by more than 40 per cent, because that would question its commitment to reform at a time when certain Ministers opposite have had to front the CJC. It wanted to hide the \$10m to refurbish the Executive Building and the substantial increases in the Budget for the ministerial and Cabinet offices. It did not want hard-working public servants to know that the Cabinet Office staff received more than a \$1m salary increase or that the Public Sector Management Commission, which is grinding public servants' heads into the ground, was to put on 13 new staff on an average salary of \$60,000 a person.

The Opposition may also have wanted to know how the Treasurer calculated economic growth of 2.3 per cent this year. Did he dream up the figure or is there some sound reasoning behind that most important Budget outcome, remembering, of course, that last year he told us that we would see 2.4 per cent growth when, in fact, the final outcome was negative growth of 0.2 per cent? If the Opposition had been able to question the Government over those matters soon after the Budget was delivered, the truth may well have been revealed, and we could not have that, could we? It might upset the Government's delicate public relations style.

Mr Randell: It might have upset their fund-raising.

Mr BORBIDGE: It might have upset the Government's fund-raising, as the honourable member for Mirani interjects. The Opposition is appalled that it had to wait more than three weeks to reply to the Budget. That is not parliamentary reform; it is a cruel hoax. The Government talks about opportunities to question Ministers about the Budget. Figures released the other day show that, in terms of questions asked and questions answered, this Parliament has the second worst record of any Parliament in the Commonwealth of Australia.

The second and probably the last Goss Budget did nothing for business. It did nothing for the productive sector of this State. It is just more of the same. Land tax was not addressed and the reforms announced by the Treasurer must amount to the greatest con job ever perpetrated on the small business community of this State. The supposed \$40m worth of land tax reforms will amount to nothing. They will not ease the burden or arrest the increasing bankruptcies in this State, bankruptcies which last year topped 70 per cent in a 12-month period. Those Claytons reforms that the Treasurer has introduced simply mean that business will still pay increases in land tax at a rate far above the CPI, while the Government's take from land tax increases to \$215m—another broken promise! The Premier, when Leader of the Opposition, said that all State Government taxes and charges would be harnessed to the CPI. In the last year of the National Party Government in this place, land tax receipts were budgeted to be \$99m. In the Government's second Budget, the Treasurer estimates the Government's income from land tax to be \$215m—a reduction, according to honourable members opposite. I need not remind the Treasurer of the figures of our performance in Government compared with what he has done.

Mr De Lacy: Your last Budget was \$136m.

Mr BORBIDGE: The honourable member is the Treasurer. He is the man driving it and he has sought to mislead and misrepresent the people of Queensland in respect of land tax, but he has been caught out. The Gold Coast alone now contributes almost \$90m

to the Government through land tax. Perhaps the greatest joke that emanated from the celebrated keyboard of the Treasurer had to be that he would introduce legislation to stop landlords passing on land tax to tenants.

Mr Littleproud: His argument is flawed.

Mr BORBIDGE: A break-through, according to the Treasurer; but, as the honourable member for Condamine says, his argument is flawed. It will not work. The idea was well and truly canvassed by the National Party when in Government, and it simply does not work. The land-owner, as the Treasurer himself has admitted, will simply include the land tax component in the up-front lease payment. Then there is the catch, the doublecross of this conniving little man who sits opposite. Because stamp duty is payable on the total lease amount, the small business community for the first time in the history of Queensland will pay stamp duty on land tax. It will pay a tax on a tax because of what the Treasurer has done in the Budget. The Treasurer's so-called reforms will amount to a tax on a tax—a simple concept, one which was not missed by Treasurers in South Australia and Victoria who rejected the idea, but which has apparently escaped the Treasurer of this State.

The National Party will abolish land tax outright. It will no longer be part of the substantial taxation component of the business community. It is an outdated tax. It is disproportionate in slugging the growth sector of the State. It cannot be reformed. It is immoral and, as soon as there is a change of Government in Queensland, it will go. Sure, we will lose about \$200m by making that decision, but that is a short-term sacrifice that we on this side of the Committee are prepared to make. Over the medium term, that sacrifice will be repaid with interest through increased economic activity and by allowing the business community to redirect profits from taxation to investment. It is clear to see from the logic that comes across the Chamber that, if this man was Treasurer some time ago, death duties and gift duties would never have been abolished here in Queensland. It is a simple yet effective philosophical concept of Governments taking their hands out of the pockets of businesses and allowing them to get on with employing people and investing in value-adding capital equipment.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: I take the interjection from Mr De Lacy that if he had been Treasurer, death duties and gift duties would not have been abolished in Queensland. I am glad that is on the record and has been confirmed by the Treasurer and the Goss Labor Government of this State. Whilst the Treasurer will undoubtedly run a "Where will they get the money for that?" campaign in the lead-up to the election, I am confident that the business community will not be conned. We did it in the 1970s with gift and death duties and we will do it again.

Funding to the Queensland Small Business Corporation has been cut by 6 per cent in a move that reinforces our view that the Government is silently moving control of small business into the bureaucracy. The money from the QSBC has been transferred into the business program within Minister Smith's department, from where it will probably never be seen again. For many years, the small-business community has been fighting a rearguard action to save the Queensland Small Business Corporation from the hands of bureaucrats and to keep it a separate autonomous body.

Mr Beattie: You were the Minister. Why didn't you get it going?

Mr BORBIDGE: We did it. We kept it separate.

Mr Beattie: And what did you do?

Mr BORBIDGE: We increased its budget substantially. What the honourable member obviously does not appreciate is that the Goss Government has cut its budget by

6 per cent and embarked on a strategy to transfer its programs into the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development. The small-business community was desperately looking at this Budget for a lead to head off record increases in bankruptcies and to protect the largest employer in this State. What did it get? Nothing! It watched the budget for Housing and Welfare increase by 38 per cent, Environment by 27 per cent and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs by more than 100 per cent. What did the people who paid the bills get? The answer is: nothing. They had to wait until yesterday, when the Industry Minister and his minder, the Deputy Premier, announced a so-called major review of business regulations. Not only is it too little too late; it is also an initiative of the former Government that the Industry Minister has been sitting on for over 18 months and doing nothing about.

Mr Littleproud: Does the Government think social justice is equivalent to mismanagement?

Mr BORBIDGE: I agree with the comment made by the honourable member. There are certainly warped priorities on the part of members on the Government side of the Chamber. Under the chairmanship of Sir Ernest Savage, the Savage committee led to the previous Government enacting the Regulatory Revocation Act 1986. The business regulation review that was to accompany that legislation has been stalled by the present Industry Minister. He now promises a review to be completed by 1994. This is another review to assist business and it will only take three years! Meanwhile the bankruptcy rate is increasing by 70 per cent per year. This is a record, and yet the Government will have a three-year review to try to make the public service more compatible with the business community. It is too little too late, and many businesses will have well and truly closed their doors by that time.

Another con job associated with the Budget was the so-called additional \$8m to the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation. This was the initiative that was to provide 20 000 jobs in the medium term. It is the Claytons \$8m—the \$8m the Government gives when it is not allocating \$8m. The money has to be paid back from existing QTTC resources or through efficiency savings, wherever they may be found and however they are to be quantified. The Treasurer did not tell us that in his Budget Speech. That came out in questioning at a later time. The \$8m is not a budgetary addition—it has to be paid back over the next two years. The Chairman of the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation and the Minister for Tourism might like to tell this Parliament how they will repay the Treasurer that \$8m. Who will be sacked? Which offices will be closed and what programs will be cut back to find the \$8m to repay to this Treasurer who sits opposite and who is in charge of this greedy little, seedy loan affair? Perhaps the priorities of this Government and its \$8m are seen in the best light when we hark back to the \$10m that is to be spent upgrading the Premier's Executive Building office, or the more than \$1m that is to be spent on Government media offices in Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns, media offices that are quaintly referred to by the Treasurer as "bookshops". The \$8m to the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation is a con. It was designed to get con men a headline and give the impression that this Government is committed to tourism and job creation. That is rubbish. If this Government was committed to tourism and jobs, it would have provided a "no strings attached" grant to the QTTC or built the \$8m into the base Budget allocation.

Another of the massive con jobs perpetrated in this Budget surrounds the Fraser Island relief package announced with fanfare the other week. Again, this is turning out to be a con. At this time, seven forestry workers based in Maryborough are being given early retirement to allow for their replacement by displaced timber workers. In its attempt to find jobs for displaced timber-workers, the Government has decided to sack forestry workers. Dedicated forestry workers are being sacked only to be replaced by timber-workers. I suppose in the warped mind of the Treasurer it makes some sort of sense.

Mr Littleproud: Social justice.

Mr BORBIDGE: Perhaps it is social justice, as the honourable member for Condamine suggests. There are no new jobs. This is simply a shuffling of the cards in the already loaded deck. This is another Goss three-card trick, just like the three-card trick played on the Criminal Justice Commission. A 40 per cent Budget cut is quite clearly pointed out on pages 116 and 117 of Budget Paper No. 3. The Premier can point to whatever supplementary Budget information he likes, but I am saying that either I am right, or the Treasurer has misled this Parliament.

Mr De Lacy: You're wrong.

Mr BORBIDGE: For the benefit of the honourable member—my source of information—which has been verified by other sources—is simply this: I refer the Treasurer to his own Budget and pages 116 and 117 of Budget Paper No. 3. If I am wrong, I ask the Treasurer: why did he mislead this Parliament? Why did he provide false information in his Budget papers?

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: I can understand the Treasurer's sensitivity. He has been caught out again. He is the greatest con man ever to sit in this Chamber. To disguise his paper-thin commitment to Fitzgerald, the Premier pointed out that in some obscure Budget document he could prove that he was actually going to increase funding to the CJC. Mr Goss said that the CJC had spent only \$17m of the original \$20m budget. Now the Premier will give back the money to the commission and allow it to be spent this year. I say to the Premier and the Treasurer that they have cut funding to the CJC and they have done it as part of their politically motivated vendetta against that body. This vendetta had its origins in the poker machine report and has been cemented in recent times by the appearance of a number of Goss Government Ministers before the Criminal Justice Commission. We know that the Premier wants to get at Sir Max; we know it was the Premier who feverishly beat up the licence story on the Saturday after he received Crown law advice; we know he wants to get at the member for Brisbane Central; and we know that he thinks the CJC is an unnecessary impediment to his Government's excesses. This Labor Government does not forgive and it does not forget. The CJC budget cut is part of this Government's program of getting even and paying back dues. The pay-back is contained on pages 116 and 117 of Budget Paper No. 3.

Another matter I wish to briefly address is poker machines, for which the Treasurer has budgeted a revenue receipt totalling \$9m this year. It should be remembered, of course, that the Treasurer budgeted for the receipt of \$10m in poker machine revenue during the last financial year.

Mr Stephan: How much did he get?

Mr BORBIDGE: I can inform the honourable member for Gympie that he did not get one cent of it.

Mr Littleproud: Didn't they say \$30m of support for sport over three years?

Mr BORBIDGE: As the honourable member for Condamine points out, again the Government has been caught out. The Treasurer is now continuing on a course of destruction by forcing poker machines on an electorate that simply does not want to be associated with organised crime. The Government is spending more than \$130m on poker machines. It has approved six tenderers, some of which will be the subject of attention during the current session of Parliament. I am reliably informed that the successful tender for poker machines will be announced soon and that the approximate tender bids range from Olympic at \$6,300 per machine; Ainsworth at \$6,500 per machine; Universal at \$6,700 per machine and IGT at \$7,100 per machine. The Government's stated intention is

to purchase 20 000 machines. This equates with an overall expenditure of taxpayers' money in the vicinity of \$140m. The necessary communications for these machines—which will be necessary for every tenderer except IGT, as fate would have it—will be the subject of yet another tender. All I can say to the Treasurer is that he should not introduce poker machines until he is absolutely sure that everyone on his list, all his approved manufacturers and all the people to whom he is speaking and with whom he is doing business check out. He has not listened to the allegations I have made in this Parliament. He has not checked them out. In the not-too-distant-future, he will be sitting in this Parliament with more egg on his face than he has now.

How can this Treasurer be trusted with the carriage of a Budget when one considers his efforts so far in respect of poker machines and the tenders for the new Brisbane casino? He still does not know whether or not he will allow poker machines in the new casino, despite the fact that they are referred to openly in the tender documents. He did not have the guts to tell prospective tenderers that the Government had already made up its mind to site the casino on the South Bank. He left it to the Deputy Premier to make the announcement to startled tenderers and to thousands of viewers last week. It was a costly surprise to the tenderers, as many had spent hundreds of thousands of dollars preparing tenders to accommodate the three sites. It simply was not possible to prepare drawings based on one site and attempt to transpose them onto the other two sites. If a tenderer wanted to bid for all three sites, the same process had to be undertaken three times. That would have been okay if the Government had been fair dinkum about considering the three sites, but it was not. Through the Minister responsible for the South Bank—the Deputy Premier, who is No. 2 in Cabinet—the Government indicated a clear preference for the South Bank site. That preference will cost a lot of tenderers a great deal of money.

Mr Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: I say to the honourable member who interjects that if the Government wanted the casino on the South Bank site, it should have said so from day one and should not have announced three preferred sites. This is just another example of a Government that is out of touch with the business community; a Government that is demonstrating unfettered arrogance; and a Government that simply does not care. More than 18 months into the life of this Parliament, the Goss Labor Government is still unable to claim one major economic development initiative. Not one job-creating economic development has been announced at a time when unemployment has topped 10 per cent. There is still no life at Boyne Island. There is still no solution to the problem of the Yabulu nickel refinery. There is still no Townsville nickel refinery. The enterprise zone and its 19 projects have gone; they have walked out the door. The MFP has also gone, and major developments throughout this State have effectively stalled under this Government.

Mr Littleproud: Is Ensham going yet?

Mr BORBIDGE: No. Ensham is another one that is not under way—the list is endless. Even the Premier's own electorate has witnessed the closure of the Expo Furniture manufacturing facility and the likely loss of almost 200 jobs. The principal of that company phoned the Premier, but got no answer. His employees were prepared to work for nothing to see the company through and were prepared to negotiate a voluntary employment agreement to save the company and their jobs, but under the legislation enacted by this Government to abolish voluntary employment agreements, they were not allowed to do that. This Government is faced with the prospect of 200 people being out of work, yet the dithering, bumbling Premier and the Minister for Industry did not even have the decency to phone back. They talk about manufacturing industry, but when it comes to throwing the lifebuoy, then—in common with so many members of the Labor Party—they go missing in action. The Tech-Quad project to link the major universities has fallen over.

A \$30,000 grant in this Budget will not reinvigorate it until the Government shows some understanding of and interest in information technology. This is a fairy floss Budget. This is a Government that relies on its well-oiled public relations machine. This is a Government that promotes rhetoric ahead of reality, but a Government can rely on public relations for only so long. That time is fast approaching for this non-performing Government and as time goes on, people will start to realise that this is a non-performing Treasurer.

Mr BARBER (Cooroora) (5.37 p.m.): I listened with interest to the earlier speaker and one thing is clear: the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has refused to listen to the last speaker on my side of the Chamber, who said that this Budget has been acclaimed Statewide by all commentators. Not only did the honourable member on the other side of the Chamber not listen, he lived by that old adage that if one is going to tell a lie, one tells a big one. That piece of misinformation is in respect to question-time in this Chamber. Question-time is a very important part of the procedure of Parliament. Mr Borbidge alleged that question-time, and the number of questions asked, has suffered under this Government. Nothing could be further from the truth. In the last session of the Parliament, 1 104 questions without notice were asked. In the previous year, under Mr Borbidge's Government, 137 questions without notice were asked. In the year before that, there were 191 questions without notice. It is clear that, compared with the previous session, between twice as many and three times as many questions without notice were asked in the last session of Parliament. The sitting days are very comparable across-the-board. I have quoted figures from the recently released report of the Parliamentary Services Commission.

Not long before the Budget, Treasurer De Lacy visited the town of Noosa. He outlined to a small group of businesspeople—who may well have voted for Mr Borbidge's Government in the past—the economic philosophies of this Government. The Treasurer outlined the thinking underpinning the Budget, which was then one week away, and such philosophies as not borrowing to put in place social infrastructure were very well received by that group. Since that meeting—and I might say that not many Ministers of the Crown have been seen in Noosa in years past—the businesspeople have said to me—

Mr McGrady: The white-shoe brigade.

Mr BARBER: Quite so. There was a bevy of National Party Ministers on the Gold Coast. This small group of businesspeople were very pleased that the Treasurer came to Noosa, because in years past those people felt like a Cinderella business community. Secondly, those people were very impressed with the economic underpinning of the Budget as outlined by the Treasurer. The Treasurer told them that the Goss Government was seeking to create a climate with this Budget that has been introduced to enable private enterprise to get on with the creation of wealth. This Government has done that in a number of ways. First of all, there have been no new taxes. That was a 1989 election promise. People like to make much of politicians' promises, but of all the promises the Goss Government made, the promise of no new taxes was the one to deliver. Let me assure the Committee that this Government has not wavered from that promise one iota. To create that climate, the payroll tax threshold has been increased, and this is unparalleled in the other States of Australia. The members of the Coolum Chamber of Commerce were very pleased to hear about the increase in the payroll tax threshold when I addressed them the day after the Budget was delivered. A land tax concession was the third plank in creating a climate for private enterprise. The rate has decreased from 2.1 per cent to 1.8 per cent. That is the first decrease since 1969. Churches, charities and retirement villages will receive exemptions from land tax.

The Goss Government has set out to create a climate for the people of Queensland to create wealth. "How sweet it is" was the *Sunshine Coast Daily* headline the day after the Budget, and how sweet it was indeed. The Goss Government Budget creates a climate for

the people of the Sunshine Coast and, in particular, the people in my electorate of Cooroora. There is an ethos developing up there that, for an optimum regional economy, we have to do better what we do well now. This Government wants to put under a magnifying glass those economic activities that the region does well and create a hothouse effect. The Sunshine Coast Regional Development Board has advised me that Queensland's tourism market on the Sunshine Coast has been well documented and diagnosed. The market is a sun-loving, family market. People want educational experiences combining beach, river, farm and the environment. People want health resort holidays. How does one create a climate for the Sunshine Coast and help the region excel at what it does well? I want to return to that topic later.

The press usually holds back its accolades from Governments, but how sweet it was the morning after the Budget to read the headlines Statewide, as the member for Townsville has outlined to the Committee. Since the Budget, I have gone around to various community groups and I have been able to explain the Budget material to them and they have been very impressed. A group called the Meeting Place is a neighbourhood centre for the town of Nambour. The Sunshine Coast hinterland has suffered historically from isolation, lack of public transport, and lack of delivery of Government services. The Nambour Meeting Place—

Mr FitzGerald: It is long way out back.

Mr BARBER: It is a long way out, but the Meeting Place at Nambour seeks to meet the needs of the town of Nambour. When I addressed the group on Friday night at their annual general meeting, they were very impressed with the social justice Budget. I will outline a few of the points in this Government's social justice budget paper: \$620m extra for Government home-ownership programs, such as HOME and HOME Shared, that will assist 8 000 Queensland householders to own a home of their own. There has been an increase of \$5m to \$14.5m under the Community Housing Partnership Program. There has been a family package initiative of \$4.5m to provide a range of services in the city, rural and remote areas, and \$13.4m has been allocated to fund and resource child-care services in Queensland.

Yesterday, I addressed another group that is seeking to prop up a society that is always under strain. I refer to the Cooroy Community Family Support Centre, which is also in the hinterland town of Cooroy. That area also experiences the historical problems of the hinterland areas on the Sunshine Coast that I have just outlined. However, the members of that group were very impressed with the social justice elements of the Budget of which I have just spoken, and also the women's initiatives in the Budget, which I read to them and which I will outline now. Those initiatives include a quarter of a million dollars for a Queensland anti-discrimination commission; \$11m to fund a range of domestic violence, rape crisis, sexual assault and safety programs for women and girls; 3 305 extra child-care places and seven new child-care centres in Queensland. Most significantly for the Sunshine Coast, total Commonwealth and State funding of \$4.5m has been allocated for the development of breast and cervical cancer detection services. I understand that the Sunshine Coast is to receive such a base.

Mr McGrady: There is one in Townsville, too.

Mr BARBER: I am very pleased to hear that the north will have a base as well. The sum of \$132,000 has been allocated for a women's consultative council to link government and women in the community. An amount of \$1.14m in ongoing funding has been allocated to the Women's Policy Unit within Government to advise Government on the status of women, women's issues and Women's Infolink, which is a shop-front women's information and referral service. Finally, the Sunshine Coast, which is a very

sporting area and a great place for water sports, will receive \$100,000 in ongoing funding for the Women's Sports Advancement Unit.

Capital works was a major plank in the Government's attempt at introducing counter-cyclical economics in a time of recession. In the depths of the 1930s depression in the United States, Roosevelt came to power with his revolutionary new deal. It contained reforms. It stopped marketplace rip-offs. There were pump-priming projects, labour market reforms and attempts at equity across the board. It contained restructuring of the economy and reform of society. I am led to believe that it broke on the United States like a tidal wave.

Mr McGrady: Happy days are here again.

Mr BARBER: Is that right? Often it was hard to tell where restructuring left off and reform started, but it certainly was a package of great significance in American history and great news for an American economy that had really stultified, suffered from inequalities, and departed from the basis of American democracy when it first kicked off. I suggest that this Budget continues the Goss Government's new deal for the State of Queensland. The day after the Budget was presented, Alan Wood from the *Australian* described the capital works program as a Keynesian approach to recession. I want to argue that the capital works program is a part of the Government's sensible economic management of Queensland, as contained in its first Budget. It is an initiative to stimulate building and service industries at a time of recession and, again, it has been welcomed by the Sunshine Coast community. The announcement in February of accelerated capital works in the electorate of Cooroora was greeted by an area that has been a cinderella part of Queensland. The items of that accelerated capital works program which affected my electorate were a \$6m Block 6 for the Nambour Hospital; a new State school and preschool at Pacific Paradise; and a new high school for the Noosa Heads area, clearly delivering a 1989 election promise by Paul Braddy that a Goss Government would construct a high school in Noosa Heads in its first term. On the whole, local contractors have received the benefit of our accelerated capital works program on the central and northern Sunshine Coast.

I want to talk about the Nambour Hospital. The inability to attract a psychiatrist to the hospital this year led recently to the closure of psychiatric ward 1A. It was a converted surgical ward and its services were inadequate, despite the dedicated work of staff in that ward. The new Block 6 provided for in the accelerated capital works program in the Budget will include a purpose-built psychiatric ward and is likely to attract a qualified psychiatrist to that hospital. I want to praise the work of ARAFMI—a group designed to support the relatives of the mentally ill—for its lobbying regarding a psychiatric unit at the Nambour Hospital. I trust that that group, like me, looks forward to the construction of Block 6 and the attraction of a psychiatrist to the Nambour Hospital.

I turn to the Pacific Paradise State school and preschool. The Mudjimba/Pacific Paradise area was neglected historically by successive Maroochy Shire Councils. For years and years, until recent incumbents in Divisions 2 and 5 in Maroochy Shire, Coolum and North Shore representatives used to vote money away from these towns in favour of areas such as Buderim and Mooloolaba. A bit like the mythical town of Brigadoon, a top-notch State school is to land in the middle of Pacific Paradise in time for the next school year. It will be implanted on that landscape out of the blue. This school will be constructed at least one year earlier than proposed previously. So an oasis-like Pacific Paradise State school and preschool, I would suggest—given that the town has been neglected for some time—will descend upon that area a year earlier than had been planned. This has caused some problems. Parent meetings have been called to try to ascertain how students are going to get to that school across a busy David Low Way, which at present has no provision for pedestrians, and down unsealed dirt roads to the school. For the benefit of

those not familiar with the town, I point out that most of the town consists of unsealed roads. A Pacific Paradise School Safety Committee has been formed by parents, and that committee has lobbied Government hard and skilfully with a view to getting a solution to the problem of providing pedestrian access at the school. I am hopeful that a solution will be found before the commencement of the school year and that traffic lights will be installed soon after the start of the school year.

Departmental meetings have been called between all interested players in the school—the Transport Department, the Education Department, the Administrative Services Department, the Maroochy Shire Council, parents, others and me, and we are working cooperatively to solve the infrastructure problems involved in imposing a state-of-the-art school on a town that has not the infrastructure to support it. I hope that those problems will be worked through and that Pacific Paradise will deliver to a growing area the very best in Australian State education facilities, because I am confident that is what our schools deliver these days. The parents are keen and excited about what is on offer to their children. They are champing at the bit to kick off the school community and school committees. In the appropriation debate earlier this year, I said that Budget moneys, properly allocated, can create vibrant communities. This Budget allocation to Pacific Paradise will create a focus in that town that it never really had before. The school will be a boon for the town. This Goss Labor Government Budget delivered that school under the accelerated capital works program at least 12 months earlier than anticipated.

Finally on the subject of the accelerated capital works program, I wish to talk about funding for the Sunshine Beach high school at an estimated cost of \$5.5m. Let me make it clear that in the short term the National Party had no intention of building a high school in Noosa Heads. It took Paul Braddy to come to town in 1989 to promise a high school in Noosa Heads in the first term of the Goss Government. At that time, 700 students were transported by bus along dangerous roads to high schools at Coolum and Cooroy, and more than that number are currently being transported until the school opens for the new school year. The need for such a school was clear decades ago when a high school was planned and constructed at Cooroy. I am told that, on demographic principles, it should have been built at the beach, hence the problem in Noosa Heads that we have inherited. Under this Goss Government Budget, the very best in Australian high school education will be delivered to the town of Noosa, and it is not before time. Blocks of purpose-devoted buildings will surround thematic courtyards giving learning focus to the arts, crafts, sciences and so on. In last year's Budget, Cooroy State High School received a performing arts block. If that building is any indication of the facilities that are provided in new high schools in Queensland, Noosa Heads can look forward to a magnificent campus for its children. Finally on this topic, let me praise the "campusing" of education that is occurring in the Girraween Estate at Noosa Heads. It is a credit to the town-planning of the Noosa Shire Council that it has provided for the Sunshine Beach State School and the St Thomas Moore primary school. It has also provided a serviced allotment to the Government to construct the high school. The rugby union ovals and the bicentennial hall have been provided. In future, we look forward to a tremendous education precinct in the Girraween Estate.

I turn to the tourism budget and confirm that tourism is the major identifiable industry in my electorate on the Sunshine Coast. Its natural attractions are cementing the Sunshine Coast into the domestic tourism marketplace as an ideal family getaway. A fortnight ago, I attended the annual general meeting of Tourism Sunshine Coast and the feelings in the industry were very buoyant. Looking out over the idyllic scenery at the Mooloolaba yacht harbour, the new QTTC managing director, Ken Roseberry, had no trouble understanding the vigour of Sunshine Coast tourism. Of course, the Budget contains \$8m extra for the QTTC to expand its programs and do better what it now does

well. Because he came from private enterprise, Mr Roseberry was gratified by that injection of money for the QTTC and assured the meeting that effort and results will be rewarded with funding through the QTTC. He made it clear to the meeting that lackadaisical approach, dross and slack attitudes will be cut out of the tourism industry under his chairmanship and that funding will be channelled to those people who do their jobs well. Coordinating efforts are continuing on the Sunshine Coast to try to get together what the Sunshine Coast does well in tourism in order to maximise the economic returns to the region. Tourism Sunshine Coast compiles and distributes calendars of Sunshine Coast events. The recent Festival of Flowers was a tremendously successful event. In the northern part of my electorate, the Noosa Shire Council is also facilitating the coordination of tourism events through the proposed Noosa events group. It is proposed that lists will be compiled of the events that occur in Noosa throughout the year. The Noosa Arts Festival, the art festivals at Christmas-time and the Pomona King of the Mountain—all tourist events that have such widespread attraction throughout south-east Queensland—are to be coordinated to ensure they do not clash, and promoted. In providing an additional \$8m to QTTC, the Budget will help the region do better what it already does very well.

Sitting suspended from 5.58 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr BARBER: I turn now to education. Schools are becoming increasingly a community focus. Communities are gathering around school campuses to pursue community pursuits involving child-care, opportunity shops, committee meetings and sports. In order to grow into a healthier society, people have to be educated and money has to be spent on education. In its first two years of office, the Goss Government has spent an extra \$260m on education. This year's Budget allocates \$2.1 billion for the Education Department, which is the largest allocation for education in Queensland's history. It will provide an extra 472 teachers in Queensland schools. Some \$3.2m is provided for the Remote Area Incentive Scheme for teachers and there is an allocation of \$158.4m for school capital works. The Budget will provide financial aid for parents and p. and c. groups through more than \$21m for school textbook allowances and more than \$40m for school grants. It provides \$7m for the development of the new Student Education Profile to replace the TE score, and \$5m to improve literacy and numeracy in schools.

In my part of the world, one of the bricks and mortar allocations contained in the Budget is for the construction of an amenities block at the Mapleton State School. That facility is greatly needed and will be provided not before time. It is welcomed greatly by the school community. The Cooroy primary school was allocated a new library to replace a room that was formerly a filled-in space under a teaching block. The Coolum primary school will receive a much-needed, long-awaited covered play area and tuckshop. All of these facilities improve the school communities as well as the communities around them. The Goss Government has a commitment to teachers' salaries and career paths, which will mean that the education sector will flourish. It will lead to better morale, therefore better service delivery by teachers and better-educated kids. I would argue that it is an economic decision to fund education, because it leads to a trained work force, more economic activity, less crime, fewer prisoners, the economy ticking over, and children obtaining skills for life. In this new industrial revolution, children have to have the skills for change and skills for life.

Land tax reforms were welcomed by private enterprise. It was pleasing to see land tax relief for churches, charities and retirement villages. The first drop in the land tax rates since 1969 was also welcome. Land tax is a tax on wealth. Unlike the proposed GST, it is targeted at those most able to pay it. However, anomalies have occurred, not the least of which being in the area of landlords passing on land tax obligations to tenants. Where

valuations have increased, this tax was becoming harsh for small business. In all commercial leases after 1 January 1992, landlords will be precluded from passing land tax on to tenants. Small business has been relieved of the overheads that can cripple it. There are some reforms to small business in the area of commercial documents that I would suggest need to be looked at. The first is the landlord's ability to pass on to the tenant legal costs related to leases. I think that is an onerous obligation. It happens across the board. My view is that if a person obtains legal advice, he should pay for it himself. Paying for one's own legal advice is more akin to the traditional solicitor/client relationship. Similarly, mortgagees are passing on to mortgagors across the board the costs of mortgage documents. I think that is an onerous impost on people who want to get into home-ownership. Again, I believe that if a person gets legal advice, he should pay for it himself. I believe that lawyers do not have to be as careful in the quantum of their accounts if the person to whom they are sending the account is not their own client. I say that because if someone's client is sent a nasty bill, the client has a way of getting on the phone and telling the person who has sent him the bill what he thinks of him. But if the bill is sent to a client of someone else, there is less cause for caution. In the future, I want to pursue this point for reform. The land tax reforms of the Goss Government Budget create a climate in which small business can get on and do its job. The parties opposite have long claimed small business as their constituency. In my view, small business has never had it so good as in the current Goss Government Budget. Payroll tax concessions, which will cost \$14m, will reduce payroll tax for 6 000 employers Statewide who manage enterprises of about 100 employees each.

Finally, I want to talk about positioning Queensland in the Australian market. The *Business Review Weekly* of 30 August wrote about the new world alliances of the EC bloc and the American trading bloc and how they are all in a state of flux since the collapse of the communist regimes in eastern Europe. Australia has to find its way in the new world order. After two Goss Government Budgets, Queensland's position in the Australian order is much clearer. Queensland is the low-tax State. Land tax has been reduced; payroll tax has been reduced. Queensland is a State that is prepared to fight for fiscal equalisation in Federal forums. Queensland is a State of balanced Budgets. It is the State of micro-economic reform through Public Sector Management Commission reforms, through new procedures within Administrative Services and through the pursuit of merit in the public sector. In this Budget, \$200m is available from savings in the public sector to spend on the Goss Government's social reform agenda. In positioning Queensland interstate, it has become clear what Queensland is not. It is not the State of crushing debt. It is not the State of high taxes. It is not the State of fuel taxes. The State that frees up the market to create wealth is the State in which Australians want to live. Queensland is that State, with the Government intervening in the marketplace only it should, to stop small business being ripped off, to create job training in Nev Warburton's Department of Employment, Vocational Education, Training and Industrial Relations, and to educate our children.

My region of Noosa is also trying to position itself in a changing environment. Budget allocations have helped position Noosa in the State and in the world scene. As a tourism destination, Noosa has a world identity. It is known internationally as a world-class place to visit or in which to reside. The Noosa council's initiatives are helping to position the town and region in the Australian marketplace. Recently, the Noosa council convened workshops for opinion leaders in the area to come together to try to figure out what the region's future may be. No small part of the decision-making process and the positioning of Noosa in the Australian marketplace is the Goss Government's decision this year to reject the Leisuremark rezoning for the Noosa north shore. June's Cabinet decision was pivotal in positioning Noosa in the Australian and international tourism marketplace. Noosa remains an end-of-the-line tourist destination, which Byron Bay and Coffs Harbour are not. Noosa is the pretty end-of-the-line place to go for one's holiday. There are

economic benefits in that decision, because Noosa is the last stop for the proposed World Heritage listed area of Cooloola and Fraser Island.

Mr McGrady: Cooloolum?

Mr BARBER: Cooloolum will be the second-last stop for that area. The south shore of the Noosa River should have a hothouse effect as the only area providing services and economic support to the industries that will be living off the World Heritage area.

The decision to reject the Leisuremark rezoning delivers what Noosa fought for for many years. Although it was a hard decision, it was the correct decision. It delivered to the town the result for which it had fought. In positioning Noosa for the future, the legacy of past Budget decisions sets it up well for the coming years. I refer to the sealing of the Boreen Point Road, child-care centres at Cooloolum and Tewantin, the Transport Department one-stop shop at Tewantin and permanent baby health clinics at Noosa and Mudjimba.

Time expired.

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong—Leader of the Liberal Party) (7.38 p.m.): Queensland households are worse off by \$10 a week, or \$500 a year, with this State Budget—the second Goss Labor State Budget, which does nothing for the jobless in this State. It comprises hidden new taxes and tax increases above the rate of inflation. The Budget does nothing to create jobs in this State in the long term. The Treasurer is very much aware of that. The Budget does nothing at all to help the private sector within this State. Wayne Goss' hidden rip-off of Queenslanders is continuing with this Budget.

In this Budget, State taxation revenue will increase by 11.4 per cent—four times the expected rate of inflation. So much for keeping taxes and charges at or below the rate of inflation, as promised by Labor and this Treasurer! Honourable members know how deceitful they can be. It is quite clear from this Budget that Labor's deceits continue. We are experiencing a time of recession that the Labor Party has brought on in this nation. That recession is putting small business out of business, creating a huge pool of jobless in the community and wrecking the economy of this State and nation. At the same time, this State is experiencing a drought, which is one of the severest in over 80 years and is affecting large sections of the State.

There is very little opportunity for any real chance of any significant pick-up in the economy. As a consequence of that, this Budget contains an increase of 11.4 per cent in revenue from State taxes and charges. That increase, which is four times the rate of inflation, must be seen for what it is. This Budget sets out to rip money off the ordinary taxpayers and householders of this State from Coolangatta to Cooktown, Thursday Island, Camooweal and Birdsville and back to the border. Clearly, this Budget does absolutely nothing for the people of Queensland in the long term. It might be good for the Government. It might allow the Government to achieve record returns to bolster up the revenue so that the Treasurer and Premier can go around Queensland talking about their significant expenditure. However, it does nothing by way of helping the small-business community.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: The Treasurer knows that full well. He sits there mouthing words while he is ripping people off left, right and centre. Queenslanders are worse off as tax increases come out of their pockets. One has only to look at the situation in relation to jobs. The unemployment rate in this State is a sad indictment of this Treasurer.

Let me consider some of those taxes and charges. I start with land tax, about which members have heard a lot today. I will come back to the Liberal Party's position shortly. Firstly, I want to look at what Labor is doing about land tax. Payroll tax and land tax receipts will still increase. The concessions announced, which are negligible, do not strike

at the heart of the problems. Even the Government in Victoria, that much-despised State—and this Treasurer has been attacking his Labor colleagues in Victoria—the Government can give real, substantial reductions in land tax. But that is not the case in Queensland. The estimated revenue from land tax in this Budget is up from \$190m in 1990 to \$215m. Even if one subtracts \$11m for the Commonwealth authorities that were previously exempt, the figure is still \$204m. The Treasurer cannot deny that the figure keeps increasing. It is in his own Budget documents.

The same applies to payroll tax. The estimated revenue from payroll tax during 1990-91 was \$790m. The estimate for 1991-92 is \$810m. Once again, payroll tax—that tax on jobs—is increasing. Members know how the Labor Party trumpeted on radio and television about the significant reductions that it was making. But in point of fact, those are only more Labor lies, and the Treasurer knows it. His own Budget documents highlight the fact that land tax and payroll tax revenue receipts to the Government during this financial year will increase. According to these documents, the Government is not forgoing revenue at all. Clearly, the Government must get off the back of business. There is no attempt to do that in this Budget. The business community is burdened by a maze of Government red tape. The initiatives with land tax and payroll tax are cosmetic. They are very Mickey Mouse indeed, and the people have seen the Budget for what it is. The Treasurer knows that full well. The Queensland Liberals are reaffirming their policy—as stated prior to the last State election in 1989—for abolishing land tax. It is a commitment that we gave then and we give again now. The Treasurer does not have to get himself into a lather of sweat about it, trying to get around the State and talk up what he is doing for members of the small-business community because they see through him and know him for what he is.

In relation to revenue raised—State taxes and charges rose by some \$465m, from \$4,074m in 1990-91 to \$4,539m in 1991-92. That is an 11.4 per cent increase. I read those figures out because I know that the Treasurer has trouble with figures. I always remember the day when the Treasurer found out what the State debt was. He rushed into this Chamber in a lather of sweat, but nobody had bothered to tell him that the figure was in the previous year's Budget documents. What a little faux pas that was! The Treasurer is still getting the egg off his face and I suggest that he has a lot of egg on his face over this issue also. Commonwealth payments to Queensland increased by 10.8 per cent, from \$3,804m in 1990-91 to \$4,210m in 1991-92. Total revenue from Commonwealth and State sources has increased by \$870m—an increase of 10.7 per cent. This Government is the biggest-spending Government in Australia, with outlays increasing by more than 11 per cent. Despite the pledge at the recent Premiers Conference to curtail Government spending, the Government in this State is the biggest-spending Government in this nation, with expenditure increasing by more than 11 per cent.

The Treasurer would have us believe that the spending was funded by increased public service efficiencies, which, of course, is simply bunkum, and he knows that it is bunkum. He has increased the State public service by 7 500. I refer the Treasurer to the figures from the Australia Bureau of Statistics. There is no use in the Treasurer hopping up and saying that those public servants are teachers, nurses and policemen, because he knows and the Chamber knows that that is not the case. He would be lucky to make up 1 500 from those sources. The vast majority of those people come from other sectors of Government operations. One has only to look at the departmental figures to find that in some departments staff numbers have increased significantly. Once again, the Treasurer is trying to deceive the people by indicating that he is spending more but raising less revenue in taxes. He would have people believe that he defies gravity and walks on water in relation to those matters, but we know that that is not the case.

I turn to the new taxes that the Treasurer has introduced. The Government guarantee fee, or the borrowing charge, is a tax that was introduced last year, was kept on

this year and has been increased. Other Government charges introduced this year amount to \$155m and comprise dividend payments in lieu of tax and guarantee fees from a number of Government enterprises. The Treasurer lists some of those as Suncorp, the Queensland Treasury Corporation, the Queensland Investment Corporation and the Queensland Electricity Commission. In relation to Queensland electricity prices—last financial year, we saw for the first time a breaking of the three-year freeze on electricity charges, the prime reason being the Treasurer's borrowing charges of some \$17m which the Electricity Commission, in the end, had to pass on to Queensland consumers. This year, we will once again see an increase in electricity charges. Under this Government, taxes and charges are being passed on to electricity-consumers—to the mums and dads and householders across the State.

We see exactly what the Treasurer's rhetoric is all about. His claims of increased services and cuts in taxes in the middle of a recession are a load of rubbish. The Treasurer knows that and a study of the State Budget clearly shows it. A study of the Budget shows also that the Treasurer has introduced two new State taxes and charges: one that he brought in last year and another that he introduced this year. He does not mention anything about the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Trust Fund—that hollow log. This year, I am sure that the Treasurer will raid a few more hollow logs. Funds are now being transferred across from those trust funds. In the Budget for this financial year, some of the \$100m that was in fidelity guarantee trust funds, of which I have spoken in the Chamber, is being transferred out. This Budget has provided no boost to private sector confidence. The Treasurer knows it and the community knows it. That is why Labor is in all sorts of trouble around the State, particularly with the small business sector. That is why the Government is getting a caning from Coolangatta to Port Douglas. Government members are having to front up to one public rally after another trying to talk their way out of it, but it will not get them anywhere.

In the 15 months since the beginning of the last financial year, the Government has broken more than 1 279 promises in relation to taxes that have increased more than the rate of inflation. There is no use in the Treasurer coming into the Chamber and pretending that the financial year now runs from March to March. Everybody knows that that is bunkum. It is a nonsense. That is one of De Lacy's walking-on-water, Donald Duck prophecies. He said, "I have suddenly found the State debt." He knew what the State debt was. It was in last financial year's figures. It is a load of bunkum. The Treasurer and the community know that the financial year runs from 1 July to 30 June, so talking about March to March will get him nowhere at all. People are seeing that the Treasurer is a politician who, along with his Premier, cannot be trusted. Every time he and his Premier break a promise to Queenslanders, another Queenslanders loses his job. I cite the example of the record unemployment under the Government. There are 1 279 reasons why one in three young Queenslanders is unemployed. That is our next generation, and the Government cannot find jobs for them. The Treasurer comes up with one or two training programs but, by hell, there are no jobs out there. The Treasurer knows it and the community knows it. This Government is not interested in creating jobs.

I turn now to small businesses. There are 1 279 reasons why small business bankruptcies are increasing at an annual rate of 55 per cent. That is hardly a proud record at all, yet what does this Government hit them with? It hits them with increased land and pay-roll taxes for this financial year. It is no wonder that manufacturing investment in Queensland is amongst the lowest of any State in this nation. This is the worst recession in 60 years, yet this Labor Government has increased its public sector numbers. There have been no improvements in the private sector. All we have seen is negative growth. The Treasurer squeals like a stuck pig whenever the Queensland Liberal Party talks about abolishing land tax. Over the coming months we will talk a lot more about it, because the

7 500 additional public servants are costing the Government some \$200m extra in salaries and wages. That is what the State bureaucracy blow-out is costing this Government. Those figures mean that if the State public service was reduced by that number or the Government had not appointed the 7 500 additional public servants, it would have had the funds to abolish land tax. The Government knows it, the community knows it and the people employed in the small business sector know it.

This Government continues to tax Queenslanders by stealth, contrary to the promises made by the Treasurer and the Premier. On 9 September this year, Mr Goss said on ABC radio—four days after the Treasurer's Budget—that the drought could have a bad effect on the State Budget. This was an admission by the Premier. Prior to that, he was running around the State talking about a "dry spell". Where is the Minister for Primary Industries? The best he could do was go outside with a pink broly. He was running around the primary producing areas of this State with a pink umbrella. "Rain-maker" Casey—what a farce! This Government does not have a clue. We are in the middle of one of the worst droughts in this State's history. It is happening in the south-east corner, the Darling Downs and the South Burnett, yet the best the Premier can do is to get "rain-maker" Casey out with his pink broly. There are yet more extraordinary Government calculations that have not been included in this Budget because no allowance whatsoever has been made for the long drought that is upon us. Unfortunately, it is prophesied that the drought will be with us for some time. It is worth while noting that the Treasurer's Budget outcomes are based on economic growth in Queensland of 2.3 per cent, some 40 per cent higher than the national growth forecast by the Federal Government, yet at the same time we are faced with one of the severest droughts on record. Even today, I could not help but notice that certain shires in this State were declared drought stricken and have been added to the growing list of drought declared areas of Queensland.

Again, Queensland is faced with negative retail trade figures across-the-board. There has been negative growth for the last four months. Queensland is the only State that has been faced with that problem. The April figures record a negative growth of 0.1 per cent and May, June and July show negative growth of 0.3 per cent. Yet the Treasurer keeps telling us how this State will lead Australia out of the recession. It seems to me that, because of these figures and the drought that has struck this State, we are leading Australia into the recession. That statement shows that Labor is out of touch with the real world. In fact, Queenslanders are cutting back on food and clothing, but Mr Goss and the Labor Party keep stating that Queensland is leading the way out of this recession. Ordinary householders are cutting back on food and clothing. What an indictment of this Labor Government, which is supposedly a party that represents the workers! If this drought continues, we face the prospect of higher taxes and charges in Mr Goss's third Budget. No doubt he will try to avoid that Budget by going to the polls. There have been severe cut-backs in Primary Industries at a time when rural producers are suffering from not only a severe drought, but also low commodity prices. Does this Government give a damn? Not on your life! It continues to cut back. The cuts are certainly occurring in the primary producing areas. So much for Queensland leading Australia out of this recession.

I turn now to look at spending across-the-board. The situation in regard to law and order in the outer suburbs is getting worse. Today, contrary to the Minister's ongoing statements, there has been virtually no increase in police numbers. I know we hear a lot from the Ministers, the Treasurer and Mr Goss about official police numbers, yet when one visits suburban stations it is impossible to find the additional police. They are nowhere to be found. What the Government has forgotten to tell us is that the Police Service is suffering a record resignation rate. It quietly overlooks this resignation rate when it talks about the increase in police numbers. Honourable members might care to have a look at the figures that were tabled in this Parliament in answer to a question recently. They will

see that there is an all-time record number of resignations from the Police Service. Never before has morale been so low in the Queensland Police Service, which is a clear indictment on this Government. Never before have so many people left the service because they are fed up with this Government, which has a policy of being soft on crime and dangerous criminals. This is typical of Labor Party policy in regard to police and law and order. This Government has a "revolving door" prison policy and has cut back funding to prisons. I am sure that we will continue to see a break-down in prison security. Prisoners are literally walking through the front gates because of this "revolving door" prison policy. Already this year there have been a record number of escapes. There have been 80 escapes.

Mr Quinn: Eighty-one.

Mr BEANLAND: Eighty-one! One cannot even walk into this Chamber and turn one's back for a moment without another prisoner escaping. Another one has popped out tonight. No doubt he simply walked through the front gate as they usually do. It will not be long before the figure of 100 is reached, which will be a record number of escapes in any one year. Police numbers are not increasing, as this Government would lead us to believe, and at the same time the Government has a soft law and order policy which has resulted in a reduction in the number of security personnel in our gaols. It was not so long ago when prisoners were kept behind bars and ordinary householders were able to go about their duties and responsibilities without any risk of being personally attacked and robbed of their property. Now it is the people in the community who live behind iron bars while the prisoners roam free throughout the State. Unfortunately, it is a sad indictment on this Government that this is the true situation.

The centralisation of Government services, particularly in rural areas, should also be addressed. This Government has spoken about regionalisation and has tried to equate it to decentralisation. They are two vastly different concepts. The centralisation of services in rural Queensland has been carried out with very little thought having been given to it and at the cost of a great deal of human suffering. A number of country towns are suffering badly and have received no assistance from the Government at all, while a handful of major provincial areas continue to grow. Things are so bad for the Treasurer that he is about to pack up and leave the Chamber. If I were he, I would leave, too—in disgrace. He is hiding, and he ought to hide from this Budget. The Treasurer should get up off the floor of this Parliament while I reveal how this Budget contains no proposals for job increases and absolutely nothing for the private sector. Currently, one in three young people is unemployed, but the Budget contains nothing to encourage the development of employment opportunities in small business or medium-sized businesses in this State; nor is there anything in the Budget that will encourage exports—a matter that has been conveniently overlooked by the Treasurer. This Government hangs its hat on policies of reform and promises to make Queensland competitive, yet the Budget does not contain a damned thing to encourage Queensland's export industries. At a time when Australia's foreign debt is fast approaching a figure of \$200 billion, that is an absolute disgrace.

Under this Government, unemployment is a sad and sorry tale. The number of unemployed people rose from 96 800 in December 1989 when the Government was elected to office to 151 400 as at July this year. A very significant increase has occurred in the number of unemployed people, yet the State Budget contains nothing that will assist those people. Instead, more red tape has been introduced over a period. It is worth while noting that yesterday the Government made a great song and dance about how it would cut red tape—the red tape that has been increased by this Government, and nobody else—in areas such as industrial relations legislation. It is now far more difficult for ordinary folk to obtain employment in Queensland because this Government has taken away voluntary employment agreements and enterprise bargaining. The centralised wage-

fixing system has been reintroduced into the State, which will once again give union bosses an increase in the power they previously exercised. By doing so, the Government has done away with the opportunity for people to obtain greater flexibility, job satisfaction and jobs with better conditions than currently apply. Moreover, it has prevented more jobs being created in the private sector.

The planning and environment legislation has resulted in a cut-back in the number of development applications. If the Government is interested in reducing red tape, I suggest that it should look at the type of legislation that is making it difficult for development to proceed. In excess of 650 business licences have been issued in this State and the number continues to grow. The Government should examine those applications carefully because it is one of the areas that is constricted by red tape. I mentioned previously that an additional 7 500 public servants have been appointed, yet another Minister in this Government proposes to bring in a nature and conservation Act. If this Government is serious about cutting red tape and creating more jobs in the community, it should start looking at that type of legislation and its effect upon the private sector. It should also look carefully at the way in which red tape stifles development and the creation of job opportunities at every level of government. This Labor Government should begin to clean up the mess that it has created. In relation to the environment issue—one day the Premier is pro-green and the next day he is going around Queensland saying that he is all in favour of development. In recent times, the Premier and other members of the Labor Party in this State have demonstrated that they change their policies like they change their socks.

It is clear that this Government can cut red tape in a number of important areas to create more job opportunities. Even the Townsville nickel refinery—the second-largest industrial complex in Queensland—currently faces the prospect of shutting down its operations unless some agreement can be reached to import nickel ore through Halifax Bay instead of through Townsville's outer harbour. If this Government has its way, it will impose upon the refinery an impost amounting to \$80m, plus the costs of transporting the nickel ore by rail from the wharf to the refinery at a time when this State has to start competing in the international marketplace. There is plenty of empty rhetoric heard from the Treasurer, but no action to follow it up. This Government does not have the guts to follow through. Time after time, when a bit of guts is required, this Government does not measure up.

Recently, I noticed a report by a media outlet on the Collinsville coalmine indicating that the Premier and the Treasurer are still negotiating the issue of rail freight. Nothing has happened, in spite of the fact that when the Government was elected, it indicated that this would be a top priority issue. This Labor Government promised that that would be given urgent priority, but nothing has happened in more than 20 months. If that is the best it can do, I would hate to be holding my breath waiting for this Government to take action in relation to issues to which it has not given top priority. The Treasurer has waited 20 months, and it is no wonder this Government has become known as the dithering, do-nothing Government. The latest joke is not just how many Mr Gosses it takes to change a light bulb, but how many Government Ministers as well as Mr Goss it takes to do it. This Government simply never gets around to making a decision, and time after time the only results it can produce are increases in red tape.

Before I conclude my remarks, I wish to mention the land tax issue. Everybody knows that this Government is not meeting its commitments in relation to the creation of jobs, reforms and making this State internationally competitive. Let us look at land tax—something that the Treasurer seems to be getting very excited about. A Liberal Government undertakes to abolish land tax on coming to office, and that will not be too long at all, because one only has to look at what has happened. Back in 1987 in this Chamber, I indicated that the big winner from the annual valuation process would, in fact,

be the Government through land tax revenue. That is exactly what has happened, because land taxes have skyrocketed. Queensland has seen, of course, increases in land tax of 39 per cent in 12 months and 150 per cent over the last couple of years. I indicate to the Treasurer that his so-called proposal to pass legislation prohibiting the passing on of land tax by landlords to both residential and commercial tenants simply will not work. The Treasurer knows that it is a con job on the people of Queensland, on the landlords and on the tenants. Tenants are aware of it and it will not get the Treasurer over the issue of the need to abolish land tax. I have demonstrated tonight how simply it can be done. The process is very simple, but the Treasurer simply does not have the guts to get on and do it. The Liberal Party knows that, the business community knows that, the whole world knows that. Land tax is one of the issues hurting the job arena and stopping small business from putting on more staff. This tax is putting a number of small-business people out of business. It is a tax that applies not only to shopping centres or commercial offices but to many residential tenants who also pay substantial amounts of land tax because land taxes are imposed upon residential areas in certain circumstances.

Debate interrupted.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Hollis): I would like to extend a welcome to the Mayor of the City of Redcliffe, Alderman Barry Bolton, to the aldermen of that city and to the town clerk, who are in the public gallery.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

SUPPLY

Committee—Financial Statement

Debate resumed.

Mr SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton North) (8.10 p.m.): I have much pleasure in entering the debate on the Labor Government's Budget. It gives me pleasure on two counts. Firstly, it is a Budget which this Government has been able to bring down in these tough economic times without having to borrow to balance its books. That is in sharp contrast to the other States of Australia. At the same time, the Labor Government has been able to reduce taxes. By doing this, this Government has been able to ensure not only that Queensland retains the strongest performing economy of all the States in Australia, but also that industry will continue to be attracted to Queensland. This, of course, will ensure that job creation will continue.

Secondly, this Budget delivers the goods in terms of the Labor Government's pre-election promises in the areas of education, law and order, and the environment. I remind the House that prior to the Labor Party's election to office it promised that these three areas would be targeted by a Goss Labor Government. This Government promised that it would spend \$250m more on education within its first three years of office to bring Queensland up to the level that other States spend on their children's education—something the National and Liberal Parties failed to do. This Government has done that. In fact, it has been done in two years and the actual increase now stands at \$261m. This Budget provides a total of \$2.1 billion for education in this State. Queensland now has the best-paid teachers, not the worst as was the case under the Nationals and the Liberals in this State. Cash grants to schools are the best that they have ever been. For example, the North Rockhampton State High School in the last year of the National Party Government received \$99,840. This year, that school received \$164,145. That is an

increase of some 60 per cent from this Government. This Government has more than lived up to its promises in this area of education.

Moving now to law and order, I note from recent media reports that both the National and Liberal Parties are condemning this Government on its approach to law and order in this State. What hypocrites they are! Everyone in Queensland knows that the legacy left in law and order in this State was the most corrupt, run-down, underfunded and undermanned police service in Australia. In just two years, this Government, under the capable stewardship of the Honourable the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Mr Mackenroth, has implemented over 100 of the 139 "clean-up" recommendations specified by Tony Fitzgerald, QC. Mr Fitzgerald would not have needed to make those recommendations if Queensland had had a decent and honest Government for the previous 32 years. The Labor Government has increased the funding to the Police Department by 11.7 per cent. Again, that is an all-time record. This Government has delivered its promise to put more police on the streets and, as a result of this Budget and last year's Budget, there will be 1 200 more operational police in the community by the end of the Labor Government's first term. That is, again, one of this Government's promises. This Government has also committed itself to a fair wage for all police. As a result of this Government's commitment to award restructuring, a decision on police salaries from the Industrial Relations Commission is expected as early as this week. No longer will police in this State be expected to work up to 80 hours a week to earn a decent wage. By the end of this financial year, it is also my prediction that Queensland will have the best-trained police in Australia.

I now move to the issue of the environment. Again, it gives me great pride to speak of this Labor Government's initiatives in this area. Unlike the environmental vandals who preceded us on this side of the Parliament, the Goss Labor Government has delivered the goods when it comes to environmental matters. In this Budget alone, almost \$100m has been allocated to the Department of Environment and Heritage. This allocation is unequalled by any previous Government in this State and it represents a 103 per cent rise in the funding to the environment since the Labor Government was elected.

I would like to highlight a couple of the initiatives of this record Budget, including \$11.5m that has been earmarked for national parks. This will go a long way towards doubling our national parks estate in the Labor Government's first term, as promised. Given that until Labor was elected my region—the central region—was starved for national parks, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to point to the 20 000 hectares of new national parks in this region since Labor came to office. I am also currently having discussions with the Honourable the Minister to have sections of the Berserker Ranges in the heart of my electorate gazetted as national park, and I welcome the increase in funding which should permit this to occur.

In this context, I also want to place on record my support for this Government's approach to the question of sand-mining at Byfield. Gone are the days when the brown paper bags slipped under a desk signalled the go-ahead for the bulldozers and chainsaws to attack our environment. So too are the days of token environmental impact studies. When it comes to development, this Government has one aim. The green light goes on only when the environmental guarantees are there. We do not want development that will result in damage which will cost our grandchildren more to repair than the project returned to the community. We do not want the air, water or landscape destroyed to the extent that our habitat is unlivable. What we want is environmentally sound developmental projects which will provide our kids and their kids with jobs. However, there are still those who want to lock out all options, to not even consider job creation. To them I say that the day has long since passed when we can afford the luxury of hoping that something will turn up. We in this country have to make our own futures. If we do not, the world's bankers will do it for

us, and they will not care a tinker's cuss for the environment. The evidence of this is apparent in Brazil. The option is offered to the conservation movement of either participating in the EIS process, ensuring that it does what it is supposed to do and making sure that the environment is protected, or standing aside, waving the placards, shouting and screaming, and forgetting all about the real issue of environmental protection. I implore members of the conservation movement to open their minds and be part of the environmental impact study process. After all, only the environment—the very environment that they are seeking to protect—will be the winner as a result. Returning now to the environment budget, I note that \$2.9m has been allocated to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. Having travelled around sections of the marine park with Richard Grimes, the regional director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and his rangers, Brian Morris and Richard Baird, I have nothing but admiration for the fine job that those people do. I note also a 14 per cent increase in funds for the management of national parks. I often sit in this Chamber and laugh at members opposite when they speak of vermin infestation in national parks being a menace to farmers because not only did they scrimp on national parks in this State but they also neglected the parks themselves by their refusal to properly oversee them.

I turn now to the area of capital works. Honourable members will be aware of the existence of the public sector capital works program, which has increased by some 30 per cent to \$3 billion. That part funded by this Budget has similarly increased by some 30 per cent to around about \$1 billion. This doubles what the National Party spent in its last year in office. The purpose of this is twofold. Firstly, it reduces the effect of the recession—a cushion effect, if you like—and, of course, at the same time maintains a skill base which, I might add, is something that did not occur in 1980-81 when we were in a similar position and the Nationals and Liberals were at the helm. The second purpose is to provide this State with quality buildings, be they schools, courthouses or departmental offices. I cite here the effects on the local Rockhampton economy of the construction of the \$24m office building in Rockhampton. Honourable members will recall that I called for its construction in my maiden speech because I was aware of the rot that the National Party, under the National Party Government, had pulled in the leasing of National House in Quay Street, Rockhampton to the Education Department. When construction finishes in 1993, the new building will have created 8 000 pay-packets for workers on site. It will provide almost continual employment for one section of the building industry or another for over 12 months. The income that the \$24m that this Government is injecting into that project will generate for the Rockhampton economy is estimated by an independent assessment—not our own; it was done by the CDRO—to be worth almost \$50m. So the \$24m that was invested in the local Rockhampton economy by this Government will be worth \$50m to the local businesspeople in Rockhampton and on the Capricorn Coast. As a matter of fact, the \$12m in other capital works that this Government has poured into Rockhampton and the Capricorn Coast—and I have not mentioned the \$20m gas pipeline which is now linked to the magnesite plant—has in no small way led to the fact that that region is returning the lowest unemployment figures for the State.

Housing is a major issue in Rockhampton and the Capricorn Coast. It is a curious thing, but the fact is that because the local economy is performing so very well, the home market has boomed. The rental market is either expensive or very limited, and prices in the home market continue to rise. The net effect of the economy in Rockhampton becoming more buoyant has been to increase rentals and increase home prices. That has put more housing beyond the reach of the everyday citizen. That is a problem in itself with a booming economy. When I first came into this place I think that the Department of Housing waiting list was in the vicinity of 250. That figure is now around 700. It just shows that as the economy picks up, people are displaced. I might add that there are some unscrupulous landlords out there. For example, some people who own caravans are

charging local people \$100 a throw per week. I am afraid that Governments cannot do much about that, but they can do something, and this Government is responding by releasing an additional \$600m for the Home Ownership Made Easy Scheme, which will enable scores of my constituents to get into their own homes. My friend and colleague the honourable member for Broadsound, Mr Pearce, and I have seen a steady stream of people coming through our doors looking for forms and advice on the HOME scheme that the Government has put together.

Mr Elder: For the first time giving them a chance.

Mr SCHWARTEN: It does. It gives those people who, hitherto, have not been able to get into a home a chance to do that. I applaud the scheme and the Government for recognising that that is a way in which it can assist the economy and the construction industry. Today, I have heard that Queensland's construction industry is performing better than that in any other State in Australia. The Government can in no small way claim credit for that. At present, the Government is the single largest lending authority in the State. I am pleased to see the Government put that additional money into the scheme, because it has a twofold effect. Firstly, it has the effect of getting people into their own home, which is the dream of every Queensland and every Australian. Secondly, it creates a boom in the building industry.

On the rental aspect, the Department of Housing, under the leadership of Tom Burns, is also pulling its weight. No more will we see the scandalous ghettos such as the one in Rockonia Road at Rockhampton used as a means of solving a housing shortage on the cheap. The former National Party Government always attempted to solve the housing shortage on the cheap. It considered that, if people were poor, it did not matter how they lived.

Mr Pearce: They even knocked back housing.

Mr SCHWARTEN: I take the interjection from the honourable member for Broadsound. They did. National Party members refused to have Housing Commission estates in their electorates. The honourable member for Manly would concur with me on that matter.

Mrs Woodgate: Six hundred homesites at Albany Creek.

Mr SCHWARTEN: Those homesites are another example. Members of the former National Party Government refused to have Housing Commission homes in their electorates, because the recipients, being working-class people, would not vote National or Liberal in a fit.

Mr Gilmore: That is not true.

Mr SCHWARTEN: It is true. There is no question that that did not occur. I return to the scandalous monstrosity that passes for a housing estate in Rockonia Road. It consists of 72 units built in a Labor electorate. The people who live there do not like living there, and I do not blame them. As well, the neighbours do not like having such a concentration of families in a small area. It was a disaster from go to whoa. It was built in a Labor electorate because the former Government knew it would not work. What is more, it was built in that shape because it was cheap to build in that way. Although the units may have been cheap to build, following my representations, the Deputy Premier has agreed to spend \$500,000 on them to bring them up to a habitable state. They may have saved the previous Government money, but they are certainly costing the present Labor Government plenty. I assure Opposition members that the people who reside in those units will remember who constructed them, as will their neighbours. I would not like to be the National Party candidate who nominates for that area.

I note also from the Budget papers that, this year, the Government will again construct 100 rental homes in my region. Although I have welcomed that, as have my colleagues the honourable member for Rockhampton, Paul Braddy, and the honourable member for Broadsound, Jim Pearce, we understand that that will not be enough homes. Rockhampton has a unique problem. It has a negative occupancy rate of 0.3 per cent, which simply means that there are not sufficient houses on the rental market in Rockhampton to provide for the people who want them. That is a unique position in Australia. With that in mind, I have made representations to the Honourable Minister and he has agreed to reappraise the position. It is a fairly dramatic state of affairs in that area in which so much development is occurring. The development is good for the economy; however, the by-product of it is that people in the area need housing. When the rural task force visited Rockhampton, the shortage of rental housing was one issue that was raised. I am hopeful that we can increase the number of houses for rental accordingly.

I turn to the area of training. As I have mentioned previously, in a recession Governments can only do so much. However, Governments cannot afford to do what the Fraser Government did in the early 1980s and what the Bjelke-Petersen Government did in Queensland, that is, to ignore the skill base and put people off from Government employ. During a recession, we have an undeniable responsibility to ensure that, when we come out of recession, we have enough people with sufficient skills to take the jobs that are available. Nobody would disagree with that statement. The lesson of history is that, when Australia came out of the recession in 1983-84, we had to look overseas for the skill base. We found that there had been a shortfall in training. With that in mind, this Budget has committed an additional \$80m to training. That allocation is a significant increase to the budget for the Department of Employment, Vocational Education, Training and Industrial Relations and it has been allocated for the training of our youth. By all indicators—and incidentally, this is not just in Queensland but right throughout Australia—it is now being found that the group that needs the focus is our youth, the 15 to 19 year-olds. Once they pass that age, they become increasingly unemployable. Their skill base has to be developed at an early stage. Accordingly, more than \$9.8m of that 21 per cent increase, which is what the \$80m represents, will be used to create an extra 8 000 TAFE places this year.

The Budget also provides \$14.1m for new initiatives aimed at youth training. That is on top of the 1 200 training positions that will be provided through the youth employment scheme. I do not know how many members in this Chamber are familiar with the youth employment training scheme, but I am sure that most members on the Government side are. It is a wonderful scheme. Recently in Rockhampton, I opened a youth training scheme launch of a cook book for the unemployed. That was facilitated with funding from the Department of Employment, Vocational Education, Training and Industrial Relations. I spoke with the people at that book launch and I was surprised to learn of the lack of skills that young people had. Most of them have been drop-outs in one form or another from our education system. They need to be retrieved back into that system. We certainly owe those kids that, and we certainly owe our economy that. Make no mistake about it: if we ignore the necessity for education and training now, the future generations will not reap the benefit of that and the economy will continue to go down the gurgler. As I said before, if Australia gets into that predicament, the world bankers will not be too fussy about our environment or any other matters, just as they are not worried about them in Third World countries such as Brazil. The money has to be spent now—this Government is spending the money now—to ensure that that skill base is established and that it is not neglected come the time when this country comes out of the recession, which of course is predicted to be sooner rather than later.

The other issue on which I want to speak and which was touched upon briefly earlier is that of Queensland Rail. Members opposite have continued to promulgate their litany of untruths about, and general mischief in, the rail system in Queensland. They seem to have that happy knack of being able to get front-page articles on the *Morning Bulletin* with the most fallacious of stories. One of these days, members opposite will recognise that they are causing undue stress, harm and upset to ordinary, honest, working people in this State. I feel sorry for the members opposite who obviously have had such silvertailed backgrounds that they have to ensure that they do not understand what it is like to have the threat of unemployment thrown into the family on a daily basis. That is exactly what members opposite are doing. In common with me and every other member of this Chamber, they know that not one person in Queensland Rail has lost his job in the last 12 months. Since the Labor Party came to Government, no-one has been forced out of Queensland Rail. That should be contrast with the 7 000 jobs that were spilt in the eighties by the lot opposite. Unlike the 43 rail stations that were closed, unlike the scores of train lines that had been closed right throughout Queensland and unlike the hundreds of jobs that had gone out of the Rockhampton railway workshops under the lot opposite, since we came to office not one person has been sacked, forcibly removed from his job or forced out by way of transfer—not one! I challenge members opposite to stand up and give the name of any single person who has lost his job in Queensland Rail. Not one of them can do it. Why can they not do it? Because there has not been any loss of jobs. Yet members opposite continue to go around the State, make up this nonsense and frighten the wits out of the poor unfortunate railway workers. Members opposite stand condemned for that. The good news—and members opposite never want to talk about the good news—is that in this financial year this Government will be introducing a door-to-door freight service in Queensland Rail. For the first time ever, unlike what the lot opposite did, a Government has gone out and aggressively marketed the rail industry in this State. What did the lot opposite have in mind in relation to this? The Leader of the Opposition gave it away when he was down in Sydney. He did not think that we up here got the Sydney papers. He spoke about handing out freight in this State to private industry. His game plan was to let Queensland Rail run down until it reached a deplorable state, flog off all the profitable areas of transport such as coal and minerals and then trash the rest of it. That was the game plan that the Nationals were up to.

Mr Fenlon: These are the captains of industry, aren't they?

Mr SCHWARTEN: That is right. The captains of industry opposite are the captains of private industry who ran the rail industry in this State down to the extent that every day that a taxpayer in this State gets out of bed, a million and a quarter dollars has gone down the rails of Queensland Rail. That is a million and a quarter dollars every day that the workers of this State—the taxpayers of this State—are contributing. This Government will not cop that. We on this side regard the rail industry in this State as a valuable resource. We will not stand idly by and allow it to continue to go down the track that it was going under the National Party. We care about rail jobs. We will not allow it to go that way. Accordingly, we will be doing everything that we possibly can to turn it around, to market it and to get as much freight on it as we possibly can so that at the end of the day Queensland is the winner because the taxpayer will be putting less into it and the workers who work in it will have security of income. I do not believe that we can do much more than that, especially given the circumstances in which we were left by the lot opposite.

I reiterate that I am immensely proud to be part of the Government that brought down this Budget, which maintains our low-tax base. I remind members that this is the only Budget in Australia that is about the business of reducing taxes. It increases our services to the public and minimises public sector cost to industry. This Budget provides for preparation of our youth and unemployed to re-enter the work force with a sound skill base

on which to call. The Opposition has been trying desperately to knock this Budget. However, it cannot find fault with it, and has sought to make up nonsensical stories. The Opposition has been ridiculed in the latest business magazines all over the State because it does not understand how the budgeting system in this State works. I offer my congratulations to the Treasurer, Keith De Lacy, for having achieved so much in such tight economic times, and I support the motion before the Committee.

Mr RANDELL (Mirani) (8.38 p.m.): It gives me pleasure to take part in this debate. This is the first time in my 11 years in Parliament during which time I have seen 11 Budgets presented in this Chamber—

Mr Barber: Too many years.

Mr RANDELL: Too many years? I have been here long enough to witness in the member's electorate of Cooroora the biggest lie that the ALP has ever told. I refer to the toll-road. The Government promised to take the toll off that road. But what did it do? It kept it on. The honourable member should not talk to me about that! I have seen 11 Budgets presented in this Chamber, and this is the first time that the Opposition has been given three weeks before it could reply to it. The Government should be ashamed of itself. That certainly makes a mockery of this Government's promised accountability, promised reform and promised democracy—the Westminster democracy that so many people on the Government side of the Chamber are so fond of telling us about. They must be out of their minds. Never before in the history of this Chamber has an Opposition been forced to wait three weeks to present its Budget reply. I wonder why. Is it because the Treasurer and the Premier wanted to jet around this State and sell the Budget without giving the Opposition the opportunity to scrutinise the Budget documents and expose the deficiencies that exist therein? They exist all right, and I will expose them as I go along. This Government desperately wants to hide those deficiencies. That is a disgrace, and something that the citizens of Queensland will remember at the next election.

Queensland is suffering because of Federal and State ALP policies. Rural people are trying to fend off possibly the worst drought in living memory. However, this Government has brought down a Budget that is full of carrots for the social welfare group, whose allocation increased by 38 per cent. The environmental budget has increased by 27 per cent, and the allocation for Aboriginal and Islander affairs has increased by 100 per cent. But what about the people in this State who pay the bills? What do they get? The small-business people, the rural people and the other workers of this State get practically nothing more in their allocation than an increase equal to that of the CPI. But they do get an increase of 57 per cent in land tax over two years! This is during a time of national recession brought on by the Labor Government. For the 12 months ended 30 June this year, bankruptcies in this State have increased by 835, or 51 per cent. That is what this Government has presided over during the past 12 months. The next 12 months will see more of that. If one goes out into the street and picks out nine people, there is no doubt that at least one of them will be without a job. People cannot get jobs in this great State of ours. That is a scandal. Twelve months ago the unemployment ratio was one in eleven; today it is one in nine; and next year it will probably be one in five. Government members are hypocrites. Let me have another look at the increase in land tax. It is interesting to note that exemptions from land tax are provided for religious and charitable groups and retirement villages. The Opposition supports that wholeheartedly. The question must be asked of the Labor Government: do trade unions have an exemption status? Does this mean that the Trades Hall in Peel Street at South Brisbane, where the Labor Party occupies two floors, is free of land tax? Under section 13 of the Land Tax Act, all land owned by or in trust for a trade union is exempted. There is no doubt that this Government espouses the user-pays policy. Trade unions should have to pay their share of land tax, despite their special relationship with this Government. They are getting a pay-off. In view

of the Government's user-pays attitude, it should explain to land tax payers why trade unions still maintain their exempt status.

It seems as though this Government has learned well from the New South Wales ALP—Wran and Unsworth—the art of raiding hollow logs. Budget Paper No. 3 shows clearly funding of \$43.6m being pulled out of the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund to help meet Justice Department programs. That is how the Government balances its Budget. It has been estimated that the Government pulled \$67m out of Queensland Ambulance Service trust funds and has tried to hide that. It is no wonder that this Government wanted to sell this Budget to the people of Queensland before the Opposition had a chance to expose it in this Chamber. When he was elected, Mr Goss said that he admired Mr Cain in Victoria and held him up as a model of financial management to follow. Government members are hypocrites. What is happening here will go down in history.

I could go on and on about the incompetence of this Government. This Budget is the product of mediocre people who are set on nothing more than holding onto power. They have lacked imagination and vision. They have given us no hope for the future of this State while Labor clings to power. In fact, Queensland has taken the first steps down the same track as other ALP-controlled States have taken. I refer to Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and the ALP in the Federal sphere. This Government is following that same track. What a contrast to the Budgets that we became used to in Queensland when the National Party was in power! Primary industries were once the backbone of this State's economy. We were a grain and livestock producer, a State economy that was wholly dependent upon primary production, while the rest of Australia diversified. Under decades of Labor rule, we stagnated. Later, the member for Condamine will tell members what happened under the last Labor Government. Rural industry was the backbone of our economy. Over the years, its relative importance declined as successive National Party Premiers pushed ahead with developing an integrated economy. What we ended up with—and what this Labor Government inherited—was an economy with a healthy mix of primary production, mining, manufacturing, processing and great service industries such as tourism. Queensland was the envy of the nation. There is no doubt about that. The former National Party Government left that for members opposite. Queensland was recognised by all economic experts as having the best and most stable economy in the Commonwealth of Australia. The economy was the envy of every Treasurer in Australia. The Labor Government inherited that and it is going down the road of demolishing it.

I stress that the concept of an integrated economy, or a mix of industries, gave the State a strong footing for future development. The National Party Government ensured that depression in one sector would not collapse the whole economy of the State. We planned wisely not to put all of our economy into one basket, and it paid off. The former Government developed thriving provincial cities along the coast and strong commercial centres to serve the inland. We developed strong infrastructure to serve those cities and towns and the industries that they support. We developed the vast coal fields and new towns in the central Queensland hinterland. Some members opposite would not be in this Chamber tonight if it were not for our ideas and policies. We developed thousands of jobs in central Queensland.

Mr Foley: We owe a lot to your policies. Your policies threw your Government from office.

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member would not know. He was out there encouraging lollers on the streets. He is a hypocrite. My comments are getting under the honourable member's skin, because Queensland will have a sad history when it is written up that, after the work of the theorists and academics on the Government side, Queensland went down the drain. However, that will happen only for the next 12 months,

because the National Party will be back in Government after the next election. The former National Party Government developed thousands of jobs and facilities, such as schools, hospitals and police stations, to enable people to live in a social scene that befits all citizens of Queensland. Under National Party leadership, Queensland developed an efficient, low-cost electric power industry, a comprehensive road and rail transport system and great water storage schemes. The National Party has the runs on the board. We upgraded the rail link from Brisbane to Cairns. We electrified the line to Rockhampton. The National Party Government built and modernised the great east-west rail links to bring the wealth of the west to the coast—to Brisbane, Rockhampton and Townsville. We built the coal lines to feed the great export trade that we encouraged to grow.

However, there was more than rail in our infrastructure development. The National Party can be very proud of the way in which it developed the great road networks of this State. It was never going to be easy with such a small population spread over a vast area, but we still managed to achieve a great deal. All the major centres of the State can be reached on good bitumen roads. The beef roads were built to tap the riches of the north and the north west. Against the odds, the former National Party Government crisscrossed this vast State with a highway network that might not have been perfect but was being improved all the time. In contrast, today we see roads other than the national highway—because the Federal Government is pouring money into that—practically falling to pieces. Councils face an enormous task to keep hinterland roads trafficable. In the hinterland, some councils are ripping up the bitumen roads that have deteriorated so much and turning them back into gravel roads.

The former National Party Government built modern, efficient power stations to feed an integrated electricity grid and to even out the cost of power to consumers across the State. We did such a good job on the power industry that we run the risk now of losing it to a national grid. Southern State Governments are desperate to tap into Queensland's cheap power as part of Labor's so-called Federalism. If the Premier gives in to that demand, he will ensure for himself an odious place in the history of Queensland. It was the great National Party that never gave up on the Burdekin Dam and irrigation scheme. The former National Party Government built the storage on so many major streams throughout the State. They are not all as massive as the Burdekin and Wivenhoe Dams; many supply the needs of small communities in the dry inland of the State; and many are small irrigation dams. The former Government encouraged all of those schemes. They were all part of a great plan to water a dry State and encourage industry of all kinds.

What has this Government done about water storage? It has set up committees and investigative teams in an effort to delay making a decision. It has completed some of the schemes that we had practically finished, but that is all it has ever done.

Mr McGrady interjected.

Mr RANDELL: I will come to the honourable member later. A prime example is the failure to commence a water storage facility in the Pioneer Valley in the Mackay region. All of the studies have been done. We just need the will to make a decision, and away we go; but, no, let us have a further investigation so that a decision can be put further down the track. Make no mistake: the National Party has gone further and we will go further in the future. For example, we still favour the Tully/Millstream project. Unlike this Government, a National Party Government would not have run off to Canberra for the go-ahead on a project that everyone knows is both necessary and feasible. The member for Flinders in this House has often spoken about the Bradfield scheme. That is a visionary project that must get the green light some time. Eventually, we must water the fertile plains of the inland. Think of the jobs. Think of the wealth it will produce. Think of what could be produced. The scheme needs people of vision, people of courage and people of commitment; however, people with those qualities are sadly lacking on the Government

side of this House. All it would take is a Government of vision and commitment. That sort of Government we on this side of the Chamber will supply again when we are returned to the Treasury bench at the next election.

The National Party is very proud of the work that it did for Queensland for more than three decades. In short, we opened up this State so that private enterprise could create jobs and wealth for all to share. By the time we left office, Queensland was the envy of the rest of Australia. We had thriving industries, good communications, cheap power and a low-tax regime. The advent of the Labor Government has put all of that in doubt. The Labor Party has replaced vision with academic theory and I cannot stress that too strongly. I look at members of the back bench on the other side of the Chamber and I know that what they espouse is all academic theory.

Mr Booth: The member for Brisbane Central has plenty of water, so he does not care about the rest.

Mr RANDELL: No. He could not care less. The Labor Party has replaced enterprise with bureaucratic obstacles and it has replaced development with stagnation. These days, nothing is happening in Queensland; there is not one project members can point to. The Labor Government cannot even keep prisoners in gaol. There is no longer any sense of purpose. We used to say that prisoners went in the front door and left through the back door, but I believe nowadays there is a revolving door at the front of the prison so that they can turn around and walk straight out. There is no longer any sense of purpose. We have lost the ability to entice major development. Whatever happened to the steel-mill for Gladstone, the Comalco expansion or the multifunction polis? What happened to those people who came in with big ideas about building up Queensland and creating jobs? They have all run a mile because they know what they will get here. They ran a mile when they woke up to what Labor in Government meant for Queensland. Like businesses large and small, they realised that Labor in Government means a climate where enterprise comes last and regulation and strangulation come first. This Budget shows it; last year's Budget showed it. There is nothing in there for enterprise or regulation. This Budget can be divided into two parts. The part which the Labor Party really loves best is spending money to prop up the welfare sector and winning votes on quality-of-life issues such as the environment. The other part which Government members often forget is that someone has to pay for it.

Mr Foley: Hear, hear!

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member has never had a productive job in his whole life. All he has done is espouse theories. He has never done one productive thing, and when the history of Queensland is written it will show the great part that the member for Yeronga played in pulling this State down. In fact, the department involved in infrastructure came out of this Budget worse off. For a start, there was nothing there for the Tully/Millstream power project which would generate a great deal of economic activity during the construction stages alone. It is a doomed project. This Labor Premier lacks the courage to promote it because of his debts to the green movement. The best he can do is throw it straight to Canberra and let his mates there wear the flak from the green movement. If Canberra lets it go ahead, the real benefits might well go south because this Labor Premier is right into new federalism. That is the term that the Premiers have invented in order to give all the important powers to Canberra. They cloak it in all sorts of terms such as "efficiency", but at the end of the day Canberra gets the power. That is where this Government wants the power to be. In this case, power is exactly what Canberra will get—cheap power from an efficient Queensland industry built up by the National Party in this State. Mr Goss wants to see Queensland power flowing into a national grid to prop up tottering industrial regimes in the south. When they get their hands

on some cheap power, they will attract new industry. What a pity this Premier and Treasurer do not have sufficient sense of adventure to do that for themselves.

The Queensland Premier has already gone most of the way towards giving Canberra total control of long-distance transport. Our interstate rail freight will soon go over to a national rail freight corporation, and anyone who thinks that intrastate freight will not go the same way still believes in the tooth fairy. This same Labor Premier has handed the fate of our trucking industry to the tender mercies of Canberra. It will not be long before it will be run in the best interests of New South Wales and Victoria. After all, that is where the voting power lies in Australia. Government members can look at the Federal Cabinet for proof of that. What are the fellows opposite doing? In spite of the bully-boy tactics of the Queensland ALP to keep him in office, Mr Hawke still lacks even one Queenslander in his Cabinet. That is what he thinks of Queensland. He played this weak Labor Premier off a break and he will do so again and again. The Government must think it need not do much with roads after it hands the trucking industry over to Canberra. There must be some explanation for the lack of initiatives for road-funding in this Budget, but there is nothing here for the real expansion of the road network. In fact, it has gone backwards and has not even risen in accordance with the CPI. It would be a great incentive for Queensland to have a go at producing some wealth for the State. On top of that, the Government has increased registration fees as a further encouragement and seems quite happy to see these fees go through the roof when Canberra takes over.

This Government does not seem to understand the sheer size of Queensland. The cost of transport must be kept down and must not be increased. What makes sense for Victoria will do nothing but increase the cost of everything we consume in the cities of Queensland, but there is no recognition of this fact in the Budget. Instead, we put all the money into greening the old Expo site or some other desirable but not essential urban program. The Government forgets about the sector that produces so much wealth in this State, and I refer to the rural sector.

Mr Palaszczuk: You are being nasty.

Mr RANDELL: I am not being nasty. I am simply giving honourable members the facts. I can see that Government members do not like the facts. At a time when Queensland is experiencing what could be the worst drought in living memory, \$100m was allocated to the old Expo site on the South Bank to become a showpiece to present to Brisbane at the next election. It is growing green grass when rural Queensland is trying to cope with what is possibly the worst drought in living memory. Farmers are battling to keep their crops alive and graziers are battling to keep even their breeding herds alive to ensure that they have a nucleus herd for the future when the drought breaks. There is not much sympathy coming from the Government because it is concerned only with the south-east corner of our great State.

As I said before, a year ago one in every 11 employable people in Queensland was without a job. Today, one in every nine people on the street is without a job. I repeat, our kids—young men and women leaving high schools and universities—have no future because they have no jobs to go to. The worrying thing is that it will get worse under the policies adopted by this Government. One hundred and twenty senior officers from the Education Department—men with a wealth of practical experience—have been forced out of that department.

Mr Palaszczuk: Rubbish!

Mr RANDELL: It is not rubbish. They have gone. The honourable member should speak to the people who know. The police force has been shattered. Police force morale is low and its members are facing a seemingly hopeless future. They have been reduced to working from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday. Staffing on weekends has been cut to the

bone. In Mackay, there is only one police vehicle and one or two officers who drive around trying to keep law and order. The crime rate in Queensland is soaring and people in their own homes are living in fear. As I said earlier, prisoners who are sent to gaol walk in, turn around and walk straight out the door again. Public servants are disenchanted and their morale has plummeted to rock bottom. Members of this Government should talk to the Queensland Railways workers in this State. They are totally disillusioned. After 3 500 workers have already gone and notification has been given that an additional 2 500 workers will be gone by next year, they wonder whether the Transport Minister will leave them with a job. Presently, railway workers are worried sick about the future, and why would they not be worried when a Government of the calibre of members opposite is in power in Queensland? Every regulation in Queensland's proud sugar industry has been dismantled. People involved in the industry are very worried about how much further this Government can go before total collapse of the industry occurs. Not one cent has been provided in this Budget for research, in spite of the fact that funding was recommended by the Sugar Industry Working Party. I will have a great deal more to say about this matter during the forthcoming Estimates debate.

The introduction of daylight-saving has had a great economic and social impact throughout Queensland, particularly rural Queensland. The Premier has done a massive somersault because he was rolled in Cabinet by Ministers who realise that the single issue of daylight-saving could lose the Labor Government the next election. The latest proposal is for a referendum to be held in February next year at a cost of \$5m. The Premier has decided to conduct the referendum at that time because he knows it would be suicide to conduct it at the same time as he faces the polls. To save \$5m in the costs of holding a referendum, the Premier should conduct it at the same time as an election takes place, but he is unwilling to do so. It would certainly be a forceful reminder to rural people of the policies of this Labor Government. Tonight, it was amusing to see the member for Mount Isa and the member for Barron River on television. If the issue of daylight-saving was voted on in this Parliament, I wonder whether they would have followed other members of the Labor Party like sheep and voted along party lines. I call on this Government to declare a moratorium on daylight-saving for this year. The people of Queensland should not be saddled with daylight-saving when a referendum is to be held in the near future. It is about time this Government took some action in line with the sentiments it has espoused. It is about time it showed a sense of democracy and fair play by allowing the people to have a say. The Government should not inflict daylight-saving on the people of Queensland when a referendum will take place in a few months because the \$5m that will be spent on the referendum could be better spent on encouraging people to increase production, to provide jobs, or to give businesses some incentive to face up to the future.

A great deal has been said in the past about the great work carried out by the Premier's rural task force. It has been said that the task force travelled throughout Queensland, communicated with rural people and has been keeping its finger on the pulse of what is happening in country areas. I inform the Committee that all the people who live in rural areas, including members of the Opposition, regard this rural task force as a joke and a political smokescreen designed to fool people into believing that this Government is really interested in the life-style of rural people. The rural task force could see nothing wrong with the conditions in rural areas, in spite of the fact that courthouses are being closed down, railway lines are being closed and public service positions abolished. The rural task force adopted the attitude that any opposition it encountered was the result of trouble that had been stirred up by members of the National Party—at least that was the excuse given when anyone dared to contradict its findings. On top of that, the Minister for Primary Industries, Mr Casey, was photographed sheltering under a pink umbrella while saying that farmers and graziers should learn the difference between drought and dry

weather. When he was told that cattle were dying as a result of the drought, he said, "Well, so be it."

Although I have no proof, I believe that a poll was undertaken in rural areas by the ALP. The results sent shock waves through the Labor Party from the most junior Cabinet Minister to the Premier. The results must have hit ALP members like a bomb blast. There was a vote of no confidence in Mr Casey, Mr McGrady and the rural task force, and then Mr Burns took charge of the rural sector. Presently, no Minister can take any action until he or she has cleared it with Mr Burns. Members of the Opposition know how much compassion can be expected from Mr Burns. I have been a member of this Parliament for a number of years and I have heard speeches made by him in relation to the squattocracy and the rural sector. In the past, he has concentrated on the little battlers who live in the cities, but the present-day battlers are the people who live in rural areas and who are struggling to earn a living not only for their families but also for the economy of Queensland. In spite of that, they receive not a bit of sympathy from Government members, who will know all about these issues at the next election. A few cosmetic changes have been made in the Budget, but the damage has already been done. No matter how much this Government papers over the cracks and glosses over the flaws in its Budget, thousands of rural people, public servants, railway employees, police officers, teachers and their families are just waiting to cast their votes against this State ALP Government. The people of my electorate have told me that that is how they feel, and members of the Government know that that is true. They also know that many present ALP members of this Parliament will not be returned after the next election. Although they are worried, their concern is too late.

I am a great believer in the old adage that prevention is better than cure. This State needs a reinstatement of tax relief so that farmers and graziers can plan and implement proper drought strategies to mitigate the effects of drought. Tax concessions would provide incentive for rural producers to prepare for future droughts, and the savings could be used to provide facilities for water storage, fences, pasture improvement and fodder conservation. In the long run, this strategy would be far cheaper than pouring money into rural areas after the event. This Budget does nothing for the productive sector in this State. It merely sets this State on the path that has been followed by other ALP Governments. Fortunately, all this will change when the National Party regains power at the next election.

Dr CLARK (Barron River) (9.05 p.m.): Queensland is the State that Australia's other Premiers and Treasurers would like to be running. These are not my words, but those of the well-respected economic commentator for the *Australian*, Mr Alan Wood. In spite of that, members of the Opposition still like to claim that the only reason why Queensland is the envy of other States is that the previous Government managed the economy so well that somehow the Labor Government is living off the legacy of the previous Government's financial management. I am not in the least bit surprised by the tirade I have heard from members opposite who can never bring themselves to acknowledge that a Labor Government can actually behave in an economically responsible manner. The failure on the part of this Government to embark on massive spending and tax increases must be a bitter disappointment to them. The good news for members of the Opposition is that this Labor Government will give them plenty of practice in analysing successive Labor Budgets. However, the bad news is that they will never succeed in destroying this Government's growing reputation for sound financial management.

Social reforms through economic efficiency will continue to be the hallmark of this Government and of successive Labor Governments. The strength of Queensland's economy is all the more remarkable given the current economic climate. In 1990-91, the Australian economy experienced one of the most severe recessions that have occurred in

the last 30 years, reflecting a worldwide recession that adversely affected the economy of the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and New Zealand. During 1990-91, Queensland emerged as the strongest State in Australian financial markets. The Queensland Treasury Corporation is now able to borrow at a lower cost than any other State central borrowing authority. Queensland's long-term credit rating has been reaffirmed at AAA for its Australian dollar debt, which is the highest rating it is possible to obtain. This credit rating is higher than the ratings of all other States except New South Wales, which also has a AAA rating.

These outcomes reflect Queensland's strong financial position. The State Government's net debt fell \$426m last year. That is a 10 per cent reduction. The net financing requirement result for 1990-91 was a negative of \$649m. An even more realistic view of that outcome is the actual surplus of \$804m. The surplus is a better measure of the State's overall financial position, because it includes the effective repayments of debts to the Commonwealth. The estimated surplus for 1991-92 is \$252m, including a central Government surplus of \$217m, and a \$48m surplus in the public trading enterprise sector. This achievement is unique and remarkable, in comparison with the results of other State Governments where public debt has reached tremendous proportions. Consider the per capita debt for the Northern Territory—\$6,910; Victoria, \$6,320; New South Wales, \$3,575. By contrast, in Queensland, it is \$1,153. These are Australian Bureau of Statistics figures. These higher levels of per capita debt in other States are consequences of a positive NFR, or deficit, in New South Wales of \$1.4 billion, and in Victoria of \$1.5 billion, in comparison with the negative NFR prediction of \$11m for this financial year. It is worth noting that the debt service costs account for only 5.4 per cent of the Budget for the year, compared with 13 per cent in Victoria. What this means is that there is \$700m more for vital services in health, education, and police.

Queensland appears likely to lead Australia out of the current recession, with State economic growth predicted to be 2.3 per cent this financial year, compared with 1.5 per cent nationally. The doom-and-gloom merchants on the opposite side of the Chamber have consistently talked down the Queensland economy all year. Those members do not want to face the fact that in 1990-91 Queensland continued to make an above-average contribution to Australia's economic performance in exports, building approvals, engineering, construction, and motor vehicle registrations. Even in those areas, which are below the national average, like private investment, the 1990-91 figures showed an increase over the previous year. During the March quarter, Queensland was the only State to record a positive growth rate for private new capital expenditure—0.1 per cent as compared with minus 10.1 per cent nationally.

Treasury analysis suggests that the State economy troughed earlier than that of the rest of Australia, with the September quarter in 1990 being the worst, and a broadly based recovery has now commenced, according to the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research indicators. This recovery is most apparent in housing, tourism and manufacturing. The latest ABS statistics indicate that building approvals for Queensland during the three months to July grew by 10.5 per cent, compared with a national growth of 1.5 per cent; and that the growth in residential building was 7.5 per cent, compared with a national rate of minus 8.8 per cent—a dramatic difference that augurs well for the future. Consumer spending and exports are both forecast to return to firmer growth, and there are an estimated \$14 billion worth of major mining, manufacturing and tourism projects in Queensland currently under construction, committed or the subject of feasibility studies. The number of new business names registered in the June quarter in Queensland rose by 5.9 per cent. In Cairns, where tourism is taking off again, the increase is 21 per cent on the March quarter.

Improving Queensland business conditions are also clearly evident in two key private sector surveys. The joint Confederation of Australian Industry and Westpac "industrial trends survey" shows that, whilst a net balance of 18 per cent of Queensland respondents' business situation deteriorated in the June quarter, this compared with 69 per cent in the previous quarter. Furthermore, there are now as many respondents who expect higher output as expect lower output in the coming quarter—the best result in Queensland for almost two years. Similarly, the National Bank quarterly business survey reported that Queensland had the best trading conditions in Australia in both the June and expected September quarters.

The Queensland Confederation of Industry pulse survey for the June quarter indicated that 33 per cent of respondents said that Queensland business conditions were satisfactory to very good, compared with only 12 per cent nationally. Forty-nine per cent said that the Queensland investment climate was satisfactory to very good. For the first time in a year and a half, more Queensland businesses now expect sales to increase, rather than decrease. I am not saying that business is booming, but any objective analysis would have to conclude that, in the present recession, business is better off in Queensland than anywhere else in Australia. Certainly, National Mutual is voting with its feet and is moving its head office from Melbourne to Brisbane. In fact, I spoke with the State manager of National Mutual recently in Cairns and he confirmed the company's long-term confidence in the Queensland economy and the Goss Government. Times are still tough. No-one is denying that. The Budget's strategy reflects that reality. It is a Budget designed, firstly, to stimulate employment and, secondly, to generate an economic climate conducive to private sector investment that in the long run would assist in the economic recovery that is under way. Specific initiatives to achieve this include a record \$3 billion or a 35 per cent increase in the capital works program to create an additional 8 000 jobs.

There has been a \$70m increase in employment and training initiatives, resulting in an additional 9 400 training places. Payroll and land tax exemptions and concessions and an 18-month deferral of rental increases are provided for commercial, industrial and tourism purposes. There has been a special \$8m injection into the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation's marketing and promotion budget. This initiative will assist in creating 20 000 new jobs over the decade. This is a package that the Queensland Confederation of Industry general manager, Mr Clive Bubb, has welcomed as a step in the right direction for future growth.

I turn first to revenue. The Government has kept its commitment of no new taxes, no increases in existing tax rates or increases in charges on average above the CPI. Earlier today, the member for Burdekin presented figures which he claimed showed a \$500m increase in taxes, fines and fees between 1988-89 and 1990-91. I took the trouble of going and getting the document to which he referred, which the Parliamentary Library has prepared. Unfortunately, the member for Burdekin has not yet realised that one has to read the fine print. I prefer to put that interpretation on the matter. If the honourable member had read the fine print, he would have known that the figures to which he was referring—in fact, just to correct him, it is not \$500m but \$449m—indicate very clearly that \$251m of the amount concerned was for motor vehicle registration fees, and that prior to 1990 that was hidden in the Main Roads Trust Fund. Again, from 1990 onwards, the Golden Casket revenue was also included in gambling tax. The note on the bottom of this document in fine print points out that the pre-1990-91 figures are thus not strictly comparable with post-1990-91 figures. All I can say is that it was a good try by the member for Burdekin. No doubt some remedial reading can be arranged for him.

Dr Watson: You always have to make sure you read the fine print. There is no question about that.

Dr CLARK: That is for sure.

Mr Fenlon: You've got to be able to read first.

Dr CLARK: Yes, one has to be able to read first. What is the truth? There are some very real concessions in both payroll tax and land tax. I might add that the structuring of State revenue does not happen just because Treasury thinks that it is a good idea. A quiet revolution has been taking place in the Treasury Department which will make it better able to respond to the demands of managing our economy. Treasury has developed a computerised forward estimates model to estimate and forecast all State revenues. As part of that project, significant research and evidence has been undertaken into the modelling of key State taxation receipt items in order to provide an enhanced degree of predictability of receipts in a given economic environment. This level of sophistication, using the most modern techniques, will further assist Queensland to get it right and fully appreciate the implications of any changes to revenue sources.

I will return to payroll tax. The Budget allows for the exemption level to be increased from \$500,000 to \$550,000 from 1 January 1992, with a further increase to \$600,000 from July 1992, to provide additional assistance to the small-business sector. These concessions are estimated to cost \$14m in a full year and will benefit in excess of 6 000 employers. The introduction of these concessions in 1991-92 will mean that Queensland's exemption levels are the highest of all the States. Business should also remember that the payroll tax rate of 5 per cent in Queensland is 40 per cent below the standard rate applying in most other States.

The other tax in relation to which concessions were provided was, of course, land tax. These concessions, worth \$40m, mean that Queensland land tax rates will be the second-lowest in Australia, higher only than those of New South Wales. The so-called cosmetic changes to land tax are indeed very extensive and, I believe, worthy of repetition. The maximum tax rate will be reduced from 2.1 per cent to 1.8 per cent, with reductions in each of the graduated lower rates, ranging from 10 per cent to 14 per cent. These percentages translate into tax cuts of approximately \$1,500 in the middle of the scale up to \$30,000 at the top end of the scale. Additionally, very real benefits will be gained in the 1992-93 financial year as the effects of the new lower land valuations are evident in the Cairns, Mulgrave, Douglas and Gold Coast local authority areas, where tourism growth had previously escalated valuations.

As a result of other elements in the package, the statutory deduction for land owned by natural persons other than trustees will increase from \$150,000 to \$160,000. The liability threshold for land that is owned by companies, trustees and absentees will be raised from \$35,000 to \$40,000. The parameters governing the exemption available to religious and charitable bodies will be expanded. Land owned and used for the operation of a registered retirement village will be exempted. Land tax may be deferred for the life-time of elderly owners who can demonstrate hardship. The tax rate at which land owned by home unit companies is assessed will reflect the average unit value rather than the total value of land owned by the home unit company. Finally, some 25 000 land-owners will not be required to lodge annual returns. Automatic assessments will be issued to these taxpayers. For land-owners still required to lodge returns, the requirement level will rise from \$35,000 to \$40,000 for absentees, trustees and companies and from \$156,000 to \$179,000 for individuals.

I note that the Liberals and Nationals have committed themselves to abolishing land tax. The question has been asked several times in this Chamber: how are they going to make good the money that will not be available, the \$215m that would be raised from land tax? What other taxes will they raise? What other services will be eliminated?

Mr Hayward: They are going to borrow.

Dr CLARK: I will take that interjection. We have not heard anything at all. We can only assume that they are going to borrow. All we have been told is, "We will tell you later." It simply is not good enough. Currently, under the Land Tax Act and the Retail Shop Leases Act, property-owners can transfer their land tax obligations to tenants. The Government recognises that that situation is immoral and should not continue. It has been the cause of widespread complaints from tenants. The Government has therefore decided on two measures to provide better protection for tenants. Legislation will be introduced in Parliament later this year to prohibit the passing on of land tax by landlords to both residential and commercial tenants. That prohibition will apply prospectively to leases executed after 1 January next year. Secondly, to assist tenants with existing leases, the Commissioner for Land Tax will be empowered to provide lessees with details of land tax assessable on the parcel of land which includes the leased premises. Importantly, these reforms will introduce a certainty for small-businesspeople that will enable them to better manage their finances and their businesses. The member for Surfers Paradise did not present a shred of evidence that small business in South Australia, where a similar prohibition exists, has been in any way disadvantaged.

I turn to stamp duty. The interstate comparisons for duty payable on conveyancing on dwellings or motor vehicle registrations confirms Queensland's reputation as the low-tax State of Australia. As a further concession to business, Crown land rental increases recommended in the Wolfe report for commercial, industrial and tourism properties would be deferred for 18 months, which matches a similar commitment given in regard to rural properties announced earlier this year. This measure, worth \$10m, is specifically aimed at giving breathing space for Queensland businesses. Last year, the Treasurer foreshadowed that the micro-economic reforms in the public service and the corporatisation of Government-owned enterprises would pay off, and indeed it has. The evidence is there in dollars and cents. The efficiency dividends are the result of reforms initiated by the Government. The Budget estimates that dividends from Government-owned enterprises should reach \$61.5m, while payments in lieu of income tax will increase to \$73.1m, and the extension of a borrowing guarantee fee to all Government enterprises, departments and Crown authorities will raise \$20m in total.

Suncorp, the newly established Queensland Investment Corporation and the Queensland Electricity Commission will all be contributing substantial dividends and payments in lieu of tax this year. All tax on enterprise profits will be paid to the State Government under an agreement with the Federal Government. Extensions of the 0.5 per cent borrowing guarantee fee which was imposed on the Queensland Electricity Commission only last year is expected to raise an additional \$2.6m; but I reiterate that there are no plans to remove the subsidy provided to local government authorities on guaranteed borrowings. Although this guarantee fee was first applied to the Queensland Electricity Commission last year, the electricity price has increased by only half the consumer price index and the QEC paid off substantial debt—\$255m—during the year. So much for the dire predictions of last year that that would increase the price of electricity!

However, keeping down taxes and charges is not the only thing this Government has done to benefit businesses in the Budget. As I indicated at the outset, a key part of our Budget strategy is to provide a helping hand to the economic recovery that is beginning to be felt. An overall allocation for business and industry assistance programs is \$45.1m. The major initiatives in this year's Budget include a 25 per cent funding increase for direct business assistance, with \$4m for the refocused Queensland Small Business Corporation. A new regional development and services program which aims to facilitate economic development in regional Queensland receives almost \$16m. That includes \$6m for the National Industry Extension Scheme which assists industry to be more internationally competitive by improving productivity and efficiency.

There is also \$9m provided for industry-related capital works which incorporates strategic industrial estate work, including work in Cairns. Other highlights include—

\$2m as assistance to major projects funding to encourage industry to establish in or relocate to Queensland;

\$360,000 for a program of sectoral plans including studies on the information technology, aerospace, environmental management and food processing industries;

more than \$3m to boost Queensland research and development activity under the Queensland grants for research and development program; and

\$735,000 to the industrial supplies office as part of a five-year funding program to match local manufacturers with markets.

Let me turn to tourism, which is the most important industry in my electorate. It is the third most important industry in Queensland after mining and agriculture, generating some \$4 billion and employing nearly 100 000 people. In far-north Queensland, it is a vital industry worth some \$500m to the local economy. In the present rural crisis, it is undoubtedly the shining star in the State's economic future and the industry is delighted with the \$8m injection into the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation's marketing and promotion budget. That represents a 66 per cent increase. This initiative alone will assist in creating thousands of new jobs in the tourist industry over the next decade as visitor numbers to Queensland grow to 13 million a year by the year 2000. The member for Surfers Paradise seems to think that, because that \$8m is a loan to the QTTC, it is somehow not a real Budget item. However, Peter Laurance, Chairman of the QTTC, clearly knows how real it is and he is thrilled to bits. In the *Courier-Mail* on 24 September, he stated how he would spend \$8m. He knows it is real and he knows the worth of that injection into the corporation. The QTTC plans to enter into joint marketing arrangements with other industry groups such as airlines and regional authorities to maximise the promotional push and get the most out of the taxpayers' dollar.

In Queensland, the environment is the key to our successful tourist industry, and resources are needed to manage it. Part of that \$8m to the QTTC will be used for the preparation of a State tourist industry strategic plan to address such issues as the social and environmental impact of tourism, which is vitally needed in the Cairns region. Otherwise, we will see the community becoming increasingly polarised on the effect of tourism. In addition, \$6.9m has been allocated for management and infrastructure in north Queensland's wet tropics World Heritage area and \$2.9m for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. Those amounts will be matched by the Federal Government to ensure that visitors to our reef and rainforest can be managed without destroying the very environment that attracts them. An additional \$11.5m has been allocated to further our goal of a world-class system of national parks that will also provide a boost to eco-tourism—one of the fastest-growing sectors in the tourist industry that caters for people who are interested in learning more about the natural environment. Contrast that assistance to the tourist industry with what the Liberals would do with the imposition of a consumption tax. In August, in a letter to the shadow Minister for Tourism and Aviation, David Jull, the Australian Tourism Industry Association stressed the industry's enormous concern about the tax, stating that it was "heightened by an almost total lack of detail and a genuine fear that it will undermine the international competitiveness of the Australian tourism product". The Australian Tourist Commission has certainly recognised the value of Australia not having a consumption tax. In a recent advertisement in which 54 reasons to travel to Australia were listed, the third reason listed was "no GST". So the consumption tax is recognised as an international turn-off. Surely the surest way to leave a sour taste in the tourist's mouth and wreck the tourism industry would be to bring in a consumption tax. The GST would have a similarly devastating impact on the housing industry which is

just climbing out of recession, as is acknowledged by Dr Ron Silberberg, the national Executive Director of the Housing Industry Association. It should be clear even to the members opposite that a recovery is under way in Queensland. But we must be prepared with a skilled work force as we come out of the recession. Tragically, the level of funding provided by the previous Government to the TAFE sector was always below the national average. Over the next three years, this Government aims to bring the Queensland TAFE participation rate up to the national average.

One of the most exciting and forward-looking aspects of this Budget was its investment in the young people of this State. The 21 per cent, or \$70m, increase in training and employment initiatives is set to create an additional 9 400 training places with a focus on 15 to 19 year-olds. In particular, there are 5 000 additional places in initial skills vocational education and training to meet key industry policy goals for micro-economic reform and industry restructuring; 1 000 part-time TAFE places in advanced vocational education and training; 1 000 new State-funded associate diploma places; seeding grants of \$0.75m to provide the incentive for the establishment of enterprise-based training to meet the industry needs; and further enhancement of the State-funded vocational educational and training infrastructure through a \$60m program of new and refurbished facilities and capital equipment.

The Cairns TAFE college is benefiting from the increased funding to TAFE with an extra 126 places in basic and prevocational trade courses and 42 associate diploma places. Delivery of education programs in teaching health and natural resource management to Aboriginal and Islander communities will be enhanced by an additional \$363,540. In addition, the college has received a 32 per cent increase in recurrent funding.

Also vital to industry is the Government's commitment to higher education. The Government will also contribute to the enhancement of the State's skills base through the funding of 2 000 higher education places in 1992 at a cost of \$17.6m. In addition, the State is contributing \$15.9m towards the funding of some 2 700 nurse education places in 1992. In 1991-92, some \$2m will be provided to the Queensland Tertiary Education Foundation to encourage business and industry to identify training needs and to work with the tertiary institutions in meeting those needs. Over the past two years, the foundation has approved 42 study projects. State funds of \$3.3m have been matched by industry and tertiary sector contributions of \$6.3m. Pending development of a new campus on the university's Smithfield site which was acquired during 1990-91 with State funds, the Government is also providing \$3.5m for the construction of additional teaching facilities at the Cairns TAFE College for James Cook University students. All the signs are positive for Federal Government funding being provided to the Cairns campus for 1994, and by the middle of November an announcement should be made to that effect. Commitment to education is a hallmark of this Labor Government and it stems from its social justice policy as much as from a recognition of its underpinning economic development. Thus the election pledge of an extra \$250m for education has already been met with a record budget this year of \$2.1 billion, the largest in Queensland's history. As a member of the Government's northern and rural task force, I particularly welcome the \$3.2m allocation to the Remote Area Incentives Scheme that will benefit teachers in 88 schools, half of them from the remote centres in far-north Queensland.

Last year, north Queensland did very well from the State Budget, and that commitment to the north of the State is evidenced in the second Labor Budget, which was recognised by individuals across the whole community in Cairns—local government, business, environment, education, farming and tourism. Highlights from this Budget of particular relevance to far-north Queensland include a \$403.5m capital works program for police stations, schools and hospitals. Most importantly, \$14.45m has been allocated for

the Cairns Court House and police station complex. In my electorate of Barron River, work has begun in Mossman on a \$3m police station and a resource centre for the high school, while tenders have just been called for \$2.2m worth of extensions at the hospital. On the Marlin Coast to the south, the Smithfield Police Station is being extended, a child-care centre will be constructed and nearly \$1m has been allocated to capital works in schools, bringing to \$3.6m the amount allocated to schools in my electorate since Labor took office.

Roads are essential for a decentralised State like Queensland, and north Queensland is set to benefit from major road construction and improvement works worth \$33.3m. In my electorate, the construction of four lanes on the vital Captain Cook Highway is continuing along the Marlin Coast, with another \$5.96m allocated to extend the duplication north. While capital works items are important, they are not the only measure of the Government's recognition of the importance of north Queensland. The north is a major beneficiary of the regionalisation policy as public servants are relocated into regional Queensland out of head office. Decisions are being taken in the north rather than in Brisbane. This is consistent with our policy of meeting the needs of people in north Queensland.

Mr McGrady: And north-west Queensland.

Dr CLARK: And north-west Queensland. Just about every Government department now has a stronger presence in either Cairns or Townsville, or in both cities. The balance of residential population in the northern and far-northern statistical division is beginning to change in favour of the far north, and this trend is expected to continue in the next decade. The Department of Local Government has allocated \$400,000 for the establishment of a north Queensland regional office for the planning service group. I have already requested of the Minister that this office be established in Cairns in recognition of the rapid growth and the increasing demand from local authorities for coordinated regional planning in far-north Queensland. I do not wish to say that Townsville should be neglected in this regard; I am just making the point that at the moment the growth is occurring in the Cairns region. There is a desperate need for regional planning to provide for the future to manage the growth that is occurring now.

In conclusion—Queensland and north Queensland can expect another year of continued growth under the responsible economic management of the Goss Government, and I commend the Treasurer for his excellent work and his steadfast ability to say "No" in the face of escalating demands for services and facilities that Queensland cannot yet meet. As Labor tackles recession and drought in its first term, the Treasurer is undoubtedly experiencing trial by fire. They are challenges on a scale never experienced by the National Party as it enjoyed the boom years. But the Goss Government is meeting the challenge and will continue to respond to community needs within the framework of responsible economic management to secure the future of Queensland as "the" State in which to do business and to raise a family. I support the motion.

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Condamine) (9.34 p.m.): In rising to speak in this debate, I am reminded of the comments made tonight by the Federal Treasurer, Mr Kerin, that Australia is getting close to living within its means. I think that Government members would now recognise that what has the greatest impact on Queensland's Budget is not the Queensland economy but the national economy. Regardless of what is done in the Queensland Budget, the Government can only fiddle around the edges. A Government can compensate or it can complement. What happens at the national level has a dramatic effect on what happens in Queensland. I have been a member of Parliament since 1983. Not long after I was elected to Parliament, there was a change of Government in Canberra and Bob Hawke came to power as Prime Minister of Australia. Since then—in fact, a little bit before then—Australia has been in economic decline. It is that economic decline that

has had a huge impact on what we can do in Queensland and it has had a great bearing on the way in which Budgets are drawn up. I am sure that the Minister sitting opposite would recognise the sorts of constraints that have been placed upon the Government.

In the first 80 years of its existence, Australia amassed only \$18 billion in foreign debt. In the last 10 years, that has blown out to something like \$136 billion. To repeat Mr Kerin's words: we have been living beyond our means. The Federal ALP Government has been pursuing its idea of the redistribution of wealth. It is a commendable goal to improve people's standard of living. I notice that in Queensland the term used by members opposite is not "redistribution of wealth" but "social justice". That is a commendable term. However, I have come to understand that they have got it out of kilter. For more than 10 years, the ACTU has been abusing its great industrial might. It has comprised some pretty smart people who understand what makes Australia tick, but they have gone beyond the pale. Instead of improving the quality of life of the average person—be it an employer or an employee—they have created a situation in which they thought they were giving away good things but, in fact, they have made Australia go backwards. We have been living beyond our means. What has happened at a Federal level for those 10 years under Bob Hawke and Paul Keating? There has been a huge attack on the productive sector and on exporters. There has been a loss of export income earnings. So much of our gross national product is used to pay off our overseas debt.

This is the Queensland ALP's second Budget. I can understand that it is very keen to sell it as responsible financial management. It is a great change from when the Premier got up a couple of years ago and spoke about the great economic model of John Cain and the other ALP State Premiers. I notice that, in his Budget Speech, the Treasurer has cast aspersions on the financial management of Victoria. He said: not for us in Queensland; we are going to be responsible financial managers. I put it to the Treasurer that his ideology is once again giving him the same sorts of problems as Bob Hawke's ideology gave him. The constituency elected this Government because it was told that this Government would improve the quality of life. We have been told by the "Best Treasurer in the world" that the quality of life will get better; that interest rates will be down by next Christmas; that things will get better by next Christmas. But we have never asked: which Christmas? There is a very real danger that Queensland is also heading down the same track as did Victoria. I put it to the Treasurer that he has his priorities right, but in his desire to implement the idea of a redistribution of wealth he is overdoing it and damaging the productive sector which creates the wealth. He is doing that at the expense of the productive sector of this State and complementing the Federal Government, which is also doing that.

I turn now to some of the things that have been going on and have had a huge effect on the productive sector. Members have spoken at length about land tax. There is no doubt that land tax has a big impact on the capacity of a company to remain viable. The major problem with land tax at present is not so much the tax itself—and the National Party will do away with it—but the refusal by this Government to go back and make valuations that reflect the present day values of those properties. People on the Gold Coast have had their land tax assessed on 1986 or 1988 valuations when there was a boom in the economy in that part of Queensland. Now they are in a recession and being burdened with a land tax based on those valuations that are out of kilter with the real value of those properties. There has been a massive increase in Crown land rentals.

Mr Dollin: That's not true; it went down.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I beg the honourable member's pardon. The other day, a constituent came to me and said that she had just paid a 200 per cent increase in the rental of Crown land that is used for grazing.

The Government could not move fast enough with the concessions on farm vehicle registrations. Since then, it has patted itself on the back a little bit and said, "We have given some relief on farm vehicle registrations." The reality is that those registrations have been greatly increased. It is a pretty common tactic for socialists and Fabians to take away a mile, give back half a mile, pat themselves on the back and say, "We have made some great improvements."

An Opposition member: Two steps forward and one step back.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Two steps forward and one step back—correct. The role of the QIDC has been changed markedly. The Treasurer said, "We are going to make it just like any other bank." At one time the rate charged by the QIDC was always 2 per cent below that of the trading banks. That was wiped out in one fell swoop when the Treasurer said, "They will be just like any other bank. They will be competitive and have to pay their way." The reality was that it was another impost on the productive sector. This Government has slipped into disaster relief. In fact, it aided and abetted the belief that drought should be taken away from the list of natural disasters. However, last week in *Country Life* the Treasurer of Queensland said that drought is the worst kind of natural disaster that can occur. Obviously, he has had a change of heart, but he is on record as being part of a Government that wanted to wipe drought from the list of natural disasters.

Mr De Lacy: What rubbish!

Mr LITTLEPROUD: It is correct. Federally, droughts have been taken off that list.

Mr Warburton has introduced legislation to amend the Workplace Health and Safety Act. This Government has an aspiration to make the workplace safer. We all agree with that. But the Government has done it to such a degree that it is putting a huge impost on businesses that employ people and affecting their viability. That is another example of the productive sector not being able to carry the load that the Government is putting on it. There has been enormous spending in the environmental sector at the expense of jobs.

The Government's overall thrust is to improve the quality of life. However, I put it to the Government that it has got it out of kilter and is doing so without due regard for the capacity of the productive sector to pay for it. I am sure, Madam Chairman, that, because of the disasters facing my electorate, you would understand it if I was to speak about that area. I do not intend to speak at great length about the drought, which is merely accelerating the financial decline that has been affecting that part of Queensland for the past 10 years. In fact, during the past few days, after the National Party has been going around asking for opinions and ideas about how to improve access to assistance for people who are suffering badly at the present time, farmers have come to see me. More than one of those farmers has said, "Ten years ago, I had money in the bank. I was out of debt and had a good solid farm." In the past 10 years, those people have gone from being prosperous and having money in the bank to having to borrow money to be able to plant the next crop. I will not put all the blame on the Government. There has also been a decline in commodity prices across the world. Governments federally and at a State level should have been sympathetic and understanding about the situation. I remind members that we are Governments for the people. Governments should have understood that there was a sector out there that was suffering badly and should have put in place some measures to allow people in that sector to remain viable during this cycle of downturns in commodity prices. Unfortunately, that has not been the case at a Federal level. When this Government came to power, the big catchcry was: we are going to take away those rorts that the National Party gave all its mates out there.

Mr Beattie: And too right. We have looked after them since then.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I point out to the member for Brisbane Central that it is marvellous what has happened since then. If he is honest and thinks about it, he will admit

that the National Party was taking measures to ensure that people in the productive sector remained viable so that they had a bit of selvedge up their sleeves to help themselves when a downturn came.

Mr De Lacy: What about Fitzgerald?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: The Treasurer should not talk about Fitzgerald. The Labor Party tried to take people to court for the alleged abuse of drought assistance and was laughed out of court.

When Government members attended a country Cabinet meeting in Toowoomba, they started to realise that the rural sector was hurting pretty badly and that all those so-called rorts that they would have taken away were necessary. Government members patted themselves on the back and said, "We will give you a nine-point plan." The former Government had most of those measures in place but the Labor Government took them away. The Government took two steps forward and one step back. It kept on chipping away at the productive sector.

Mr De Lacy: They are rort free.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: One cannot even get into the darned things. Not one of the 22 people who attended a meeting of the Cattlemen's Union can access the guidelines, yet the Treasurer was out there wearing his Akubra hat and a pair of moleskins and thinking that he knew what the bush was about. The Government must look after the productive sector that has the capacity to generate wealth in Australia and give us all that improvement in quality of life to which members opposite aspire—that redistribution of wealth—

Mr T. B. Sullivan interjected.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: The Government is not doing too much about it. I can tell members a couple of things that should have been done in the Budget. I will then refer to things that should have been done federally, because the big game is Federal. In the past 10 years, people of the ilk of members opposite who have had power federally have done a massive disservice to Australia. Until we turn that around, we are going nowhere. On the State scene, I notice that the Department of Family Services has a reduction of 218 people. Never before has there been such a need for people to give family counselling both in the cities and in the country. There is a great need for that counselling because, in times of economic stress, we see family hardships and family break-ups. Why can the Minister not convince the Cabinet that more counsellors are needed? A similar problem exists with the DPI. When the member for Auburn was the Minister responsible, the former National Party Government set up a system in which financial counsellors went out to tell people how best to access lines of credit. We provided some counsellors, but more are needed. Those counsellors are being swamped. One fellow in the shire adjoining mine had 200 clients. He is off work on sick leave because he cannot handle so many clients. However, in the DPI the Government has cut the number of service personnel by 425.

The next point I put to the Government is this: why could the former National Party Government afford to have all of those public servants delivering services all over Queensland and, all of a sudden, the Labor Party Government says that Queensland cannot afford it? All of a sudden, the Labor Government reckons that it can do it better, that it knows all the ways of doing it better. I will read a letter to the Premier from the Chinchilla parish of the Uniting Church in Australia, which states—

"In recent weeks statements have been made by Ministers of the Government which do not represent the real situation presently being experienced by families in both the Chinchilla and Murilla Shires.

The Honourable the Minister for Primary Industries last weekend inferred that dams in Queensland were 90 to 95% capacity and there was plenty of water in rivers, streams and creeks.

The other statement was made by the Honourable the Treasurer in Parliament (18th July, 1991)"——

Mr De Lacy: Why don't they get out of politics, because they are not doing their parishioners any good by interfering in politics?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I will tell the Treasurer what that man is doing. He is taking food parcels out to families. The Treasurer should not come at that. The man is a humanitarian. He is out there looking after families. I will continue to read the letter because it is jarring the Treasurer a bit. The letter states—

"The other statement was made by the Honourable the Treasurer in Parliament (18th July, 1991) that 'cuts in the numbers of public servants and massive cuts in services were not happening in Queensland. The whole story is a beat-up. The Goss Government is all about delivering services . . . This Government is increasing service delivery . . .' (Hansard p. 189)."

Of course, the whole story is a beat-up. The letter continues—

"As a minister of the Uniting Church whose parish visitation covers both Shires, I wish to convey my concern that these statements misrepresent the truth . . ."

Mr De Lacy: And he is a member of the National Party. Deny it!

Mr LITTLEPROUD: How would the Treasurer know? I would not know what his politics are. He is a man who cares and he is concerned that the Government is making untrue statements. He had the guts to write to the Premier, and he jarred the Government so much that the Premier took fright and sent Tom Burns out. What did Tom Burns do? For two days, he carried the flag and said, "It's terrible, it's terrible, it's terrible." He flick-passed it to Canberra and we have not heard of him since, the little fox terrier that he is. He was smart all right. He led the charge and, as soon as he got up some pace, he flicked the issue off to the side and let someone else carry the can. Good old Tom! It is disgusting that the Treasurer of Queensland should attack a minister of the church because he had the audacity to write to the Premier of Queensland saying that the Government of Queensland was making untrue statements. What a hypocrite! I will continue. I have done what I set out to do. I have stirred up the Treasurer. He is a bit soft on that.

Mr Beattie: Don't get too excited.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I will refer to some measures that should be taken federally. I will return to my theme: Australia has been living beyond its means, and our balance of payments proves it. We must put some capacity back into the productive sector to create the wealth so that we can all have a better way of life. The Government has been trying to short-cut it, and we have gone down the drain. We must change the tax rules. We must do something about the workplace measures. When the member for Peak Downs was the responsible Minister, we had a good start in Queensland with voluntary employment agreements. That riled badly some Old Guard fellows from the unions. However, it worked. Look at Metway Bank. Look at Power Brewing. It worked. Of course, the Labor Government came to power and threw out voluntary employment agreements. Since then, we have seen a good example down south with the SPC cannery at Shepparton. It was facing economic disaster but it brought in enterprise agreements. The greatest Treasurer in the world even said that enterprise agreements are the way to go. Let us put some flexibility into it. That is what we must do to put Australia back on the map. It frightens me that a fellow called Tom Barton will be the next union heavy in here with the same old

1950s mentality. The Government should not let him take on the portfolio as Minister for Employment, because Queensland would not recover.

The Government will have to do something about the importation of foods. Mostly, we are importing foods just for the palate. We can produce those foods in Australia. We already produce most of them here. Unfortunately, the foods coming into Australia are not only being produced overseas but also being sold here at dumped prices. That is happening at an increasing rate. If we cut the level of those imports and make people produce those foods in Australia, we will improve. A good example was cited at the graingrowers conference by a fellow called Doug Shears. He stood up holding in his hand a plastic bag with a pizza base in it. He said, "That is being brought into Australia at \$12,000 a tonne. You fellows sold it overseas for \$90 a tonne, but it comes back value-added at \$12,000 a tonne." We must produce food here in Australia and we must prevent food from being dumped in Australia. It is commendable to say, "Let us give the people the cheapest food we can", but that can only be done by damaging home industries. If home industries are damaged, Australia is being done a great disservice. I return to the point that we are living beyond our means and some incentive has to be given to those people in the productive sector who create employment. In that way, we can all benefit. If the situation is put back into kilter by a few percentage points, it will be all right.

Some tax depreciation incentives must be introduced for things such as the conservation of water, land and fodder. There should be a tax depreciation on machinery which is used for productivity. These incentives did exist, but they have been wound back to next to nothing. In 1975, Malcolm Fraser gave a 120 per cent tax deductibility allowance to get the economy kick-started again. Something like that must be introduced in order to wind up the productive sector. People buy the goods produced by the factories, and that has a flow-on effect to the rest of the community. The wage fixation system should be altered. For example, wharfies cannot be sacked. They take redundancy pay-outs of \$500,000. That must be changed, because the companies that handle the wharves cannot continue like that. It is laughable.

Mrs Edmond: There has been a 40 per cent increase in productivity.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Yes, but at the present time, the men are not gainfully employed. The men themselves say that they would like to take redundancy or move to another job, but the agreement that has been made makes it impossible for them to be sacked. They must be given redundancy pay-outs of approximately half a million dollars, and there are not many companies around that would want to do that. There must be more flexibility.

Another matter of concern to me at the Federal level is the compulsory superannuation scheme. This was a salary rise by means of legislation and not by a decision of the Industrial Commission. It could not be handled there. This is another part of the redistribution of wealth and improving the quality of life. The Government is deluding itself because it is just an impost on the productive sector's ability to pay and companies are falling over. One of my colleagues said that this year there has been a 70 per cent increase in business bankruptcies in Queensland. Surely that is a good enough sign that things are out of kilter. When the Government hears that an additional 325 people are unemployed every week, it must know that things are out of kilter. The Premier and the Treasurer can puff their chests out, look at the Budget papers and say, "We have got more teachers and we have this and that", but if the productive sector is going down, the State is going nowhere.

Mr Beattie: You are attacking the number of teachers we increased—473 teachers.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I am saying that it has to be in kilter and the Government can only do what it can afford. Times have got tougher. The Government would like to deliver on all the promises it gave before 1989 but, if the economy cannot stand it, the Government has to cut its cloth accordingly. The previous speaker, who is now in the chair, said that this is a very difficult time for Queensland. Everyone understands that it is a difficult time for Australia and that Queensland has performed pretty well. I warn this Government that it has its priorities out of kilter and it cannot continue to bombard the productive sector.

In conclusion, I return to my theme that possibly Australians are getting close to living within their means. For the last decade, we have been unable to do so, because we have had the wrong sorts of policies and the productive sector has been attacked. I understand that the Government wants to improve the quality of life for everyone, especially those people who vote for it, most of whom are wage-earners. Government members must not have their eyes closed, because unless Australia has the capacity to create wealth, we cannot afford it.

Progress reported.

PUBLIC SECTOR (APPEALS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 5 September (see p. 868).

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn) (9.56 p.m.): As the Premier informed us during his second-reading speech, one of the objects of the Public Sector Management Commission Act 1990 was "to enhance the access of public sector employees to appeal tribunals for the redress of grievances". All things considered, it seems to me not unreasonable to believe that Wayne Goss the Premier is proud to be associated with such a philosophy—indeed, to promote it as his own. I am disappointed that he is unable to indicate to the House tonight that that is the fact, but it is reasonable to assume that he endorses that philosophy.

However, if such a belief is valid it then raises the question: why has this Premier been prepared to preside over the vindictive treatment meted out to public sector employees, particularly heartless and spiteful during the first year of his accession to power? This treatment afforded those employees no access whatsoever to minimum cost appeal processes. It is high time that the Premier made yet another confession to the people of Queensland. I am pleased that he is now in a position to say that he will make a further confession to the people of Queensland. Not only on the matter of daylight-saving should he confess to a degree of arrogance, but also in politicising the public service, destroying careers and career opportunities for public sector employees—whose only sin was to have been employed on demonstrable merit by the previous Government as middle to upper range executives—and disturbing the mental health of many of those people.

In all those areas this Premier has demonstrated a shameful degree of arrogance to which he should now confess. I deliberately lay the blame at the Premier's feet even though I doubt that he was or even is conversant with what went on and is still going on. The shame and the blame must rest with Wayne Goss the Premier and not with his hired hands from the south or from academia. As I am sure that Mr Goss would wish and expect it to be, the buck must stop at his desk. It is more than time that he acquainted himself with these facts, just as he has acquainted himself, albeit belatedly, with the facts relating to daylight-saving and the

drought. Of course, the drought is what Ed Casey believes to be a "spell of dry weather". In relation to those two other issues of daylight-saving and the drought, the Premier admitted the error of his arrogance, by whomever it was perpetrated, and endeavoured to remedy some of the many ills caused by his hatchetmen. He must take action now. He should be big-hearted enough to follow suite and admit that he was in error in this regard and that he has displayed a degree of arrogance, which is a position that he should not allow to remain.

Employees in the public sector have the efforts of union officials such as Laurie Gillespie and Jenni Eastwood to thank for forcing this Government to provide the greater range of appeal rights set out in the Bill that is being debated tonight. It is a joke, though—a bad joke—for the Premier to suggest that this Bill will be "a means of preventing patronage and nepotism". Admittedly, at least he had the good grace not to suggest that it would be a means of preventing cronyism! Examples of patronage, nepotism and cronyism under this Government have been well documented by the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, as well as by the member for Merthyr.

Mr Ardill: Ha, ha!

Mr HARPER: Well may the honourable member laugh. The fact is that the examples have been well documented in this Parliament. I do not intend to take up either the time of this House or the pages of *Hansard* to repeat the allegations. Suffice it to say that the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Merthyr have well documented that cronyism. Let us now consider a few areas in which this Bill fails—areas that provide the backdoor route for the very real Labor trait of patronage, nepotism and cronyism. To start with, this Bill is retrospective only to 1 July this year. Nineteen months of Goss Government patronage, nepotism and cronyism will remain unchallengeable. I notice that no comment is being made by the honourable member who interjected previously. He knows that he cannot deny that fact.

Although the Bill will tidy up some areas that have caused discontent, it will not overcome the anomalies that have been perpetrated by this Government since it came to office. No right of appeal is available to an officer whose appointment on probation has been annulled, and there is no appeal available at all to temporary officers, irrespective of how competent and efficient they may be. There is a built-in mechanism to facilitate manipulation of the intended system to prevent promotional appointments. It is a mechanism to facilitate cronyism at its worst, and it is to be found in the lack of appeal provisions available to an officer who has applied for a position on promotion, only to lose out to an officer who is appointed to the position on equal transfer. Members of the Government should ponder that little avenue that could prevent promotion of a targeted officer virtually indefinitely. The response from the Government benches is staggering. There is not a murmur.

There is also the lack of opportunity by a permanent public sector employee to appeal against an outside appointee to a position. Those appointees are unchallengeable. However, if the outside appointees are good enough, should they not be prepared to meet the same appeal challenges as are members of the service? Of course, here again is that facility for patronage, nepotism and cronyism which the Premier claims this Bill sets out to eliminate. Following on from appeal rights not being available against people appointed from outside the public sector is the concern about Government policy on Government-owned enterprises. The thinking is that here, again, appointment decisions and disciplinary decisions will not be subject to appeal, which seems somewhat contradictory to the stated objectives of this legislation. Surely, reasonable protection against vindictive decisions, or decisions based other than on fact, should be available in what is essentially an arm of the State public sector because when questions of promotion or discipline arise, particularly in the middle and lower ranges, there is a very real difference between public-owned enterprises or Government-owned enterprises, whether they be Government departments or commercially competitive Government enterprises, and true

private enterprise. There must be a proper appeal remedy available to those employees who fall within those categories.

It seems to be incongruous that the appeal provisions will apply to statutory authorities but apparently not to Government-owned enterprises. Frankly, the mind tends to boggle at the differentiation, particularly when it is envisaged that the Queensland Ambulance Service and the regional health authorities will come within the ambit of this Bill. Perhaps the clause of this Bill that perpetuates as well as reflects the incredible powers given by the Act it seeks to amend is the one that allows an appeal tribunal to decline to hear an appeal under circumstances it reasonably believes are frivolous or vexatious, misconceived or lacking in substance, or for any other reason that the tribunal believes the appeal should not be heard. If that does not reflect the incredible powers provided by the Act, which are now proposed to be increased by this amendment, and if that does not epitomise the grounds for concern in the public sector, probably no other part of the legislation does. Is it any wonder that the state of morale in the Queensland public sector is at its lowest ebb ever? Is it any wonder that Dr Coaldrake and his commission is given credit for having more power over people and their lives than a Supreme Court judge? That is the commonly held view. That is what is being talked about around the ridges.

Mr Borbidge: They have united the public service.

Mr HARPER: They have united the public service.

Mr W. K. Goss: Who has?

Mr HARPER: They all hate you, Mr Premier. It is a united public service, hell bent to get rid of the Goss Government, and so be it. As Ed Casey would say, "So be it." This Public Sector Management Commission has been given sweeping functions and powers which inevitably make it the prime influence in Government decision-making. It mouths platitudes associated with such of its functions as to "achieve processes of appointment to positions within the public sector based upon a proper assessment of merit" and "to ensure that public sector employees obtain fair and equitable treatment", yet one of the commissioners of the Public Sector Management Commission is also the commissioner for public sector equity! Does not this reek of the much bandied "Caesar unto Caesar" syndrome?

The present low standing of the Public Sector Management Commission would in no small way seem to be attributable to at least some of the people selected to comprise selection panels for appointments to the many positions which this Government has deemed expedient to effectively declare vacant. Merit would seem to be a synonym for patronage, nepotism, or cronyism. It is being claimed that people in a position of trust are seen to be manipulating their own and their cronies' appointments. The people of Queensland should be questioning whether this so-called honest selection process has, in fact, been all too frequently rather a dishonest process. An aid to that questioning would, perhaps, be the breaking of the nexus which exists presently between the Public Sector Management Commission and the Commissioner for Public Sector Equity.

It would seem to me that the lady who holds that position must find herself in a very distasteful and onerous position, because she has to take action to ensure public sector equity, but she is part and parcel of the original outfit, as a member, as a commissioner of the Public Sector Management Commission.

It would seem that this Government has set out to emulate the United States system of appointments to positions in the public sector. Of course, we would all know from the American example that, inevitably, this will lead to massive sackings and replacements every time the Government changes. In other words, at the end of next year we will find that there will be a massive change, there will be people who have been appointed to these

positions who will have to leave because of the politicisation of the public sector by this Government. Again, the people of Queensland should be questioning whether that is in the best interests of stable Government, for in the past we in Queensland have been well served by a loyal, professional public sector ready to accept direction from the Government in power, irrespective of its party political persuasions.

I have indicated on behalf of the Opposition our concerns with the principal Act and with this amending Bill. You may be assured, and the people of Queensland may be assured—and the work force in the public sector, the people employed in Government-owned enterprises, in statutory authorities—right across the board—that on return to Government, the National Party will be taking a very hard look at the totality of this Act with a view to truly ensuring equity and fairness in public sector employment at all levels.

Mr FOLEY (Yeronga) (10.12 p.m.): In response to several of the observations of the member for Auburn, it is necessary to correct some of the misapprehensions that the honourable member expressed to the House. Let me deal, firstly, with the honourable member's misunderstanding of the legal meaning to be attributed to the new section 5.6 (6A) which is inserted by clause 5, namely, that the appeal tribunal may decline to hear an appeal if it reasonably believes that the appeal—

- “(a) is frivolous or vexatious; or
- (b) is misconceived or lacking in substance; or
- (c) should not be heard for any other reason.”

The honourable member for Auburn urged upon the House the view that that expression “for any other reason” was so broad as to allow an injustice to be worked. May I remind the honourable member that there is an established principle in the construction of statutes by the name of *eiusdem generis*. What that means, in plain terms, is that broad words such as “for any other reason” must be interpreted within the class of words of which they constitute part of a list. That is to say, the appeal tribunal's power to decline to hear an appeal is not at large for any other reason but is confined to other reasons within the class of those items previously listed, that is, where it is of a class which is in the nature of being frivolous, vexatious, misconceived or lacking in substance.

Mr Harper: Where are those terms defined in this Act?

Mr FOLEY: Those terms bear meaning at law, and to be frivolous or vexatious has meaning at law like the terms of being misconceived or lacking in substance. The honourable member's attack was upon the breadth of the term “for any other reason”. With great respect, the honourable member was apparently unaware of the principle of *eiusdem generis*, because it is that principle which enables the proper construction to be placed on that very worthwhile provision within the Act.

Mr Harper: Why wasn't this amendment included in the original Act?

Mr FOLEY: Because human knowledge, like human culture, progresses with the passage of time. I know that at first blush it might seem that the intellect which moves this Government is so perfect as to be incapable of improvement, but it is a time for the confessing of the capacity to learn. Were it possible to frame in heaven statutes, the Parliament would become redundant. I am sure that the honourable member would not urge redundancies further than those that have already occurred in some sectors of the public service.

That error really colours the whole approach of the honourable member, namely, one of scepticism and suspicion. He relied in his argument upon the proposition that evidence of cronyism had been placed before this House and in that he was plainly wrong, for the only propositions that have been put before the House have been contained in several lists which have, I might say, been a most disgraceful piece of McCarthyism and a

collective attack upon individuals without descending to particularity, without attempting to assert that any of the said individuals were unqualified or were improperly appointed. It is on the basis of that false premise that the honourable member proceeded in order to seek to discredit the reforms because these reforms are a very important part of the business of preventing patronage and nepotism in the public sector. That is important not just as a virtue in its own right but also because this Government stands for micro-economic reform. It stands for having an efficient, effective public sector and thereby driving the citizens' dollar further when it comes to delivering public services. We cannot afford to have patronage and nepotism choking our public sector, and that is why Bill No. 1 introduced into the Forty-sixth Parliament was the Public Sector Management Commission Bill. I am as proud now as I was then of the significant reform being achieved by this Government in that arena.

It is important to note that the Bill extends these provisions to statutory authorities. That is important, because if a Government moves to corporatise functions, then it is necessary to have regard to the rights and liberties of employees in the public sector, so that one sees in this extension to statutory authorities an extension of responsible employment practices with respect not only to public servants as such but also to the employees of statutory authorities. With regard to the issue of retrospectivity, I must say that I was quite surprised by the honourable member for Auburn's apparent urging of even greater retrospectivity. The honourable member is a former Attorney-General of this House who, I might say, introduced some pieces of legislation, such as the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act, which were very progressive indeed. I am shocked to think that the honourable member would urge upon the House greater retrospectivity. Indeed, the only basis for permitting this retrospectivity is that 1 July was the date on which the public sector management standard on recruitment and selection came into force and it is necessary to enable prospective appellants to make reliance upon that standard, and so that transitional retrospective operation exists.

I might just say in passing that issues such as retrospectivity are the very sorts of things which the scrutiny of legislation committee would pick up if that legislative standards Bill recommended by EARC and endorsed unanimously by the all-party parliamentary committee were to come into operation. There may be occasions such as this one when there may be agreement that it is necessary to make these retrospective operations, but it illustrates the proposition that it is highly desirable to have an all-party parliamentary committee to scrutinise legislation to pick up matters such as retrospectivity which would otherwise simply go through or get enmeshed in the debate over the merits of the Bill.

I regard it as truly a red letter day when the Opposition spokesman leading the debate gives praise to the trade union movement. I could not let the occasion pass without congratulating the honourable member for his complimentary remarks to Mr Laurie Gillespie—

Mr Harper: Credit where credit is due.

Mr FOLEY: That is a very fair-minded approach. It is very difficult to reconcile, though, with the extraordinary and repressive legislation with respect to industrial affairs that was passed during the time when the honourable member was in the Ministry. In the spirit of the capacity of members of this House to make mistakes and repent, there is really more rejoicing in caucus for one National Party member who repents his or her disaffection for unions than for many who have kept the faith through the dark years. It is to the credit of the Queensland State Service Union and the Professional Officers Association that they have played a role during what is, after all, a very difficult time for all involved in the process of change. Those unions have had not only to deal with change through the Public Sector Management Commission but also to participate in the process

of that raft of changes proposed through the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission. One of the reasons that I am happy to support this amendment is that it gives even greater extension to the appeals provisions which will in turn ensure that we have equal opportunity in the public sector. Section 2.14 of the Act provides that it is a function of the management of the Public Sector Management Commission to ensure equal opportunity in management and employment within the public sector. Its work in that regard is already beginning to bear fruit.

Finally, I draw attention of the House to the fact that we are yet again debating an appeal system. On a number of occasions over the past year, this House has debated specific appeals mechanisms, whether they be the trade measurement administration appeal mechanism which we debated last year or this mechanism for appeals within the public sector. It is relevant to note in that regard the extraordinary maze of administrative appeals systems which operates in Queensland today. Indeed, no compendium of those various appeal mechanisms had been undertaken in the legal history of Queensland until EARC made such a list and published it in its current issues paper on administrative appeals. It is extraordinary that our law could have become so sophisticated in its civil and criminal jurisdictions but has been so primitive in its administrative regions. It is one thing that the French and the peoples of the European continent had well and truly over the common lawyers of England, but I am pleased to say that Australia is now at the forefront and, dare I say, that Queensland is at the forefront of reform in administrative law both in the common law world and, I venture to suggest, amongst administrative lawyers generally. We can look forward to that EARC review of administrative appeals bearing fruit next year with the first systematic review of appeals on everything from weights and measures through to the public sector. That will, I am sure, be something that will bring a note of rationality.

I note that one of the provisions not before the House today is any provision to amend section 5.6 (2). That section as a matter of policy deprives citizens of the right to representation by counsel or solicitor in appeals before the Commissioner for Public Sector Equity. Being a barrister, I regard such restrictive trade practices imposed by the Parliament with a great degree of scepticism. It is perhaps not a popular view at present to be speaking in favour of the legal profession, but I venture to speak so nonetheless.

Mr Harper: But it is only a matter of cost, isn't it, really? You have to provide a reasonably cheap appeal mechanism which employees can afford; that's what it's all about, surely?

Mr FOLEY: A Solomon has come to judgment, Mr Speaker. I respectfully endorse those remarks. I am informed by the Commissioner for Public Sector Equity that, since the operation of the Act, there has been a steady stream of appeals taking, on an average, from one to two hours and that a culture has been developed whereby citizens are encouraged to self-help, to appear for themselves. That is a very desirable thing. I make mention of it, however, for although those provisions may benefit from such a healthy culture during a period of reform, it is very easy for them to become moribund and for them to be taken over by a class of industrial advocate. If that were to be so, it seems that there would be no good reason for denying to citizens the right of choice to be represented by counsel or solicitor. I note that in passing but I welcome, nonetheless, the achievements of the Commissioner for Public Sector Equity in keeping costs down and in ensuring a rapid access to the appeal process on the part of appellants. Dr Davis is to be commended for that. I support the Bill before the House.

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong—Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.27 p.m.): It is sad to see that these appeal provisions apply from 1 July this year and do not go back to December 1989 when this Government came to office. The treatment of public servants by this Premier and by this Government is nothing short of despicable. There is probably

no word in the English language that one can come up with as appropriate to describe the treatment that those people have received. They have been treated worse than a pack of wild dogs would be treated, and they know it. What is more, every member of the Labor Party knows it. Although the legislation applies from 1 July, it will not resolve the real issues or fix up the real hurts within the public service currently or lift the morale of the public service. We have seen those stand-over and bully tactics apply since December 1989, and they still apply. At present, there is a great turn-over of press officers. Every time the Premier gets a bad opinion poll or some bad press, out goes another press secretary. Because education was going badly, Mr Braddy's press secretary got the boot. Then there was Mr Casey, the rain-maker with the umbrella.

Mr Harper: The pink umbrella.

Mr BEANLAND: The pink umbrella, that is it. His press secretary got the boot. I am not sure whether he got the sack over the pink umbrella or because he said, "We are having a little dry spell at the moment." Out went Mr Casey's press officer. We know that there have been a couple of changes of staff at the Treasurer's office also. One well knows why, of course. With the amount of egg that the Treasurer gets on his face from day to day, it is no wonder that they have left.

Mr Coomber interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: The Treasurer's press officer wrote his speech. We know that the Treasurer got egg all over his face. The stand-over tactics are continuing. I am reminded that one morning only a couple of weeks ago, the Premier hauled before a Cabinet meeting all the chief executive officers and, like a petulant bully boy from the schoolyard, dressed them down. The Premier was very unhappy with the flack that the Government was copping on a range of issues—flack that it deserved to cop. Over a period, we have seen that nothing has changed under this Labor Government. It has gone out of its way to sack and to abuse public servants. It has displayed arrogance. We have seen cronyism. Day after day, we have seen the appointments of chief executive officers from the southern States—Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth—and from Canberra. They were all leaving the sinking ships in those States and in Canberra. They could not wait to get off the sinking ships to take up positions in this State. Cronyism is very much alive and well.

Because of all this we see that morale in the public service is probably at its lowest point in its history. Even the Labor Party's own people in this State cannot figure it out. They want to know why so many people are being brought in from over the border. Why are those Mexicans coming into Queensland and taking over the jobs of good, loyal, Queensland public servants. They cannot work it out themselves. They ask the question: what is the Labor Party up to? Good, loyal, Queensland public servants are getting the boot to make way for the Labor Party's cronies from across the border. Day after day, we have seen that. We know what happened to the first batch of senior public servants when this Government came to power. They were consigned to the Gulag before they finally got the boot. No public servant who arrives at work at half-past eight or 9 o'clock in the morning can be sure that by morning tea time he will still have his job. There is a good chance that, under this despicable Government, which is full of cronyism day in and day out and which displays arrogance, those public servants will not have a job. From time to time, we see that the arrogance comes unstuck, and yesterday it came unstuck again.

This legislation in no way overcomes that problem. I make it quite clear that the cronies within the public service have only one way to go, namely, to get out. As time passes by, this legislation will come under much closer scrutiny. At another time, there will be an opportunity to replace it with some good, sound, sensible legislation. This legislation in no way goes to resolve the real problems that are confronting the Queensland public service at present. I know that the public servants themselves see their demise coming in

the short term. Those who have not yet got the boot know that it is only a matter of time before the Government strikes yet again. I look forward to the day when this Government might be thrown out of office so that Queensland can get back to the Westminster traditions of having an independent public service, one that is free of the cronyism, the arrogance and the abuse that it has suffered from this Government over a period. This political interference has to cease. The only way in which it will cease is when this Government loses office.

Dr FLYNN (Toowoomba North) (10.34 p.m.): I want to speak briefly in support of these amendments to the Public Sector Management Commission Act 1990 in relation to appeals. Last December, some amendments to the Local Government Act passed through this House. That legislation became known colloquially in Toowoomba as the Berghofer Bill. This legislation may become known in Toowoomba as the Gynther Bill. The House may recall that when Mr Gynther, who was the principal of a State high school, failed in his bid to be appointed to that position when the principalship was upgraded to the new principal special class or Band 11 principal, there was quite a bit of controversy.

Mr Quinn: Band 11 was special class. It always was.

Dr FLYNN: I said "the new principal special class or Band 11 principal". Until the passage of this Bill through the House tonight, Band 11 principals have not had access to an appeal mechanism. This is because, under the old public service classification, public servants on classifications I-15 or Band 3 and above have not had the right to appeal. Because Band 11 principals, with their large salary rise, are now earning salaries in excess of Band 3 public servants, under the Act as it stands without these amendments Band 11 principals do not have the right to appeal. The amendments before us grant this right of appeal. Proposed new section 5.3 (1) (c) states—

"an appointment of an eligible public sector employee to a position as an eligible public sector employee if the appointment involves the advancement of the employee to a position with a higher maximum salary . . ."

This now covers the anomaly concerning Band 11 principals and so grants appeal rights to them. I support this amendment.

In Toowoomba at the time of the events surrounding Mr Gynther, much was said about this matter and there was quite a bit of controversy. The Toowoomba State High School P. and C. Association felt that the process used in the selection of the Band 11 principals was unfair. I disagree with that. I believe that the process used was fair. Certainly, the result was very hard for Mr Gynther, and no doubt it was very disappointing to him personally. The p. and c. association, which has felt aggrieved by the process used by the Education Department, should be reassured that, after these amendments go through the House, if Mr Gynther or any other applicant for a Band 11 position now or in the future wishes to appeal, that appeal will be heard by the Commissioner for Public Sector Equity or his nominee.

Mr Speaker, as you would appreciate, if people are concerned about the action of the Education Department, I point out that it will not be involved in the hearing of the appeal. Concern has been expressed by the Toowoomba State High School P. and C. Association that the interview panel, consisting of two regional directors of the Education Department and an appointee from the Public Sector Management Commission, could not manage the process fairly. As I have already stated on the public record, I disagree with that. The Education Department will not be involved in the appeal mechanism. The appeal will be heard by the Commissioner for Public Sector Equity or his nominee. That body, which is staffed by people with extensive knowledge of the public sector, the public service and the law, can fairly hear any dispute and arbitrate on it. I am very pleased that Cabinet has brought to the House these amendments that will allow Mr Gynther the right to

appeal, if he so wishes. I wish him well with that. I know that if there is any remaining doubt about the fairness of the process, these amendments will allow that fairness to be tested.

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (10.39 p.m.), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their constructive contributions to this debate. The concern of the Opposition in relation to appeal rights is indeed a welcome change. Under the previous Government, Queensland had the most restricted appeal system of any public sector in Australia. As a result of the Public Sector Management Commission Act 1990 and this amending Bill, Queensland will catch up with the rest of Australia. The Bill is consistent with one object of the Public Sector Management Commission Act, which is "to enhance the access of public sector employees to appeal tribunals for the redress of grievances". At this stage, the Government has made no decision in relation to the existence of appeal rights in Government-owned enterprises. This decision will be made in the context of the forthcoming White Paper on GOEs. Appeals will be allowed in other statutory authorities that are subject to public sector management standards. Appeal rights will be extended to blue-collar and other Crown employees. The right to appeal will no longer be restricted to public servants and employees of a very limited number of statutory authorities. As indicated, I believe, by the member for Yeronga in his comments, the provisions in the Bill relating to appointment appeals will apply to all appointments made on or after 1 July 1991, the date of introduction of the Public Sector Management Standard on Recruitment and Selection. In order to maintain the credibility and viability of the appeal system, it is important that a tribunal have wide discretion to be able to refuse to entertain an appeal. The system must be protected from unreasonable and unnecessary appeals that are funded at public expense. Taken as a whole, this Bill and the Public Sector Management Commission Act are a major initiative of the Government to entrench the principles of merit and equity in the public sector. They ensure that there exist appropriate mechanisms of promoting compliance with those principles.

Prior to the election of this Government, we indicated in some detail our proposals for reform of the public sector. Those proposals for reform, which were long overdue, were welcomed by independent commentators and public sector unions. Indeed, as we said at that time, those proposals represented the concluding part of the trilogy of reform that was required in terms of the Queensland public sector. We spelt out in more detail than had ever been spelt out before in any Queensland election the reforms that were needed in respect of the public sector. We meant it, and on election we set about doing that. In the time that we have been in Government, that process of change has not always been smooth. There have been misrepresentations in respect of the process of reform and change. Notwithstanding that, the Government, with the support and expertise of committed people in the Public Sector Management Commission and in consultation with DEVITIR, has worked assiduously towards reforms that—whilst in some cases they were uncomfortable for particular people and controversial in other cases—were without doubt absolutely required if we were to build what we believe to be the best public service in Australia, that is, a public service committed to the principle of merit and a public service committed first and foremost to the service of the people of Queensland. To do that there had to be a capacity for change and a capacity to embrace the positive changes that had occurred in other public sectors throughout Australia, both at the Commonwealth and other State levels. There had to be a commitment first and foremost not to the ossification that had occurred under previous Governments—both National and coalition—but a commitment to change and a commitment to a dynamic public sector in which people of ability and expertise could bring together that ability, expertise and commitment to the public to serve the public in a way that is ultimately in the best interests of the community. That is what these reforms are about. They have not always been smooth. The process of change inevitably generates anxiety and uncertainty. There is no doubt on the part of the

Government and the Public Sector Management Commission that in the final analysis these reforms are directed to one thing and one thing only, that is, the best public service in Australia in the interests of the people of Queensland. I thank all members for their contributions.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. W. K. Goss (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5—

Mr HARPER (10.45 p.m.): Despite the instructive comments of the member for Yeronga, I again assert the Opposition's concern about clause 5, which is an amendment to section 5.6—matters concerning appeal tribunals. The particular area of our concern is clause 5, which inserts section 5.6 (6A) in regard to an appeal tribunal having the ability to decline to hear an appeal if it reasonably believes that the appeal is frivolous or vexatious, is misconceived or lacking in substance or should not be heard for any other reason. As the honourable member for Yeronga said, that other reason must relate to the essence of the preceding subparagraphs. The National Party believes that that provision is too wide. We understand that frivolous or vexatious complaints or misconceived complaints or complaints lacking in substance can certainly tie up the process. We have all seen that with the Criminal Justice Commission. That is an example where, in an effort to ensure fair play, justice and equity, in that legislation the National Party Government required the commission to consider all complaints that were made to it. Of course, as the member for Yeronga said, experience is a great teacher. He used rather more words to describe it, but that was the essence of what he said.

The National Party agrees that there is a need for some flexibility in the Act as it presently stands, but we have very real concerns about the breadth of the flexibility that is afforded by this amendment. We are opposed to it. We will not divide the Committee; we simply express our concerns and give notice that we will certainly watch the effects of the amendment. We will watch to see just how flexible the tribunal is in exercising the discretion that is afforded to it by this amendment.

Mr W. K. GOSS: The principle raised by the member for Auburn is reasonable, but it has been considered carefully by the Government and we would urge upon the Committee the original provisions from which we do not propose to depart. In my concluding remarks, I said that, in order to maintain the credibility and the viability of the appeals system, it is important that the tribunal has wide discretion to be able to refuse to entertain an appeal. I said that the system must be protected from unreasonable and unnecessary appeals which are funded at the public expense.

The Bill extends the grounds on which the tribunal can decline to entertain an appeal to cases that are misconceived, lacking in substance or when there are other reasons that the complaint should be dismissed. The wording is taken from the New South Wales anti-discrimination Act. I would ask the member to consider that. I will cite one example, perhaps an extreme example. An unscrupulous employee—not one employed by this Government; obviously, one employed by the previous Government—might lodge an appeal simply in order to get a free trip to Brisbane. I know that the member for Auburn would not know anybody like that, but it is conceivable.

Mr Harper: I understand that the Leader of the House in his Department of Police and Emergency Services makes police pay their own way.

Mr W. K. GOSS: If the honourable member is prepared to move an amendment that all public servants lodging appeals should pay their own way and their own expenses, I am prepared to accept it.

Mr Harper: No, that is your Government doing that.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I note that the honourable member for Auburn declines to accept the invitation. It is important, obviously, that the taxpayer be protected from unscrupulous behaviour but, to leave aside the extreme example that I quoted, it is important that the taxpayer and the system be protected from unnecessary appeals. This is a reasonable approach. If I recall the debate correctly, the member for Yeronga correctly asserted that this is a principle that can be tested and established in practice. If a problem were to arise in practice, maybe this Government or a future Government should consider drafting new terminology. However, we are satisfied at the present time that this is the appropriate terminology to meet what is required. I conclude on this point: the whole spirit of the approach taken by this Government is to extend appeal rights beyond those provided by the previous Government, so it is a bit rich for the member for Auburn to stand here and protest too much.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 8, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr W. K. Goss, by leave, read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (10.53 p.m.): I move—

“That the House do now adjourn.”

Supply of Poker Machines

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.53 p.m.): Tonight, the Opposition calls on the Treasurer to refer to the Criminal Justice Commission all companies approved to supply poker machines to the Queensland Government. If this does not occur, I intend to detail the criminal activity of people with whom the Treasurer is about to invest \$140m. I will also detail police investigations undertaken by the New South Wales police, the Australian Federal Police and the National Crime Authority. It is my intention to provide both the Criminal Justice Commission and the National Crime Authority with information that people associated with IGT, Olympic, Universal and Ainsworth have been or are involved in illegal activities. All of these companies have been approved by the Queensland Government.

The Treasurer and his sycophantic Machine Gaming Division should explain why they are prepared to enter into dubious business acquaintances with the following companies. In respect of IGT, they should explain why a certain Danny Gladstone, a senior executive, is acceptable when he has been convicted of street gaming or SP betting offences in New South Wales. The Opposition would like to know why Mr George Cragen, the general manager of IGT—a man who has been questioned by the CJC—is doing business with the Queensland Government when it is alleged that he has been involved in the operation of illegal gaming machines in Papua New Guinea. We would like

to know why Mr Nick Balagiannis, the managing director of Olympic, is considered desirable to do business with when he, too, was involved in the same activity and when he is a close associate of one Les Jones, who was recently released from prison in New South Wales, and an associate of one Angelo Duros, a prominent crime figure who is now deceased.

Mr De Lacy: The Treasurer couldn't care less.

Mr BORBIDGE: A man is dead, there is an unsolved murder and the Treasurer says that he could not care less. What an indictment! The Treasurer may also like to explain why Olympic remains on his preferred tender list when an associated company, New Age Amusements, and a certain Paul Mitris have been engaged in illegal gaming machines and other activities in Melbourne, including the operation of two illegal casinos, one in Footscray and one in Richmond called Mahong 1 and Mahong 2, respectively.

Mr De Lacy: Couldn't care less about what you say.

Mr BORBIDGE: The Treasurer may also like to explain why the production manager of Olympic, a Mr Andrianakis, has been charged and convicted of bribing police and why a Phillip Johnson, Olympic's accountant, has been convicted of embezzlement and fraud. I take the Treasurer's interjection. He says that he could not care less. I say that if he does not care less, he is a disgrace. The Treasurer and the MGD may then like to explain why it considers it both proper and appropriate to deal with Labor's old mate Len Ainsworth and his right-hand man, the disgraced former New South Wales Assistant Police Commissioner, Bill Allen, a former chief of the Licensing Branch of the New South Wales police.

This information has been easily obtained by the Opposition, but the Treasurer keeps saying, "Put up or shut up." I say to him tonight that he has been given every opportunity. He should be referring these matters to the Criminal Justice Commission for investigation. Tonight, I call on him and give him one more chance to put the tender process on hold until this occurs. If he does not, and if he insists on making a mockery of the accountability process, then it is my intention to provide further information and take such further action as I consider proper and appropriate. Tonight, it is a tragedy that this Minister says, in respect of an unsolved murder, that he could not care less. If he were prepared to examine the original allegations, then he would not be in this position tonight and what is about to unfold would not have occurred.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member's time has expired. I call the member for Toowoomba North.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am on my feet, Mr Borbidge.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am on my feet, Mr Treasurer.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Surfers Paradise under Standing Order 123A and I suggest that both honourable members go outside.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am on my feet again and I warn the honourable member under Standing Order 123A as well.

Roadside Telephone, Warrego Highway; Daylight-saving

Dr FLYNN (Toowoomba North) (10.58 p.m.): I wish to thank the Minister for Transport, David Hamill, and the regional director of the Transport Department in Toowoomba, Mr Les Louis, for their prompt and sympathetic consideration of a small but important problem near my electorate. In early September, I was approached by Mr Thompson, one of only two or three residents on the uphill range section of the Warrego Highway. He told me of the difficulty faced by the numerous motorists who suffer break-downs on this section of the road and do not have access to a telephone. Basically, these motorists have the choice of a long walk uphill, flagging down a passing motorist or eventually finding their way to Mr Thompson's house, which is the most visible and accessible house in the area. Mr Thompson regularly has his peace disturbed by these incidents. He is a good Samaritan and does not really mind. He obviously feels compassion for the stranded motorist. He told me about a recent incident that disturbed him.

One of the stranded motorists who found sanctuary at his house was a young woman who was travelling alone and whose car broke down at night. She arrived at his house stricken with fright. She had panicked because she was alone and did not know where to go, and she was concerned for her personal safety. This is not surprising, considering recent incidents on this State's highways and two recent brutal rapes that have occurred in Toowoomba. Mr Thompson asked me to investigate the possibility of a break-down phone—similar to the ones used on the Gatton by-pass and on freeways throughout the State—being installed on this section of the Warrego Highway. I certainly agreed with him that such a phone would be very useful for a large number of motorists and, even more importantly, it would provide an important women's safety measure on the Toowoomba Range.

On 12 September, I wrote to David Hamill. Yesterday, I was advised by Mr Louis in Toowoomba that he considered such a phone was necessary and that work would proceed as soon as possible. In fact, at the moment, negotiations are under way with a local towing company operator who is interested in sharing the cost of installation in return for the first opportunity to obtain any towing business. Of course, the Transport Department will require that operator to pass on messages if the motorists wishes, including any messages to the RACQ. I hope that these negotiations are successful because I think that this type of service has an important advantage over most break-down phones. For example, the phones on the Gatton by-pass are answered in Brisbane during the day by the Department of Transport. At night, the calls are switched through to the RACQ depot at Eight Mile Plains. If the Toowoomba operator becomes involved, then the Toowoomba Range phone will be answered locally in Toowoomba, which has important advantages in response-time by either a towing service or other appropriate help, including the police. If the negotiations break down, the Department of Transport has undertaken to have another good, hard look at the position. I would expect a prompt and sympathetic result in that event.

In less than three weeks, I moved from an important constituent's problem to the threshold of a solution. Mr Hamill and Mr Louis deserve praise for their prompt action. I also thank Mr Thompson for his civic-minded action in helping motorists, which he continues to do, and also for bringing the problem to my attention. While I am handing out praise, I also take this opportunity to congratulate the Premier on his decision to support a referendum for daylight-saving. I believe that a referendum is the only way that this issue can ever be settled.

Mr FitzGerald: That was the National Party's policy, but you wouldn't believe it before, would you?

Dr FLYNN: I certainly think that a referendum is the only way to settle this issue politically in Queensland, and I will be supporting the referendum proposal in caucus tomorrow. Subsequently, I will be voting for daylight-saving because I personally support it. It is interesting that members of the National Party call for a referendum while they are in Opposition, but they never had the courage to do it while they were in Government. Former Premier Bjelke-Petersen was scared that if a referendum was held, daylight-saving might get up, and members of the Liberal Party never called for a referendum because they were scared that daylight-saving might go down. It is really only the Labor Party that finally has been prepared to bite the bullet, hold a referendum to settle the matter democratically, and abide by the result.

Staffing Levels at Gold Coast Police Stations

Mr COOMBER (Currumbin) (11.03 p.m.): The staffing levels of police at all Gold Coast police stations must be reviewed immediately. The staffing levels of operational police for shifts during the night and at weekends are a joke. However, if I speak out about the appalling state of police numbers, a police officer telephones my office for further details in order to undertake a departmental inquiry. As a member of Parliament, I have the right and the responsibility to speak out about any issue affecting the livelihood of Gold Coast residents. Mr Speaker, the parlous state of policing in Queensland under this Labor Government and the Police Minister, Mr Mackenroth, is evident when the right of a member of Parliament to speak out is questioned.

In the September edition of the *Queensland Police Union Journal*, Mr John O'Gorman stated—

“The Police Union totally rejects claims attributed to Sir Max Bingham that police officers in this State are ‘covering up’ in relation to assaults being committed by police officers. It was made very clear that in the event of Sir Max having evidence of this type of behaviour, then it was his responsibility to investigate such matters and if such evidence existed, then to take the necessary action.”

I ask: will the Police Minister commence a departmental inquiry to establish what evidence Sir Max Bingham possesses to substantiate such claims? I ask that question because, if the Minister does not do so, then he is setting a different standard for the Chairman of the Criminal Justice Commission from the one he sets for an Opposition member of Parliament. For the record, let me state that the Minister commenced a departmental inquiry about statements I made regarding a lack of police officers at Coolangatta—not in an attempt to remedy the chronic lack of police operating at night and on weekends on the Gold Coast, but to harass a member of Parliament who was critical of the Labor Government's police policies. It is an attempt to gag a member of Parliament. On 25 August 1991, at St George's Holiday House at Coolangatta at approximately 9 o'clock at night, two tourists who were holidaying at Coolangatta noticed youths emptying petrol from a parked vehicle into a vehicle driven by the youths. The tourists, Mr Watson and Mr Gamarais, disturbed the two youths, who fled on foot, leaving their vehicle in the car park. A short time later, one youth returned to the vehicle and was detained by the two visitors. The manager of St George's, Mr Adrian Rogers, asked his daughter to telephone the Coolangatta police for assistance. The phone was answered by a female police sergeant who indicated that the police would come as soon as possible. One hour later, a second call was made to Coolangatta police. Again, the sergeant said that no police were available and that someone would come as soon as possible. After two and a half hours, the youth was released because they could no longer detain him. I find that incident unacceptable, and I said so in the press after I received the full facts; but this is not the only incident that has occurred. Coolangatta Police Station, which is supposedly a 24-

hour station, has been shut at night on at least two occasions in the last three months. Staffing levels at Coolangatta are so low that if an officer is ill, instead of calling in an officer on overtime, the telephone-operator is asked to do patrol car duty. The phone remains unanswered, and it was only recently that a diverter was installed to refer the calls to Broadbeach. This is a disgraceful situation for Australia's premier tourist area.

I proceeded to criticise the Minister for Police in the media. On 13 September, an inspector from the Burleigh Police District asked if he could conduct a taped interview with me about statements in the press. This is not the first time this has happened. In my opinion, this is not a Government being efficient but an attempt to muzzle criticism by a member of Parliament. The interview was conducted and concluded in my office, and the police officer left to interview the witnesses. However, the problem still exists with Coolangatta Police Station. I do not wish to be seen as being derogatory of police—they need support—and this Government has sold out every policeman in Queensland. The Government has set the guidelines and policy, the police carry out their responsibilities, and do so to the best of their ability. This Government is using the police force to collect revenue, not stop crime. I reiterate this further complaint: a Gold Coast security officer, who was responding to an activated alarm at the Coolangatta Shopping Resort, was stopped by a Random Breath Unit near the Currumbin Sanctuary. The security officer told the officers that Coolangatta Police Station was calling for assistance on the two-way radio. The reply to the security guard by the police was that they could get more points in revenue by apprehending drink-drivers than responding to break and enter calls. The security guard proceeded on to Coolangatta Shopping Resort to secure the building and about one hour later the police arrived. They were the same police who were at Currumbin.

The latest incident occurred on Saturday, 28 September, at 3 a.m. A young female teacher, her boyfriend, and another male friend were set upon by a gang of youths near the Coolangatta Post Office. The young lady rang the Coolangatta Police Station three times. The Coolangatta police car was at Southport responding to a domestic dispute and no police were available to attend to the young lady in distress. The two young men were injured and taken to hospital by ambulance, but at the same time a fire engine arrived at the Coolangatta Post Office. The young lady was told that, because of the severe police shortages, in the future, if this happened, she should ring the fire brigade. This is a disgrace!

Time expired.

Flinders Mall, Townsville

Mr DAVIES (Townsville) (11.08 p.m.): It is only a few months ago that I took issue in the Townsville media with a small group of delinquents who are creating havoc in Townsville's Flinders Mall. I am annoyed that this group of delinquents are undoing much of the good work being done by the Aboriginal community at large in Townsville—work being done by tribal elders, such as Thelma McEvoy, a person who is well known to people such as Tony McGrady and me—and a great ambassador for the Aboriginal community. It is from that angle that I am very annoyed with this particular group of delinquents.

Following these concerns being made public, a meeting was held involving the police, the City Heart Traders, myself, representatives of the Aboriginal and Islander community, and others. The meetings were conducted in a spirit of cooperation and everyone was hopeful that things would start to improve. It disappoints me greatly to have to say that not only is the problem still there three months later, but it is getting worse. The problem is one of personal attacks, both verbal and physical. It is a problem of drunkenness, of consuming methylated spirits and other alcohol in a public place—the Flinders Mall—of smashing bottles, of propositioning young girls, and numerous other

complaints, such as urinating in public. As recently as last Monday, 23 September, the children of the marketing manager of the City Heart Traders were verbally accosted and abused by one Cyril Lightning. Cyril Lightning is nothing but a nuisance. These attacks are increasing in regularity and are of concern to both the City Heart Traders, shoppers in the mall, and me. It is a problem which is being stifled in being resolved by the system. By "the system", I mean the bureaucratic system.

The police feel they are being made somewhat powerless to act because of the leniency being shown by the judiciary to offenders charged with swearing and drinking in the mall. I know the police are frustrated. The police feel that it is somewhat useless and a waste of resources to continually charge people for drunkenness, only to find that they are released on a nominal bail. Other concerns of the police are the recent decisions by the judiciary that the use of the offensive "f" and "c" words are "normal" amongst these semi-permanent inhabitants of the mall. That is an intolerable situation, and probably has been encouraged somewhat by a New South Wales magistrate, Ms Pat O'Shane, dismissing charges against a man who described police officers in a crowded Lismore cafe on 1 January 1991 as "f-poofters".

The City Heart Traders is correct in saying to me that the judiciary at large must be made aware that the "f" and "c" words are not acceptable as everyday language in places such as the mall, and, if the judiciary thinks otherwise, then it is out of touch with the vast majority of the general public. Arguably, the judiciary has become too soft. It must hand down maximum sentences to deter offenders and/or keep them out of circulation for as long as possible. There have been two recent cases dismissed where offensive/obscene language charges had been laid by the police. So, their sense of frustration can be understood. Understandably, the police feel that they are being rendered impotent. I am advised that these cases were not the norm. Police can be encouraged in that the New South Wales Supreme Court overturned the decision of the New South Wales magistrate, Pat O'Shane, which would have been a precedent-setting decision, in its decision on Friday, 13 September 1991. Mr Justice Studdert said—

"I reject the contention the community's standards have slipped to such an extent that the utterances . . . could not, as a matter of law, constitute an offence."

The New South Wales Director of Public Prosecutions had appealed against Magistrate Pat O'Shane's earlier decision.

I am behind the City Heart Traders 100 per cent in its quest to clean up Flinders Mall. We cannot have the police being hampered in doing their job. We have to support them. We cannot have the police—

being reluctant to act where indigenous people are involved because of the backlash from so-called do-gooders and the seemingly endless "legal aid" funds available;

erroneously believing that offensive/obscene language will not attract the support of the judiciary because of the two recent cases dismissed;

continually offering the excuse that they are underpaid and understaffed; and

being under pressure not to take cases to court because those affected do not want to give evidence.

There have been many unpleasant experiences in the Flinders Mall over a long period. There have been examples of shop-keepers being accosted in broad daylight and telling the offenders to take whatever they want for fear of their own safety. There have been repetitive examples of methylated spirits and other alcoholic beverages being consumed, as I have said before, in the mall in full view of the public. There are daily examples of verbal accosting and abuse, and women and children being subjected to the worst language and propositioning that one could imagine. The City Heart Traders is not

exaggerating. Its members have been reluctant to say much publicly because of the possible negative impact on the mall trade, but, quite frankly, this Government has to act, and act now.

Time expired.

Cottonseed; Daylight-saving

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (11.13 p.m.): I rise tonight to bring to the notice of the House a matter that is causing people, who have to feed stock in drought conditions, a lot of concern. Mr Roger Sneath, a DPI officer at Dalby, has published an excellent paper on drought management. I do not intend going into the paper in detail, but I will concentrate on one thing—whole cottonseed. I want to urge the Minister for Primary Industries to try and negotiate with the people—although I am not sure whether they are holding big quantities of cottonseed, but I think they are—to see if this material can be released, similar to what the Minister achieved with molasses.

Cottonseed is used as a feed. Although I am a long-time farmer, it was not used much as a feed in my day. I never used it much, but in the last six months it has been used very successfully. The problem now is that there is a shortage of that product. Either accidentally or deliberately, it is being held. I assume that it is held by one or two companies, but principally by one company. These companies may be tied into overseas contracts, but I am not sure that they are because cottonseed cannot be exported in bulk. It has to be stored in containers. It may not be correct to say that it is all held for export. Cottonseed is a wonderful product because its protein rates from 20 per cent to 24 per cent, with an average of about 22 per cent. That is nearly double the protein rate of most grains. That makes it a good product. It is not a difficult product to feed. One can feed as much as four kilograms a day, but many people feed only two kilograms because it is a bit dangerous to stock. It can be fed only to ruminants. It cannot be fed to horses. The fact that it can be fed successfully to cattle makes it a good feed for that purpose, particularly for dairy farmers or for people who are trying to finish cattle or even for people who are trying to keep cows alive.

Mr Springborg: Sheep farmers, too.

Mr BOOTH: Yes, it can be used for sheep, too. I did not take that into consideration because there are not many sheep farmers in my area. The honourable member is quite right. It is good for sheep as well. Cottonseed can be used as a feed without much danger. All that is needed is some care and a bit of education and guidance. There is some risk but it is only very minimal. The cost of cottonseed has risen from approximately \$140 a tonne about six or eight weeks ago to \$240 a tonne. That is expensive but the farmers still think that it is one of the best buys. It does not look like a very palatable feed for stock but they seem to eat it much more readily than one would expect.

It is claimed by some people that the company Cargill holds a lot of supplies. Whether that company is tied up or not, I do not know. Nevertheless, it is difficult for me to believe that that company could get an export price as high as the local price. I suppose if the company has signed contracts for the cottonseed, there might be some problems. I urge the Primary Industries Minister to try to negotiate with that company and see whether there is some way of obtaining supplies of cottonseed. We know that not many days ago some grain sorghum was exported. Grain sorghum is also wanted badly here in Queensland. It seems crazy to export it when it is wanted in this State. I did not rise to attack the Minister on the matter. He took a little while to get away from the pink umbrella stage, but I think that he is back on side again now and is trying hard. I rose to make a plea to him more than anything else.

Before I resume my seat, I want to say something about daylight-saving. I congratulate the Premier on having the common sense to hold a referendum. But it seems ridiculous to adopt daylight-saving this year when the proposal will probably be defeated in February, anyhow. Surely it is just a waste of time. There is going to be a lot of argument for months and the proposal will probably be thrown out neck and crop. All this time is going to be wasted. The referendum on daylight-saving could have been held at the same time as the referendum on four-year parliamentary terms. An amount of \$5m or \$6m could have been saved. There was not enough leadership. This Government is going to pieces. It is out of touch—

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

Mr BOOTH: The previous National Party Government did not make silly decisions like that. It had the courage to govern and make decisions. I urge the Government to dice daylight-saving immediately—

Time expired.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services

Mr BREDHAUER (Cook) (11.19 p.m.): On Thursday, 12 September 1991, the report of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission on the provision of health and medical services for the Aboriginal communities of Cooktown, Hope Vale and Wujal Wujal was tabled in Federal Parliament. The inquiry, headed by Commission President Sir Ronald Wilson, was initiated following complaints received by the commission on 19 May 1989. Public hearings were scheduled for October 1989 but were postponed following a legal challenge in the Federal Court by the Russell Cooper National Party Government. It will be to the never-ending shame of the people of Queensland that the Government of Russell Cooper was so embarrassed by the performance of his and previous National Party Governments in the area of Aboriginal and Islander health that he attempted to hide from the gaze of public scrutiny. This Government, on the other hand, removed those obstacles and welcomed the investigation as a means of helping us to identify areas of need in the delivery of Aboriginal health services. Likewise, the Government now welcomes the report and the inquiry's findings and recommendations. The report makes 16 recommendations. These refer mainly to the areas of community infrastructure, participation by Aborigines and Islanders in the delivery of health services, the training of Aboriginal and Islander health workers, the development of aculturation programs for non-indigenous health workers in Aboriginal and Islander communities and conditions of employment for nurses in remote areas and birthing rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island women.

I am particularly proud that my Government has been recognised by the Human Rights Commission as having made considerable progress on most of these recommendations. In a media statement released to coincide with the tabling of the report, the commission states—

“The report commends the Queensland Government for its current initiatives to restructure health service delivery in the State and for its acknowledgment of the problems caused by previous policies governing the provision of health services to remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.”

In fact, as the Regional Director of the Peninsula and Torres Strait Region Health Authority, Dr Gareth Goddier, has pointed out, over about the last 18 months, more than \$170,000 has been spent on renovations to the clinics at Hope Vale and Wujal Wujal. More than \$80,000 has been spent on clinical equipment, and the Cooktown Hospital received new operating theatre equipment. Staffing at Wujal Wujal has been increased from two to four. At Hope Vale, staffing has been increased from two to six. An additional nine nursing

shifts, equivalent to two additional staff, have been provided at the Cooktown Hospital. Wujal Wujal and Hope Vale now receive visits twice a week from doctors based in Cooktown. Specialist services in dental health, child health, nutrition and obstetrics and gynaecology have either commenced or been approved. These are just a small start that has been made on addressing those needs.

I wish to speak briefly about the conditions of employment for nurses in remote areas. The report states—

“In a detailed and sensitive submission to the inquiry, the Queensland Nurses Union outlined the role of nurses in remote communities generally and discussed their needs. It is clear that to date nurses, generally non-Aboriginal, have been the main health professionals with whom Aboriginal communities have come into contact. Remote area nurses perform a multifaceted role as teacher-researcher, care-giver, statistician, community adviser and provider of emergency aid in a variety of cross-cultural situations.”

I wish to pay tribute to the efforts of remote area nurses throughout the Cook electorate. In my travels around the electorate, I have spoken to many nurses and can attest to both their hard work and the general high esteem with which the profession is held by the majority of Aboriginal and Island people. I am conversant with most of the inadequacies of their conditions of service and refer particularly to the fact that nurses must be able to work and live in remote areas in a degree of security which means that their personal safety is not at risk. I reassure nurses that I am personally and firmly committed to working towards a better package of employment initiatives and incentives for nurses in remote areas and that the provision of high-standard and secure accommodation is a primary objective in that regard. I am pleased that the Peninsular and Torres Strait Regional Health Authority is currently providing input into the development of a remote area health nursing award and a training package that will provide incentives for remote area nursing staff. I recognise, however, that much more still needs to be done in that regard.

In the time available, I cannot address all of the issues, but I wish to make a couple of comments about Aboriginal and Islander women's birthing problems. I cannot empathise fully on those issues, being neither Aboriginal or Islander nor a woman, but I do understand the sorts of problems that those women experience. I can also understand the trauma that they must feel being separated from family and loved ones at that important time. Although I appreciate the persuasive arguments by the health professionals about the need for safety in birthing situations for Aboriginal and Islander women, I believe that it is most important that we look at initiatives that can make the birthing experience a far more acceptable one for Aboriginal and Islander women. I commend the Health Minister and the Government for the Budget initiative to train midwives so that Aboriginal women will begin to be able to give birth in their communities closer to their families and loved ones.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.25 p.m.