NOTE: There could be differences between this document and the official printed *Hansard*, Vols. 320 and 321

TUESDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 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—

Liquor Amendment Bill;

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land (Consequential Amendments) Bill;

Stipendiary Magistrates Bill;

Pay-roll Tax Amendment Bill;

Land Tax Legislation Amendment Bill;

Appropriation Bill (No. 2).

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

Report

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to advise that today I received from the Chairman of the Criminal Justice Commission the *Report on an Inquiry into Allegations of Police Misconduct at Inala in November 1990*.

Ordered to be printed.

ELECTORAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMISSION

Report

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to inform the House that on Thursday, 21 November 1991, I received from the Chairman of the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission a report in three volumes titled *Report on Local Authorities External Boundaries Review.*

Ordered to be printed.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Resignation of Mr D. E. Beanland

Mr SPEAKER: I have to report that a vacancy exists on the Standing Orders Committee consequent upon the resignation of Mr Denver Edward Beanland, MLA, from that committee.

Appointment of Mrs J. M. Sheldon

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (10.05 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That Mrs Joan Mary Sheldon, MLA, be appointed a member of the Standing Orders Committee to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr Denver Edward Beanland, MLA."

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE OF SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

Resignation of Mrs J. M. Sheldon

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that a vacancy exists on the Committee of Subordinate Legislation consequent upon the resignation of Mrs Joan Mary Sheldon, MLA, from that committee.

Appointment of Mr J. N. Goss

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (10.06 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That Mr John Nelson Goss, MLA, be appointed a member of the Committee of Subordinate Legislation to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mrs Joan Mary Sheldon, MLA."

Motion agreed to.

PRIVILEGE

Referral of Publication *Nationals in State Parliament* to Select Committee of Privileges

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I refer to a publication *Nationals in State Parliament*, dated November 1991, which states on page 2, under the heading "Stop Press"—

"The unprecedented scenes in Parliament on Thursday, 31st October, where the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees totally disregarded Parliamentary Standing Orders, occurred as we went to press."

I regard this attack on myself and the Chairman of Committees that we "totally disregarded Standing Orders" as a reflection on our integrity and impartiality, and I am therefore referring a copy of the publication containing the article to the Select Committee of Privileges for investigation and report.

PETITIONS

The Acting Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Burdekin Falls Dam Scheme

From **Mr Smyth** (21 signatories) praying for funds for the construction of the Burdekin Dam scheme to its maximum capacity of water conservation and hydroelectric power.

Tobacco Levy

From **Mr Turner** (155 signatories) praying that the tobacco levy be increased and that the proceeds be channelled into an independent foundation for health promotion, research and sponsorship of sport and the arts.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have to accept that interjection from the member for Lockyer. I suggest the statement was a reflection on the Chair and the motives of the Chair. I ask the honourable member to withdraw and apologise.

Mr FITZGERALD: I certainly will apologise to the Chair if you considered it any reflection upon yourself, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have just told the honourable member that I considered the interjection to be a reflection upon me, and I ask for an unqualified apology.

Mr FITZGERALD: I give you an unqualified withdrawal.

Importation of Tropical Rainforest Timbers

From **Mr Palaszczuk** (111 signatories) praying that the importation of tropical rainforest timbers be selectively banned, that only timbers that can be harvested from plantation or secondary regrowth be imported as raw timber and that Queensland give support to international action to protect rainforests.

Abortion Law

From **Mrs Woodgate** (442 signatories) praying that the Queensland Parliament will oppose any attempt to decriminalise or legalise abortion.

Child-care Legislation

From **Ms Warner** (260 signatories) praying that the Parliament will support the Child Care Bill 1991 and promote the development of associated regulations.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table—

Regulations under—

- Public Sector (Appeals) Amendment Act 1991, the Public Sector Management Commission Act 1990, and the Public Service Management and Employment Act 1988
- Workplace Health and Safety Act 1989
- Fishing Industry Organization and Marketing Act 1982

Orders in Council under—

- Parliamentary Members' Salaries Act 1988
- Summer Time Act 1990
- State Housing Act 1945
- Fishing Industry Organization and Marketing Act 1982

Ordinance under the City of Brisbane Act 1924-1990
Guideline under the Sugar Industry Act 1991
Report of the Rice Marketing Board for the year ended 31 March 1991
Report of the Central Queensland Egg Marketing Board for the year ended 28 June 1991
Reports for the year ended 30 June 1991—
Local Government Grants Commission on Financial Assistance for Local Government
Atherton Tableland Maize Marketing Board
Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission
Lower Burdekin Rice Producers Co-operative Association Limited
Mackay Sugar Co-operative Association Limited.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Trade Mission to Northern Italy

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development) (10.10 a.m.), by leave: I led Queensland's first business development mission to northern Italy from 10 to 22 October. Today, it gives me great pleasure to report to Parliament on the results, to date, of that mission. Directors of seven companies participated in the mission along with representatives of the Italian Chamber of Commerce, Queensland, an official from the Mount Gravatt College of TAFE, an official of the State Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Director of the Trade and Investment Development Branch of the Premier's Department. While overseas, we were ably assisted by the marketing director of the Queensland Government Office, Europe. The value of the new business through Italian contracts which originated from the trade mission runs into millions of dollars. This is one area in which Queensland is taking a leading role in addressing the balance of trade problem afflicting our nation.

While commercial interests understandably preclude the companies from making public the details about their new business prospects, they have assured me—and I am pleased to assure the House—that the long-term benefits from this mission will be immeasurable. We will be hearing much more about those benefits when the contracts are finalised. New sources of investment and technology have been identified and discussions on new joint ventures have been initiated. In the meantime, I can inform the House that, beginning next year, one of the first tangible results involves arrangements that are currently being put in place for Queensland textile industry students to be able to study in Florence. This is a real break-through, which was achieved during the mission by the Associate Director of Applied Science at the Mount Gravatt TAFE, Nerida Davis. She is confident also of securing a scholarship with assistance from an international airline for at least one student to attend a semester at the highly regarded Polimoda Institute, starting in September 1992. The course offers credit points towards a degree in fashion at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York.

Early this year, the Queensland Government was approached by members of the Queensland chapter of the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry with a proposal for a business mission, which they were very eager to organise in co-operation with my office and the Premier's Department. It was, indeed, a golden opportunity to expand Queensland's international trade base in a country which now boasts the fifth largest

economy in the OECD. Northern Italy is recognised as an industrial and commercial powerhouse with world-leading expertise in many areas. We embarked on the mission with three objectives: promoting Queensland's export of goods and services to Italy; increasing the flow of Italian technology and investment to Queensland through new and joint ventures; and fostering co-operation between Queensland and Italian companies in the provision of goods and services to third markets. We achieved very strong gains in each of those objectives, and I am confident that this is only the beginning of a new and prolific phase in our business relationship.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Queensland chapter of the Italian Chamber of Commerce for its tremendous efforts in initiating and organising the trade mission. In its short history, the Queensland chapter of the chamber has achieved a great deal and has made a valuable contribution to the development of stronger trade and cultural links between Queensland and Italy. I seek leave to table the list of participants in the mission, the mission program and details of meetings which I attended while overseas.

Leave granted.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Lotus Glen Correctional Centre

Hon. G. R. MILLINER (Everton—Minister for Justice and Corrective Services) (10.13 a.m.), by leave: I wish to advise the House that a Queensland correctional centre, Lotus Glen near Mareeba, has been awarded the Inaugural Corporate Award of the Human Rights Commission. The centre was nominated by the Tharpuntoo Legal Service Aboriginal Corporation for attending to the cultural needs of Aborigines and Islanders and heeding the recommendations of the Kennedy report and the report of the royal commission into black deaths in custody in relation to the management of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders. I pay tribute to the efforts of the general manager of Lotus Glen, Mr Tom Lane, and his very dedicated and loyal team as well as the wide net of community groups involved with the centre. The community's involvement is part of the reason for the centre's success. Indeed, it is an integral part of the Mareeba community.

Lotus Glen is proof that dynamic security can, and will, work more effectively than the traditional static security. The centre is proof that officer/inmate interaction need not be detrimental to security. The Human Rights Commission award is proof that we are on the right track in Queensland, and that Queensland is well on the way to being internationally recognised as being at the forefront of corrective services.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. Lakes Creek Police Station

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services—

"(1) Is he aware that there are still media reports indicating that the Lakes Creek Police Station is to be closed?

(2) Is he further aware that the Member for Peak Downs has issued a media release indicating that he has made strong representations to prevent the station from closing and, if so, what are the facts of the matter?

(3) Will he assure the people of Rockhampton North that the Lakes Creek Police Station will not close?"

Mr MACKENROTH: I seek leave of the House to have the answer to the question incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

1. Yes, I am aware of these media reports. However, I wish to assure the people of Rockhampton who Mr Schwarten represents that the Lakes Creek Police Station will not be closed.

   The Assistant Commissioner in charge of the Central Police Region was advised on 6th November, 1991 of this Government's decision not to close Lakes Creek Police Station. An article to this effect appeared in Rockhampton's Morning Bulletin on 9th November, 1991.

2. Yes I am aware that the member for Peak Downs Mr Lester has claimed to the media that he has made strong representations to prevent the police station from closing. I would like to assure the member for Rockhampton North that Mr Lester has never made any representations to my office on this issue and in fact Mr Vince Lester very rarely makes representations on any issue.

3. The people of Rockhampton North can be assured that Lakes Creek Police Station will not close. This is in line with a policy direction which was given to the Police Commissioner that no police stations will be closed.

   Rather than close police stations this Government is committed to building more police stations.

2. Frenchville State School

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Education—

"(1) Is he aware that the enrolment situation at Frenchville State School is such that the school could face an accommodation shortage in the 1992 school year and, if so, what action will his department take to address this situation?

(2) What initiatives is his department taking to address the overall classroom condition problems and lack of playground area at that school?"

Mr BRADDY: I seek leave of the House to have the answer incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

I thank the Honourable Member for his question. Yes, I am aware of the enrolment situation at Frenchville State School, which could result in an accommodation shortage at the school in 1992.

Because of this, I have asked the Department to investigate the problem and prepare a development plan as a matter of urgency. I will provide further information to the Honourable Member when that study is complete.

The Honourable Member will be pleased to note also that on 12 November 1991 approval was granted for the selective clearing and fencing of the newly acquired land adjoining the existing school site.

3. Queensland Industry Development Corporation Loans

Mr HOBBS asked the Treasurer—

"With reference to applications being received by the QIDC for concessional loan assistance under drought assistance arrangements—

(1) How many applications have been received at the present time?

(2) How many applications have been approved?

(3) What is the average loan and within what range are loans being approved?

(4) How many applications have been rejected and what are the main reasons for non-approval?

(5) How many notices of default and/or similar pressure have been despatched or applied to clients of the QIDC this calendar year?"

Mr De LACY: I seek leave of the House to have the answer incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The continuing attempts by the Member for Warrego to discredit the Queensland Industry Development Corporation (QIDC) cannot go unanswered.

The Member's denigration of the QIDC is nothing more than an attack on the Corporation's staff and his recent outbursts serve only to belittle their efforts and dedication. These are the people who face daily the human dimension of drought. Many of them have been called upon to work extremely long hours in an attempt to process the record number of applications for assistance. Imagine how they must feel when confronted daily with allegations of incompetence, mismanagement and heartlessness.

Personally I cannot speak too highly of the dedication and competence of the Corporation's staff.

In pursuing this matter the Member isn't motivated by a genuine concern for the rural community, but rather is selfishly using the issue to score cheap political points. To use his own metaphor, he is playing politics with the bleached bones of primary producers.

The Honourable Member has claimed that the QIDC's base lending rate is .5 per cent to 1 per cent above the bank lending rate. This is simply incorrect. Following the recent Reserve Bank cut in interest rates, the Corporation passed the full 1 per cent on to all its customers and its Indicator Lending Rate is now 12.5 per cent. This applies to all QIDC borrowers, as distinct from say the National Australia Bank which has a base lending rate for prime Corporate borrowers of 12.25 per cent but for small and medium business, including the farming community, has a Benchmark lending rate of 13 per cent.

In addition, the QIDC has a policy of charging interest rates on term loans on a half-yearly basis rather than a monthly or quarterly basis as is adopted by its competitors—with the effect that the real rate of interest charged by the QIDC is not as high as other Banks. During the Appropriation Bill debate the Honourable Member admitted that the Corporation was "on the right track" in this regard.

The competitive position of the Corporation is further enhanced by the minimal establishment fees charged by the QIDC when opening a term loan, together with the fact that there are no on-going fees and charges, in stark contrast to the situation with most other lenders.

The Member for Warrego may not be satisfied with the QIDC's performance but the clients overwhelmingly are. A recent independent survey revealed that 97 per cent of clients are satisfied with the Corporation's performance.

During times of acute downturn, drought and despair in rural areas, there will always be defaults, foreclosures and isolated incidents of recrimination on the part of clients for real or imagined shortcomings. People in crisis are not always rational when they apportion blame.

The QIDC is pledged to handle all transactions in a sympathetic and sensitive manner. This objective is clearly not assisted when Members of Parliament seek to distort and sensationalise events for selfish and short sighted political reasons.

Mr Speaker I have already sought leave to table specific answers to the questions raised and I urge all Honourable Members, especially the Member for Warrego, to carefully assess the information provided before flying off into print again. He will note for instance that the total Letters of Demand and Notices Exercising Power of Sale represent .06 per cent of all QIDC loans—and this is one of the worst rural downturns in this State's history.

I now turn to a detailed response to the Honourable Member's questions.

Question 1—How many government Schemes applications have been received at the present time?

This financial year from 1st July, 1991 to 22nd November 1991 there has been a total of 2,616 applications, 106 of these receiving special carry-on assistance under RAS Part B Drought. It should be understood that applicants are considered for a broad band of assistance. It should be further accepted that the majority of specific drought assistance required for replanting and restocking purposes etc, will not be evident until the drought breaks. The majority of assistance has been in the form of Direct Interest Subsidy grants for a total of $7,537,000. Farm loans to the value of $107,349,000 have been subsidised. This compares to $16m of farm loans subsidised for a corresponding period last financial year.

Question 2—How many applications have been approved?

Approvals are running at a percentage of approximately 67.4%. Of approximately 2,200 applications that have been assessed, 1,480 have been approved.

Question 3—What is the average loan and within what range are loans being approved?

Approvals comprise mainly Direct Interest Subsidies for additional carry-on and are provided to the commercial lender and are grants. In some instances concessional loans for carry-on purposes are provided.

a. Loans-Average amount $25,000 for carry-on purposes, ranging from $10,000 to $54,000.

b. Interest Subsidy-Average additional carry-on debt subsidised equals $34,000 ranging between $7,000 to $100,000.

Question 4—How many applications have been rejected and what are the main reasons for non-approval?

As mentioned above, the decline rate is 32.6%, with the main reasons for decline being:-

- approximately 21% of those declined are assessed as not in need of assistance;
- 73% of those declined are assessed as having no long term viability;
- 6% other reasons e.g. not fulltime farmer.

Question 5-How many notices of default and/or similar pressure have been despatched or applied to clients of the QIDC this calendar year?

Since 1st January 1991, Government Schemes has despatched:-

- 33 x Letters of Demand
- 8 x Notices Exercising Power of Sale.

Out of the approximately 5,400 loans, the above represents approximately .06%.

Mr HARPER: I rise to a point of order. I am seeking your guidance, Mr Speaker, but the practice that has become evident in the first three answers—with the approval of the House—being incorporated in *Hansard* raises the question of whether any member who may feel that an answer is contrary to his or her interests will have an opportunity to seek the withdrawal of anything, or to question any statement. The issue is that when an answer is simply incorporated in *Hansard*, members do not have an opportunity to hear the answer. Therefore, they do not know whether the answer is contrary to their interests. Consequently, they do not have a chance to test that answer.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House has the authority to allow incorporation of answers to questions on notice. When leave is sought to place questions on notice, I grant the leave.

4. Mandatory Life Sentences for Drug-trafficking

Mr GILMORE asked the Minister for Justice and Corrective Services—

"With reference to recent amendments to the Drugs Misuse Act which removes mandatory life sentences for those convicted of dealing in hard drugs—

(1) How many prisoners convicted under this Act have had their terms reduced?

(2) Have any prisoners convicted under this Act had their prison terms quashed?"

Mr MILLINER: (1 and 2) I was going to table my answer and ask that it be incorporated in *Hansard*, but I will read it out instead. According to the records in the Supreme Court, of the 19 prisoners convicted under this Act, all have had their terms reduced. Records indicate that no prisoners convicted under this Act have had their prison terms quashed.

5. Management of Wet Tropics

Dr CLARK asked the Minister for Environment and Heritage—

"With reference to recent concerns by conservationists regarding the management of the Wet Tropics—

What actions are being undertaken by the Ministerial Council, Wet Tropics Authority and Agency to ensure the protection of the World Heritage values and proper management of this most important area of North Queensland?"

Mr COMBEN: I ask that this question be placed on the Notices of Questions paper for the next sitting day.

6. Regional Planning, Far-north Queensland

Dr CLARK asked the Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government—

"With reference to the meeting of Far North Queensland Authorities held in Cairns on 24 October—

What are the Government's plans for encouraging regional planning in Far North Queensland and what are the benefits that this will bring?"

Mr BURNS: I thank the honourable member for Barron River for her continued interest in planning for the rapid growth in far-north Queensland. Her hard work is appreciated. In response to Dr Clark's question concerning the Government's plans for encouraging regional planning in far-north Queensland and the benefits this will bring, I wish to advise that the Goss Labor Government has established a north Queensland planning division within the planning services section of the Department of Housing and Local Government. A regional planning office, headed by a regional planning manager, will be established in the northern region in March 1992. It will have a staff of nine planners. I will ensure that there will be a presence in both Townsville and Cairns. This will enable planning officers of my department to interact directly with local authorities and other relevant agencies on regional planning matters. This is something which has not been possible to date because of the absence of a regional presence. In addition, it will enable the Government to be better informed on regional planning issues. A far-north Queensland regional planning conference—"Cairns 2010"—will be held in Cairns in late February 1992. This conference will explore appropriate mechanisms for responding to regional issues. A possible outcome of the "Cairns 2010" conference could be the formation of a far-north

Queensland regional planning advisory committee. A similar conference for north Queensland will be held in Townsville later in 1992.

The benefits of these Government initiatives will be that we can commence to establish a partnership between State and local government and sector agencies to address the regional planning issues facing the far north. This includes the development of possible strategies for managing the growth pressures around Cairns, the protection of quality cane land and other valuable agricultural areas, regional transportation, water supply and catchment management. Cooperation at the regional level between levels of government will also enable effective planning strategy to be put in place to ensure the sustainability of World Heritage areas. The ability to develop cooperative strategies to better manage growth should result in savings in infrastructure development costs as well as protecting areas of environmental quality.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the member for Cunningham, I advise the House that I have not ruled that Ministers have to read out their answers to questions. In fact, I have ruled that it is quite proper for members—and there are protections for them in the procedures of Parliament—to raise matters in the future about something that they did not like. It is quite proper to move that answers be incorporated in *Hansard*. I now call the member for Cunningham.

7. Management of National Parks

Mr ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Environment and Heritage—

"With reference to my suggestion that we should form a 'Queensland Conservation Corporation' along the lines of the Californian Conservation Corporation—

Will he give an assurance that he will actively consider the proposal with a view to utilising the large numbers of young unemployed people from right around the State who could be enlisted with little cost to the National Parks and Wildlife Service on works required in parks close to where they live as well as utilising the management skills of rural farmers and contractors?"

Mr COMBEN: My department and I are familiar with the California Conservation Corporation. However, as the honourable member is aware, the introduction of employment schemes involving unemployed people is strictly the province of the Commonwealth Government and is dependent on Commonwealth Government policy and Commonwealth Government funding. In respect of the honourable member's suggestion that the scheme would be of "little cost to the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service", advice from the Western Regional Office of the United States National Parks Service is that the scheme provides the minimum wage to unemployed people to engage in work on national parks. The scheme provides employment at Federal, State and local government level. The wage is paid from special funds—Federal, it would appear!—to the employing agency. The US National Parks Service considers the scheme to have been extremely successful.

The scheme appears to be little different, in effect, from the previous Community Employment Program and the early RED scheme. The CEP scheme was of great value to the service, but was based upon the service having to have project funding available to support the projects. As a result, priorities were often changed to meet the availability of labour, etc. Fleay's was developed because of the availability of a CEP scheme. Employment under work schemes of people supported by the dole is the province of the Commonwealth Government, and it is doubtful whether unilateral initiatives by the States would be tolerated at the Federal level. However, I do give an undertaking to the

honourable member that I will continue to consider a variety of possible options in relation to the type of scheme envisaged by the member.

8. Railways

Mr ELLIOTT: I thank the Minister for a sensible answer to the question.

Mr ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

> "With reference to the State Government's plan for full cost recovery for Government-owned enterprises under its corporation plan, and to the implementation of that plan as it relates to rail freight—
>
> (1) What was the level of subsidisation for city train for the 1990-91 financial year?
>
> (2) When will the State Government embark on full cost recovery on the urban rail system?"

Mr HAMILL: (1 and 2) The member's questions show his misunderstanding of the Government's corporatisation plan. Although Queensland Railways certainly advocates full cost recovery for its operations, the Government recognises certain community service obligations such as subsidised travel for Seniors Card holders, long-distance passenger services, and remote area services. These require Government financial support in order to be able to continue, and that support is being maintained. Indeed, the Westlander service, which operates in the honourable member's electorate, receives a subsidy per passenger of $313.89, which is the largest subsidy enjoyed by any long-distance train in Queensland. This passenger subsidy compares with a subsidy of $2.34 per passenger on Citytrain. By subsidising over 43 million passenger journeys on Citytrain last year, the Queensland Government effectively reduced the pressure on Brisbane's road network, allowing a greater amount of our limited road funds to be spent in regional and rural Queensland. In fact, 80 per cent of road funds, or over $400m, was spent outside Brisbane. This represents a very favourable trade-off for the support of urban public transport in south-east Queensland. This Government will continue to support urban transport in order that we can continue to direct the lion's share of road funds and the jobs they create to country Queensland.

9. Education Funding

Mr FOLEY asked the Minister for Education—

> "With reference to concerns expressed by the Parent and Friends' Association of Saint Sebastian's Primary School, Yeronga, over recent media reports of calls for a reduction in State Government funding to private schools—
>
> Will he reassure parents of children at non-Government schools that the Government is committed to increasing education funding in real terms, including funding for non-Government schools?"

Mr BRADDY: The honourable member for Yeronga would be aware that in the last Budget a total of $2,106.7m was appropriated for education for 1991-92. This represents an increase of 9.8 per cent over the comparable appropriation in 1990-91. That increase is way above the rate of inflation and it is a remarkable achievement considering that there has been no relative increase in taxes and charges. It is solid, irrefutable evidence that education is our priority and that we are prepared to support that priority. We are prepared to translate the rhetoric into reality.

With respect to non-Government schools—this year's Budget provided more than $152m for this sector. That is the largest allocation in Queensland's history. Recurrent assistance for non-Government schools has been increased by 10 per cent to $105.5m. This not only represents a real improvement in funding but also compares more than favourably with increases provided in the Government sector. The honourable member can be assured that funding provided to non-Government schools has increased in real terms and that the Government will continue to do all it can for all schools.

10. Sale of Alcohol on State School Premises

Mr FOLEY asked the Minister for Education—

"With reference to the education regulation prohibiting the sale of alcohol on State school premises with the effect that State school parents and citizens' associations are prevented from selling alcohol at their fund-raising school fetes whereas, by contrast, private school parents and friends' associations may sell alcohol at their school fetes, provided they obtain a permit from the Licensing Commission, and to concerns expressed by the Moorooka State School Parents and Citizens' Association over this apparent anomaly—

Will he give consideration to a review of this apparently anomalous regulation?"

Mr BRADDY: The honourable member for Yeronga is aware that, under current arrangements, the sale and consumption of alcohol on school premises is prohibited by regulation 19 of the Education (General Provisions) Act. In recent times, I have received representations on this matter not only from the honourable member for Yeronga but also from Mr Tony Elliott, the honourable member for Cunningham. A perusal of the departmental file on the topic demonstrates that this issue has been canvassed on many occasions without apparent effect. However, the file does demonstrate that support for removal of the ban comes from all sides of the House. This year, I have also been approached by the President of the QCPCA, Mr Bob Rossi, the Secretary of the Oakey State High School Parents and Citizens Association, Reverend Lang, and the Toowoomba State High School Parents and Citizens Association. All these groups want that regulation repealed so that State schools are placed in the same category as Catholic and other non-Government schools. In May this year, I asked the department to investigate the implications of the repeal of this regulation. Recently, I have been handed the report into this matter, and I am studying it. As members of the House realise, any change to this policy would have to be considered by Cabinet. When I have studied the report in detail, I will consider making representations to Cabinet on the matter.

11. Engagement of Consultants by Government

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

"With reference to his Government's extensive use of consultants since gaining office, and with respect to the 1990-91 financial year—

(1) What are the names of consultants employed by his Government and which departments have utilised their services?

(2) What is the sum of fees paid to each consultant and what is the total sum spent on employment of such consultants?

(3) What period of employment applied to each consultant?"

Mr W. K. GOSS: (1 to 3) The use of consultants and the fees paid to them are a legitimate concern of those interested in good public administration. In the past, such

information was not available on the public record, so potential abuses remained undetected. It is precisely because the management of departments should be open to scrutiny that my Government has fundamentally reformed the way that consultants are selected and remunerated, and their activity reported. Since 1 July this year, Queensland has had binding instructions on the engagement and use of consultants in the public sector. Such reform is long overdue. The instructions, prepared by the Public Sector Management Commission and linked by Cabinet to the State Purchasing Policy and the Public Finance Standards, ensure that tendering for large consultancy contracts requires proper management of the consulting process and, most significantly, requires departments to report the use of consultants, by categories, in their annual reports. I draw the attention of honourable members to the vast difference in practice between this Government and its predecessors.

Given that information pertaining to Government expenditure on consultants is now available on the public record and detailed in each department's annual report, I do not propose to repeat those figures in this place. I suggest that the honourable member consult the annual reports tabled in the last few weeks by various Government agencies and that, if he is interested in learning more about my Government's reforms in this area, he consult the instructions and the State Purchasing Policy, both of which are available from the State Purchasing Council.

12. Staffing, Queensland Railways

Mr FITZGERALD asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

"With reference to his department's recent action in notifying 18 railway workers at St Lawrence that they were 'surplus to requirement'—

(1) How many other railways staff throughout Queensland have received such notification?

(2) Where are these staff members located?

(3) Is his department giving any consideration at all to the economic consequences of this action which could threaten the viability of many small towns throughout Queensland?"

Mr HAMILL: (1 to 3) As from December 1989, of Queensland Railway's 20 000 employees only 191 have received "surplus to requirements" notifications. Staff members whose positions have been made surplus are located at various centres throughout Queensland. The honourable member for Lockyer's question was indeed specific to the situation in St Lawrence where technological change has resulted in a reduction in job positions. His reference to St Lawrence is a result of the extension of Centralised Traffic Control, or CTC, along the line from Rockhampton to Mackay. CTC operations enable remote controlled signalling to be done from a central position resulting in faster and more efficient freight and passenger services. CTC has already resulted in trains running one and a quarter hours faster between Rockhampton and Mackay and will result in a three-hour saving from Rockhampton to Townsville when the line comes under full CTC operations in the middle of 1993. Improvements in technology such as the CTC operations are updating Queensland Railways, dramatically improving its efficiency and ensuring its continued presence in country Queensland.

Unlike the previous Government, the Goss Government will not let Queensland Railways grow obsolete and wither. This Government is committed to embracing technological change as a vital means of driving Queensland Railways out of the nineteenth century and into the twenty-first century, thereby ensuring that Queensland

Railways will continue to provide important transport services to communities throughout Queensland.

13. Purchase of Road Transport Equipment by Queensland Railways

Mr KATTER asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

"(1) How much money has the Railways Department expended in purchasing trucks, prime movers, trailers and other road transport plants?

(2) How much money is being expended in providing workshops, plant and equipment for repairs and maintenance of these vehicles?

(3) What further expenditure in these areas will be committed in the current financial year?"

Mr HAMILL: (1 to 3) Queensland Railways has an extensive road fleet to service its ongoing maintenance and operational requirements. The honourable member for Flinders has been making extravagant claims about Queensland Railways building a massive road fleet for its small freight operations. Under the National Party Government, of which he was a member, Queensland Railways was forbidden to provide this additional service to the people of Queensland, especially those in country areas. Queensland Railways has already spent $3,309,000 in the purchase of vehicles for its important small freight project. These vehicles include 17 station wagons, 31 seven-tonne trucks, 17 three-tonne trucks, 2 ten-tonne trucks, 2 five-tonne trucks——

Mr Katter: No semitrailers?

Mr HAMILL: No. A further $2.6m is being spent this financial year on the purchase of specialised freight-handling trucks as part of the small freight project. This purchase comprises 6 prime movers, 11 rigid body trucks and 19 trailers. Existing maintenance workshops, including the Government Motor Garage, are being utilised and dealer services in many areas will also be used extensively.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Payroll Tax

Mr COOPER: In directing a question to the Treasurer, I refer to the following statement that he made in this House on 15 November 1988 as Opposition finance spokesman—

". . . pay-roll tax is a tax on wages, and a savage one at that. Pay-roll tax is a tax on employment—a very savage tax—that has escalated rapidly . . ."

Now that Queensland, along with other States, has been shown the way to wipe out payroll tax through the Federal Opposition's package of tax reforms, I ask: does the Treasurer support the proposed reforms to wipe out this savage tax? If not, what initiatives does this Government propose on a similar scale to boost job opportunities in Queensland?

Mr De LACY: I am interested to see that the Opposition is locking itself firmly into Dr Hewson's tax package, because I think it might find there is a lot more to come out of the argument before it finishes. Before the final equation of winners and losers is arrived at, there is a lot more to come out.

Mr Cooper: Are you going to abolish it?

Mr De LACY: In direct response to the honourable member's question—I think there is no politician in Australia who has not criticised payroll tax as being a tax on employment. What I question is the economic wisdom of replacing one tax with another tax. I think it is probably fair to say that the employment aspects of a GST and a payroll tax really are not very different. The wisdom of replacing a tax on companies—and I mean big companies—with a tax on ordinary citizens would have to be questioned. That is what is being proposed in this package.

Mr Cooper: You want to hang on to payroll tax, do you?

Mr De LACY: The Leader of the Opposition should listen to all the points that I am making. Dr Hewson's proposal is that a growth tax such as payroll tax be replaced by another grant from the Commonwealth Government. The Special Premiers Conference process has been looking at ways of reducing vertical fiscal imbalance.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr De LACY: What this proposal would do is increase vertical fiscal imbalance. So much for cooperative federalism! That would mean taking one step forward and five steps backwards. The most important issue is that Queensland has the lowest rate of payroll tax in Australia, and, as a consequence, this State has a competitive advantage. Dr Hewson is proposing to compensate Queensland for the payroll tax which will be abolished. This would not only do away with Queensland's competitive advantage, but also substantially disadvantage this State, because it would be compensated for the lower rate of payroll tax that is levied. Queensland would pay the same GST as every other State in Australia, but in return it would receive lower compensation, because the present rate of payroll tax is lower. They are the concerns of this Government. Before Dr Hewson's proposal was accepted, there would have to be a certainty that Queensland was not disadvantaged. This proposal would substantially disadvantage Queensland. I put it to Opposition members that instead of getting behind Dr Hewson, looking at this package through their starry eyes and thinking what is good for the National Party, they should start looking at what is good for Queensland.

Mr Stephan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Gympie to cease interjecting. I warn him under Standing Order 123A.

Payroll Tax

Mr COOPER: In directing a question to the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations, I refer him to the following statement that he made in this House on 3 December 1985—

> "Pay-roll tax contributes to the high level of unemployment in this State and provides a powerful disincentive for employers to take on additional staff, particularly apprentices."

In view of the fact that the Federal Opposition's tax reform package has outlined policies that will remove a $20 billion tax burden on Australian industry, and more importantly an $800m slug on Queensland employers, I ask: does the Minister accept that the abolition of payroll tax would lead to new and sustainable job opportunities in the private sector? If such a reform was introduced by a Federal Government, would he support it?

Mr WARBURTON: Yes, I remember that comment that I made back in 1985. In answer to the honourable Leader of the Opposition—I think that the response by the Treasurer to the first question was quite substantive and very much to the point. There is one addition that I would make and which I believe the Treasurer did not touch upon, and that is that the great majority of employers in this State who happen to be small-

businesspeople do not pay payroll tax at all. That is something that the Leader of the Opposition has declined to mention. I simply repeat that I think the Treasurer, in his answer, aptly responded to the Leader of the Opposition.

Heavy Road Vehicle Charges

Mr PREST: I ask the Premier: is he aware of the public disquiet over proposals arising out of the Special Premiers Conference for the introduction of new system of charges for heavy road vehicles? Will the Premier give an assurance that Queensland will retain the right to reject any unreasonable or unconscionable charges?

Mr Katter: This will be an interesting one.

Mr W. K. GOSS: This is an important question. I note the squawking from the member for Flinders. This Government will have much pleasure in going to every town in Kennedy and telling people what that honourable member has endorsed. Interestingly, I understand that yesterday the Leader of the National Party let it be known to members of the press that they could speculate that the party room of the National Party had endorsed Dr Hewson's goods and services tax. Let me assure members on the Opposition side of the House that there will be no need for speculation, because everybody on the Government side of the House—every member of the Labor Party—will make sure that every Queenslander knows that honourable members opposite have endorsed this package. We will ensure that the people of Queensland know that each and every honourable member opposite supports that package.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will cease interjecting.

Mr W. K. GOSS: In relation to this package—we have heard about the gain but not about——

Mr Katter interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Flinders will cease interjecting or I will warn him under Standing Order 123A.

Mr W. K. GOSS: We have heard about the gain but not about the pain. In terms of the figures, we are told that the current fuel excise is approximately 25c a litre. That excise will be removed by Mr Cooper—in his support for this proposal—and it will be replaced by a GST of about 7c a litre. We are left with a cut of 18c a litre. But Opposition members do not talk about the fine print. At pages 82 and 83 of "Fightback!", honourable members will see that Russell Cooper has endorsed full road-user charges. What does "full road-user charges" mean? The preliminary figures seem to indicate that the bulk of the work——

Mr Hobbs interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: The honourable member does not want to hear about it.

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

Mr W. K. GOSS: Opposition members have supported full road-user charges, and this package is economic rationalism let loose.

Mr Cooper: You are really flat out picking holes in it, aren't you?

Mr W. K. GOSS: Let me quote Mr Cooper's mate, Dr Hewson, who said about road-user charges—

> "The user-pays approach to the provision of public infrastructure is, however, important in achieving a rational approach to micro-economic reform."

Opposition members will let economic rationalism run loose in the north and the west, and Government members will be telling the people in those areas about that. The Inter-State Commission report on road-user charges indicates that it proposes for heavy vehicles——

Opposition members interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Opposition members do not want to hear this, but their constituents will hear about it.

Mr Johnson interjected.

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

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Gregory under Standing Order 123A. I just asked him to cease interjecting, and he interjected straightaway.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Russell Cooper and the Nationals have supported road-user charging. The Inter-State Commission report on road-user charging indicates that it would impose a charge of 16c a litre on heavy vehicles plus a mass/distance or registration charge which would vary with weight. For a typical semitrailer, those charges would amount to $21,000 per annum. That is what Opposition members support.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have already warned the honourable member for interjecting. I now warn him under Standing Order 123A.

Mr W. K. GOSS: These figures are somewhat provisional, but they are the only work that has been carried out to inform us what road-user charging and Mr Cooper's support for road-user charging equals. It equals 16c a litre for heavy vehicles over 4.5 tonnes, plus a mass/distance or registration charge. The other question that needs to be asked, and the final point that needs to be made, is: who will calculate this? Who will provide the safeguard for Queensland? At the Special Premiers Conference, when this was advanced by the economic rationalists in Canberra—they are on both sides of the House in Canberra—we fought for, and won——

Mr KATTER: I rise to a point of order. We are being accused individually of agreeing to the ISC recommendation which we rejected and the Premier agreed to.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am on my feet. The member for Flinders will resume his seat. I call the Premier.

Mr W. K. GOSS: For once his interjection was right. In conclusion—we fought for a low-cost zone for Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia and, in addition to that, to safeguard——

Mr Cooper: You sold us out.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I will tell the Leader of the Opposition who sold whom out. In addition to that, the smaller States won agreement to the right to veto these charges by the National Road Transport Commission. We got the right to a veto. What has the Opposition agreed to? It has agreed to allow the NRTC to set the charges, and it will have no role. If the Nationals and Liberals ever got back into Government federally and in this State, they would not set the charge of 16c a litre. They would have no power over that charge or over the mass/distance charge. Let me quote again Mr Cooper's mate, Dr Hewson, who stated not that the State Government will set the charge, not that the Federal Government will set the charge, but that it will be set on a rational economic basis. He said—

"The overall level of road-user charges"—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Honourable members are going to hear it whether they like it or not. Dr Hewson stated—

> "The overall level of road-user charges will be the responsibility of the National Road Transport Commission."

There is no veto. The National Party has handed it over to a bunch of economic rationalists in Canberra who will slug the people of the north and the west with full road-user charges, and that is what the Leader of the Opposition has supported.

Health, Education and Police Funding

Mr PREST: I ask the Treasurer: is he aware of any threat to funding for health, education or police in Queensland?

Mr De LACY: I thank the honourable member for the question. The answer is, "Not in the short term." However, should Dr Hewson ever become Prime Minister of Australia, there is a substantial threat—a real threat—to education and health funding in Queensland. Last week, at the conference of Premiers in South Australia, the Premier received a two and a half page letter from Dr Hewson pointing out all the so-called positive implications of the new GST package and saying how nice it would be for the States. Of course, he did not spell out the negative aspects of the GST package. One would have to say that, in the letter that he sent to the Premier, he was deliberately deceptive, because ferreted away on page 293 of the coalition's package was the quite simple statement that the coalition will reduce general purpose payments to other Governments by 5 per cent, which is equivalent to $719m in 1991-92.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr De LACY: I have not got up to page 294 yet; there could be more of these things hidden away. For the State Government, that means a cut in general funding of approximately $130m. I make the point that it means a cut of about $10m in general funding to local authorities. I am sure that they have not appreciated that yet. Where is that money going to come from? Obviously, it can only come out of funding for health and education.

The new Leader of the Liberal Party said, "I do not know what Mr Goss is talking about when he says there will be cuts to education and health because there is no GST on education and health." The fact is that if revenue grants to the State are cut, those savings can only come from cuts in services. Somewhere else, Dr Hewson cites an academic study which says that the States can be more efficient. When one is in Opposition, is it not easy to say how States can be made more efficient? One of the success stories of this Goss Government has been the way in which it has made the public sector more efficient. There is a whole range of ways in which this Government is making it more efficient. But the savings obtained from that efficiency are being put into services such as education and health. We are not about to give those savings back to John Hewson and the Liberal Party. The message for this State—and all of the other States—is that there are a lot of hidden impacts for the States, and they are not good.

Mr Veivers interjected.

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

Federal Coalition's Tax Reform Package

Mrs SHELDON: I refer the Premier to his persistently ill-informed attacks on John Hewson's tax reform package, which is winning wide acceptance——

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members on this side, I would like to hear the question.

Mrs SHELDON: I refer the Premier to that package, which is winning wide acceptance throughout Queensland and Australia, and I ask: is it not true that he has played politics on this issue——

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Port Curtis under Standing Order 123A for interjecting.

Mrs SHELDON: I ask the Premier: is it not true that he has played politics on this issue because he is more interested in protecting the job of one person, Bob Hawke, at the expense of 140 000 Queenslanders who are now unemployed?

Mr W. K. GOSS: Yesterday, my office received a very strange phone call from a citizen who wanted a copy of Dr Hewson's package. I think the process that the Liberal Party has put in place for members of the public to obtain copies of that package indicates how good it thinks it is and how it wants to get it out to the public. This citizen was told that he had to phone Liberal Party headquarters, which then sends out an order form. That order form, with a cheque for $35, is then posted to Canberra. A copy of "Fightback!" is then posted to that person's local Liberal MP. That person then makes an appointment to go around to his local MP to pick it up. The Liberals seem to be making it as hard as possible for people to get hold of the fine print.

In relation to the suggestion that anybody would play politics with this package—I reject that absolutely. I do not recall anybody in this place ever having displayed such an attitude when it came to a major policy initiative, and I do not propose to break that great tradition of the Queensland Parliament now. In fairness to the Liberals and to Dr Hewson, I point out that I think we all need to take time to study this package, because it is very detailed. They have taken well over a year to put it together and it will take the rest of us some time, I think, to get up to speed on it as well and to make an overall assessment of it. My overall assessment is that, in broad terms, this is not an economic document or an economic policy but an ideological one designed to shift the income and wealth distribution of this State from the great majority of working people to those who are well off.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I am serious about this. In terms of that package allegedly being pro-business, let me make this point: I think it may well suit some big businesses but a consumption tax—or a goods and services tax—will not suit the two major growth sectors of business that I think are important to Queensland—in particular, small business and tourism. That is where the damage will be done—in the two growth sectors of small business and tourism.

Mr Cooper: You want to keep all the taxes nice and high.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Does the Leader of the Opposition not care about small business and tourism?

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has asked a question on payroll tax. I have warned him under Standing Order 123A. This is the final warning.

Mr W. K. GOSS: While I was answering the question of the Leader of the Liberal Party and was standing up for the small business and tourism sectors of Queensland, I was somewhat surprised that the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy challenged me on that and interjected. The points that I was making to the Leader of the Liberal Party

were a direct quote from a press release by Mr Borbidge when he was Minister for Industry, Small Business, Technology and Tourism. On 16 May 1989, Mr Borbidge said what I have just said. He said—

> "While the consumption tax may suit big business, Australia's two biggest growth sectors"—

small business and tourism—

> "would be quashed by such a move."

Referring to the Federal President of the Liberal Party, Mr Borbidge went on to say that the Liberals—

> " . . . do not seem to understand . . . that the small business operator is essentially the backbone of the country, employing over 50 percent of the people in Australia . . . A consumption tax would be carried by small business and tourism
>
> . . .
>
> People would not be prepared to spend as much and in less places, leaving less income for the tourist and small business sectors to compete for."

I endorse absolutely the remarks of Mr Borbidge. For the benefit of the Leader of the Liberal Party, I table a copy of Mr Borbidge's press release.

Family Allowances

Mrs SHELDON: The question was actually about the Premier's mate Bob Hawke. In directing a second question to the Premier, I refer to his repeatedly expressed concerns about the welfare of families in our society, and I ask: does he support policies which double the family allowance for families with combined incomes below $30,000 and increase it by more than 40 per cent for those families with combined incomes between $30,000 and $40,000? Does the Premier consider this to be a major reform specifically directed at redressing inequalities against Queensland families?

Mr W. K. GOSS: Firstly, I refer to the member's comment about Mr Hawke to the effect that I did not address that in my previous answer. I did not make reference to Mr Hawke because I believed that the member knew that I do not have ministerial responsibility for issues relating to Mr Hawke. Therefore, I assumed that, by that question, the member was just playing politics.

In relation to the second part of the member's question—as I said before, it is a very detailed package. I believe that Dr Hewson is entitled to credit for being prepared to put on the table such a detailed package. As I said, we have had a few days to consider the package, but it will take much longer than that to assess its overall impact. In terms of what I have seen of it so far, and in terms of some of the commentary of people more skilled in economics than I am, I believe that it is an ideological document that will be divisive, will increase unemployment and drive up inflation by at least 4 per cent. I believe that the figures are dodgy. In fact, the inflation figure could be closer to 5 per cent. The package will be very bad for the future of this country and the average family.

For the first time, Australia has an opportunity to lock in low inflation. Ultimately, the fundamentals that we require for a country to build a long-term, strong and sustainable economy are a high level of savings and higher productivity but, most importantly, low inflation. Dr Hewson's proposal will at least double inflation. I believe that it will more than double it. It will also drive up unemployment. Lastly, in relation to the positive measures that the member for Landsborough referred to—while they are positive, they are not the whole picture. This is the problem with the Liberal Party's policy. It is talking about hand-outs and a sophisticated fistful of dollars, but not who is going to pay for it. I believe that

when the final analysis is done it will show quite clearly that the Liberals are handing over billions of dollars but taking back from the community more than they are handing over. Who are they taking it from? Because it is a broad-based tax, they are taking it from the great majority of Australians, who comprise ordinary working people, ordinary families and people who are disadvantaged or on social security benefits.

Additional Police on Sunshine Coast

Mr PALASZCZUK: I ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services: is it true that a record number of new police will be sworn in next month and that a number of them will be allocated to the Sunshine Coast? Is the Minister aware of criticism of the new police who are to be stationed on the Sunshine Coast? Will the Minister inform the House of his response to such criticism?

Mr MACKENROTH: Yes, I am aware that on 12 December about 360 new police officers will be sworn In. The allocation to Sunshine Coast will be some 35 police. Last weekend, the Liberal Party Police spokesman went to Caloundra, looked at the police station and made comments about the police. One of the things that he did was complain about the fact that we are going to send 35 new police officers to the Sunshine Coast. Obviously, the member must have——

Mr CONNOR: I rise to a point of order. The Minister is misleading the House. I did not complain——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The member will resume his seat. This is question-time.

Mr MACKENROTH: According to a newspaper article, Mr Connor said—

> ". . . the raw recruits would not be able to be trusted with serious police work and would tie up capable officers."

Mr Connor is the Liberal Party's Police spokesman and, supposedly, its alternative Minister. If he has a proposition that he can put to me whereby we can train people and give them perhaps 10 years' or 15 years' experience, perhaps he should tell me about it. The recruits that we are training are the first ever in Australia to be trained at universities. Many of them will be stationed in the electorate of the Leader of the Liberal Party. Many members write to me about obtaining more police for their electorates. I suggest that if members want any extra police in their electorates—other than the newly appointed police—they should contact Mrs Sheldon and ask her what proportion of those 35 new recruits they can have for their electorates.

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

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Federal Coalition's Economic Reform Package

Mr COOPER (Roma—Leader of the Opposition) (11 a.m.): Last week, when the Federal coalition economic reform package was revealed, something unique happened in Australian politics. The people of Australia were offered not a grab bag of election promises but the most carefully balanced, meticulously engineered economic reform package that this nation has ever seen. The people of Australia were offered a real chance to determine their future. They were offered not rhetoric but reason. They were offered not politics but a plan—a visionary plan at that. Hope was offered for unemployed youth, families, small business, industry, farmers and everyone who has long suffered under Federal and State Labor Governments. This package offers Queensland the

creation of 400 000 new jobs by the year 2000. It offers Queenslanders everything from industrial relations reform to the abolition of payroll tax, and it addresses micro-economic reform head on.

In short, the package represents the most wide-ranging and well-researched program for economic reform that anyone in this country has ever envisaged. It requires careful analysis by anyone who claims to have the interests of the people of Australia at heart. That applies in particular to Federal and State Labor leaders. But what happened when that package hit the deck? Did our Premier take the time to examine it thoughtfully and apply himself to a careful analysis? Certainly not! He was the first Labor whinger out of the blocks. Everyone knew that he had not even had time to read it, but that did not worry "Whingeing" Wayne. Surely, Queenslanders were entitled to expect more from a Premier who lays claim to having the interests of Queenslanders at heart? Let us consider why the Premier would have reacted in that way. Is it because what he really sees in the package are many of the answers that he and his Federal colleagues up until now have failed to recognise or accept? Is it because he is now running scared and is realising that he may have to keep that election promise that he made of only one term? It certainly is. The reason is that the Goss Labor Government has failed miserably to quarantine Queensland from the hardships of Hawke Labor. Over the past two years, the Goss Labor Government has been unable to get projects going and create any new jobs. The Goss Labor Government could not even recognise a drought when it happened and failed to act quickly enough to assist farmers at that crucial stage. The Goss Labor Government has made a shambles of the public service in the most vicious and discredited restructuring program ever introduced into a Westminster civil service system. The Goss Labor Government introduced an industrial relations policy that has set this State back 50 years. One year ago, the Goss Labor Government failed to agree to the call by the National Party for fast tracking of major projects to create jobs. The Goss Labor Government has produced reams of position papers but no worthwhile initiatives or employment opportunities. The Goss Labor Government dithers and cannot make decisions. The Goss Labor Government and the Hawke Labor Government are failures and cannot create jobs.

I urge the Premier today—just for once—to step back from politicking and take a serious look at the package. I urge him to assess it in a positive way, not a negative way. I ask him to particularly take note of the statement by his own Labor colleague Joan Kirner, the Victorian Premier, who last night publicly urged everyone to give the package serious consideration and not to indulge in carping criticism. That was fair comment indeed from Premier Kirner, and in sharp contrast to the poor performance of the Queensland Premier. When that package was being formulated, the Queensland National Party acted early to protect the interests of all Queenslanders. Instead of indulging in the tactics of Goss and company, we took the approach of outlining to the Federal coalition our genuine concerns. Those concerns were put together in a list of 12 conditions.

Let us look at the way in which the GST planners responded to our proposals in the package that was revealed so kindly by the Labor Party last week. The National Party asked, firstly, for the provision of widespread community communication prior to implementation. The outcome: the proposal was accepted and implemented. After the next Federal election, it will continue to be addressed both in Opposition and in Government. Secondly, the National Party asked for total and immediate abolition of the wholesale sales tax on the implementation of GST. The outcome: the proposal was adopted and $9 billion in tax will be abolished. Thirdly, the National Party asked that business GST rebates be at a level of 100 per cent. The outcome: the proposal was adopted and will operate from day one. Fourthly, the National Party proposed that the reimbursement of business GST rebates should follow the same time-frame as the

collection of returns. The outcome: the proposal was adopted. Fifthly, the National Party proposed that excise should not become a new form of wholesale sales tax and that excise on fuel, tobacco and alcohol should not be expanded or proportionately increased as a result of GST. The outcome: overall, excise has been reduced by $6 billion—far more than envisaged originally by this resolution. Having said that, excise on tobacco will be increased by 25 per cent. However, input costs for tobacco-growers will be reduced considerably. In addition, the National Party proposed that a comprehensive examination of the reduction or abolition of excise be undertaken with special reference to fuel excise. The outcome: fuel excise will be abolished entirely, saving consumers $6.6 billion. That is unlike the actions of the ALP, which has accepted the ISC report, which recommends major increases in road-user charges. A Bill relating to that is before the Senate today. If the Queensland Premier was fair dinkum, he would call upon his Labor colleagues to withdraw that Bill and, instead, to reject the ISC report.

The sixth proposal by the National Party was that a comprehensive examination of the abolition of all other forms of indirect taxation be initiated. The outcome: the proposal was adopted by abolishing wholesale sales tax and payroll tax and by phasing out customs duty. The seventh proposal was that zone rebates be increased and revised to represent a real subsidy for taxpayers who, by virtue of their relative geographical isolation, pay more for goods and services. The outcome: the proposal was adopted. Zone rebates will be increased by 25 per cent. The eighth proposal by the National Party was that new levels of income taxation rates be calculated and disclosed immediately. Income tax must be reduced from present levels across the board and not isolated to the upper rates. The outcome: the proposal was adopted, with the largest personal income tax cuts in Australian history. The ninth proposal by the National Party was for specific income tax rebates for retired persons whose principal means of support are superannuation pay-outs or investments, and for appropriate pension increases for those whose sole means of support is a pension. The outcome: the proposal was adopted. A Liberal/National Party Government will implement a wide range of measures to assist aged pensioners, retirees and low income earners. The tenth proposal by the National Party was for an examination of methods to reimburse other welfare recipients to be initiated. The outcome: welfare recipients—in fact, all Australians—will be compensated for the net one-off price effect of the goods and services package, estimated to average 4.4 per cent of the consumer price index. The eleventh proposal by the National Party was for a reduction in Government expenditure. The outcome: gross reductions of $10 billion—net reductions of $3.9 billion—will be made in wasteful and unnecessary Government spending. The twelfth condition was that appropriate adjustments be made so that single-income families are not unduly disadvantaged. The outcome was that a Liberal/National Party Government will implement a wide range of measures to assist families. I offer the full details of those 12 items by seeking leave to table a letter on the subject from Federal National Party Leader, Tim Fischer.

Leave granted.

Mr COOPER: These conditions having been met, the National Party is now committed to working in close cooperation with the Queensland Liberal Party and our Federal Opposition colleagues on this issue. We will ensure that our own State election package will be structured to enable the Federal Opposition's reform package to be thoroughly and properly embraced and introduced into Queensland. There should be no mistake about it—the economic reform package will be a major Queensland election issue. It has to be, because it will have such a fundamental impact on many aspects of the State Government's responsibilities, from payroll tax through to industrial relations.

Also, when this package was revealed last week—and when the Premier so hastily and negatively entered the debate—was the time the 1992 Queensland State election

campaign actually began. The die is cast and the choice is clear to the people of Queensland. This becomes clearer every day as more and more of this package is explained. This is the first occasion in their life-times—probably the first in 200 years—that the people of this State have a very real opportunity to turn the economic position around not only to their own advantage but also to the advantage of the nation as a whole. This nation will become far more competitive in the Pacific Rim and the entire trading bloc. If they want this reform package and want this State to enjoy all of its benefits, there can be only one choice—the election of the National and Liberal Parties as coalition Governments at both the State and Federal levels.

Goods and Services Tax

Mr DAVIES (Townsville) (11.10 a.m.): I wish to speak briefly about the GST as well. Apart from the issues of a significant reduction in the State's capacity to provide essential education and health services and what appears to be a significant increase in transport costs to rural and northern Queensland, the GST is another nail in the coffin of one of Queensland's most important industries, the tourism industry. That industry is only just recovering from the pilots dispute, the Gulf war, high interest rates and the recession, yet the members of the National and Liberal Parties on the other side of this House are supporting the GST. It would appear that in putting the GST package together, the Federal Liberal and National Parties have either seriously miscalculated the impact of this new tax on the tourism industry or simply sought to mislead the industry about the impacts of this new tax. Either way, this apparent confusion or deception within the coalition's goods and services tax package will hurt the tourism industry which is so important to this State, this country and the area of Queensland from which I come, that is, north Queensland. The most important example of this is the taxation on aviation fuel. Under the existing petroleum excise arrangements, the fuel used by the major domestic jets is exempt from excise. There is no impact of taxation on this important input into the tourism industry, that is, the cost of running Australia's airlines. Excise is applied to avgas, which is the fuel used in light aeroplanes. As I said previously, the whole policy of the Liberal and National Parties on this very important issue is very confused. On page 81 of the GST document, they say—

> "We will abolish the petroleum products excise including the excise on petrol, diesel and aviation gas used primarily by light piston engine aircraft . . ."

However, later in the document this limited reduction in excise suddenly becomes something truly wondrous. The coalition claims—

> "The coalition's commitment to remove all fuel excises including on aviation gasoline will provide a substantial boost to the aviation and tourism industries."

That is simply untrue. The coalition seems to believe that by removing a tax that does not exist, it will adequately compensate the airline industry, and therefore the tourism industry, for the imposition of a new 15 per cent goods and services tax. The reality is that the GST will mean that airline ticket prices in this country for domestic tourism can be expected to rise by 15 per cent as the increase in fuel costs are felt by airlines.

Mr Stoneman interjected.

Mr DAVIES: The honourable member for Burdekin knows what that will do to us in north Queensland. Mr Bryan Grey, the chief executive of Compass Airlines, had this to say about the coalition's proposal—

> "The section of the coalition's document which says the abolition of 'all fuel excises, including aviation gasoline, will provide a substantial boost to the aviation and tourism industries' is misleading.

> There's no fuel excise on aviation fuel for the domestic airline industry. It proves they (the coalition) have no conception of what the aviation industry is all about."

He also said that the GST would be a $525m annual impost, which would not be compensated by savings accrued from benefits such as the abolition of payroll tax. He went on to say—

> "That kind of tax is an impossible impost. What it's going to do to the industry is wreck it once again, because I can't see any kind of saving to offset that kind of charge."

These comments are very important, coming as they do from the company which has caused the most significant reduction in domestic airfares in the history of the industry in this country. All members would be wise to remember that the regime of airfares that exists today is not by any means secure or certain. The deregulation of Australia's domestic airlines is still in its early stages and only the ongoing competition of new airlines such as Compass can ensure that we achieve an overall lower structure of prices. The introduction of a new tax on domestic airfares at this time brings with it not only the possibility of a simple but disastrous 15 per cent jump in airfares but also the ability to completely destroy the current levels of discounting which have been so important to the growth of tourism in Queensland, particularly in Cairns and Townsville and on the Gold Coast. As I have said, much of the justification for the goods and services tax has been based on the concept of compensation. A number of times, the coalition has said that taxes on business inputs would be rebatable. It may be the case that there will not be a tax on a tax, but this concept of a rebate does not mean that there will not be a tax. The simple fact is that the purchase of fuel is in the final stage of production. Ultimately, the consumer must pay this additional 15 per cent charge.

I believe that the goods and services tax has even wider implications for the tourism industry, which is based largely on services rather than on physical inputs or goods. It is also an industry that is dominated, in enterprise terms, by small business, as the Premier mentioned earlier this morning. Those two features are very significant in terms of considering the compensation that the tourism industry would receive from either reductions in the wholesale sales tax or reductions in payroll tax. With regard to the wholesale sales tax, the argument is that its removal from the inputs of production or business will significantly lower costs which will, therefore, compensate for the overall higher charges caused by a 15 per cent goods and services tax. The fact is that because many of the significant inputs of the tourism industry are labour related or service related and, therefore, were not subjected previously to wholesale sales tax, the wholesale tax does not have as extensive an impact on the tourism industry as it might in other industries. Quite simply, the so-called compensation simply does not exist.

With regard to payroll tax, I note that the Australian Bureau of Statistics records in its bulletin *Hotels and Bars and Accommodation Industries Australia* that for the hotel and bar industry, payroll tax makes up 0.5 per cent only of total operating expenses and that it accounts for 1.2 per cent only in the accommodation industry. The ABS estimates that in 1986-87 more than 80 per cent of enterprises within the hotels and bars industry were small businesses—that is, they employed fewer than 20 people—and that within the accommodation industry the proportion of small businesses was over 90 per cent. Because of the large number of small businesses involved in the tourism industry, it is obvious that many tourist operators are paying little or no payroll tax. Therefore, any compensation they would be expected to receive from the proposed goods and services tax compensation package would be very small. We therefore face a situation wherein a tourist operator will be forced to put up his whole pricing structure by at least 15 per cent,

but very little will be provided in the way of reductions in his current operating expenses that would allow him to reduce or eliminate that 15 per cent increase.

It may be that the problems to which I have referred are simply the consequences of a mistake or of confusion on the part of the Federal coalition. Indeed, from the comments made by the Federal Opposition's spokesman on tourism and aviation, Mr Jull, it seems that this may be the case. On 13 September 1991, he referred to the cut in excise on aviation gasoline, and alluded to some very real benefits that would consequentially flow to the tourism industry. At that time, it appeared that he believed that the excise applied to fuel used by the major airlines. It is now a fact that this is not the case. Therefore, the package that has been put to the Australian people is seriously flawed in respect of the tourism industry and small business. It is easy to rectify this mistake. The first step towards that correction can be made by honourable members of this Parliament recognising that the GST is not all that it is cracked up to be by the Federal Opposition.

This State's Opposition Leader and the Leader of the Liberal Party support the GST. From my point of view, that means that they care very little for north Queensland tourism. I will be interested to hear what Mr Stoneman has to say about the tourism industry.

Mr Stoneman: You will be hearing about it.

Mr DAVIES: I ask the member for Burdekin to make sure he covers that subject. Tourism has been a boon for north Queensland, particularly Cairns. Every place between Cairns and Sydney will get a rub by the year 2000 in terms of the GST proposal. Predictions contained in the Boeing report suggest that there will be five million inward-bound and five million outward-bound tourists in Australia by the year 2000. By supporting the GST, members of the opposition parties are not supporting north Queensland tourism. The State Labor Government is not politicking on this issue. Members of the Labor Party are very concerned about the destruction of jobs in the tourism industry which the GST will bring about. The Australian Tourism Commission is against the proposal and the Inbound Tourism Organisation is also concerned about the loss of jobs.

Time expired.

Federal Coalition's Tax Reform Package

Mrs SHELDON (Landsborough—Leader of the Liberal Party) (11.20 a.m.): Today, I rise to bring to the attention of this House the Federal coalition's tax reform package and some of its benefits for Queensland and Queenslanders. This is a package that will lift Australia out of the black hole of high unemployment and high debt. Unless a thorough overhaul of our taxation system is undertaken, there is little chance of economic recovery in Queensland and other parts of Australia. It is a package that offers Queenslanders hope and incentive to work harder to benefit themselves and their families. There will be the largest personal income tax cuts in Australian history—a 30 per cent reduction of around $13 billion; 95 per cent of taxpayers will face a marginal rate of tax of 30c or less; and seven taxes will be abolished. Wholesale sales taxes will go; payroll tax will go; petroleum products excise will go; superannuation lump sum tax will go; customs duties will be gone by the year 2000; the training guarantee levy will go; and coal export duty will go. That is why the coalition's "Fightback!" plan is being welcomed so enthusiastically by the Australian electorate.

People are tired of the same old well-worn Labor promises that recovery is just around the corner. Every day, we hear State and Federal Labor politicians saying, "Just hold on a little while longer", while they defend the same failed economic policies that have given this country one million unemployed people and $140 billion in foreign debt. Interestingly, one of the chief apologists for the failed Hawke/Keating policies to emerge in the debate has been Wayne Goss. It seems that Wayne Goss is interested only in

protecting the job of one person—Bob Hawke, who is someone kept in office by the Goss/Ludwig alliance. Wayne Goss is doing the dirty work for Bob Hawke because John Hewson's tax reform package has exposed Hawke and Labor's lack of vision. Wayne Goss has shown more interest in Bob Hawke's job than he has in the 140 000 Queenslanders who are out of work. His negative, harping approach to the tax reform package has been intriguing because, in the past, Mr Goss has quite studiously sought to distance himself from the failed economic policies of the Federal Government. It now seems that Mr Goss can see some political mileage in taking very cheap and ill-informed shots at the reform package that is winning wide acceptance across Australia. I believe that by doing so the Premier is doing enormous damage to his credibility. More importantly, he is undermining the chance for two million jobs to be created. I challenge Wayne Goss to produce an alternative vision for the Queensland economy. Where are Wayne Goss's economic policies? He has no economic policies of his own. His only economic policy initiative was a State bank, which was promptly dropped when he gained office. When the country was crying out for reform of the labour market, he turned back the industrial relations clock by abolishing voluntary employment agreements. Wayne Goss's only economic policy is to try to claim credit for the sound finances and low tax base that he inherited from 32 years of successive conservative Governments.

In the last week, I have been amazed at the shallowness of the Premier's criticisms of the tax reform package. Only a few hours after the package was released, the Premier dismissed the plan to abolish payroll tax as "a public relations gesture". This dismissive approach hardly sits well with earlier comments from members of this Government on the damage caused by payroll tax. I wonder whether the Treasurer stands by these words—

> "Honourable members should remember that payroll tax is a tax on wages, and a savage one at that. Payroll tax is a tax on employment—a very savage tax".

That is a quote from *Hansard*, page 2544, on 15 November 1988. Does the Deputy Premier still believe—

> "It is absolutely incredible that any Government would allow payroll tax to become its major source of revenue."

That is another quote from *Hansard*, page 1538, on 17 September 1986. Does the Deputy Premier still believe—

> "That is a tax on wages, and a savage one, too. It is also a tax on employment and, again, a very savage tax."

That appears in *Hansard*, page 1538, on 17 September 1986. Does the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations still believe, as he has told members of this House in the past, that—

> "Payroll tax contributes to the high level of unemployment in this State and provides a powerful disincentive for employers to take on additional staff, particularly apprentices."

Those words appear in *Hansard* , page 3092, on 3 December 1985.

If those members still hold these views, then why will they not embrace the chance to abolish payroll tax? Or have they changed their minds? As for the personal tax cuts, lower fuel prices and higher pensions—according to the Premier, these were "a lot of frills". That was Wayne Goss's pathetic contribution to one of the most important debates this nation has ever faced. A debate about the very future of this nation is being debased by Wayne Goss for a little short-term political mileage.

Once again, the Premier's own remarks demolish his argument. Last Thursday night, on the *PM* program, the Premier said that the reform package "is a 15 per cent tax on every grocery item". That is a deceitful attempt to convey the impression that all groceries

will rise by a further 15 per cent because of the GST. This was another tale put about by the Premier, who does not bother to take into account that many grocery items are already the subject of a wholesale sales tax. Those of us who do the weekly shopping—which is something that I can recommend to the Premier as a means of keeping in touch—know that many items are already subject to Labor's hidden wholesale tax. Indeed, the Premier's scare tactics were knocked over by the Australian Supermarket Institute. The institute has calculated that supermarket check-out prices will rise by an average of 3 per cent to 5 per cent with the Federal Opposition's GST. The Executive Director of the Australian Supermarket Institute, Mr Bruce Bevan, dismissed suggestions that all goods would rise by 15 per cent. So much for Wayne Goss's credibility! Even worse has been the Premier's disgraceful attempts to trigger a scare campaign in the tourism industry. Last Sunday night on television Wayne Goss was claiming that the tourism industry would lose "hundreds of millions of dollars" because of the tax reform package. That must be one of the most irresponsible statements ever uttered by a Queensland Premier, who has deliberately set out to undermine investor confidence in the tourism industry for his own political gain. Yet, if Mr Goss had bothered to read the package, he would have seen that the initiatives that the Federal Opposition has taken will ensure that Australia remains a competitive destination on world tourism markets. The abolition of all sales taxes and the rebate of any GST on inputs for industry will in itself provide tourism and hospitality with almost $1 billion in tax relief.

A major competitive advantage will be the abolition of all fuel excise. This will not only be of major assistance to the package but also will boost domestic tourism. With 80 per cent of Australians using their own motor vehicles for holidays and leisure activities, the cost of a tank of petrol for an average car will be reduced by $10 or $12—a saving of 19 cents per litre. Avgas will also be excise free, which will result in a saving of some $28m for regional and general aviation operators.

Mr Elder: It already is.

Mrs SHELDON: I did say "Avgas" for the benefit of those Labor members who do not know what they are talking about. The abolition of seven separate taxes will mean that all Australian industry will benefit. This will flow through to consumers, including tourists. The coalition's reform package foreshadows a new industrial relations regime, with the opportunity to rid the industry of the crazy penalty and award rates which presently apply. The way has been cleared for voluntary agreements for the tourism and hospitality industries.

A Government member interjected.

Mrs SHELDON: It is interesting to hear the member standing up for the wharfies. A Federal coalition Government will allow and promote international charter flights to Australia. The Liberal Party believes that this will help generate international tourism growth, especially in regional areas. With the 100 per cent privatisation of Qantas, this will also liberalise Australia's international regime to allow a greater diversity of international flights into this country. This move will also allow Qantas the right to carry domestic passengers.

The Federal coalition will open up the area of retail shopping to international visitors. The present duty-free shopping arrangements will stay in place, but a GST exemption will be provided for goods purchased in Australia and exported by international visitors. A GST will not be levied on international air fares to and from Australia. For overseas visitors, domestic airline travel forming part of an international ticket purchased off shore will also be GST free. I hope that these facts put an end to the negative and carping campaign by Premier Goss. It is about time the Premier stopped playing political games and got behind a package that has much to offer all Queenslanders.

Education

Mr SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton North) (11.30 a.m.): I rise today to raise the issue of education in this State. I have often stated in this House that education ought to be a top priority of any Government that is concerned about our future economic and social growth. If we are to compete on the world stage tomorrow, it is vital that we invest in education today. When this Government came to power, we inherited the most underfunded education system in Australia. It was rife with political interference and pork-barrelling. It is a fact that, under our predecessors, applicants for senior positions, such as that of regional director, listed membership of the National Party as their hobby and interest. Under the coalition and National Party Governments, the pathway to promotion within the Education Department was paved with green-and-gold passes. In some cases, that National Party Government fluked it. It actually appointed some very capable individuals but, in other cases, mediocrity was the order of the day.

When our Government set about restructuring the Department of Education on a merit promotional basis, it was sure to run into difficulties, and we have certainly done so. However, the contrast is that, since the Cabinet influence over this department has ceased, there have been some decisions which have not been well received by members on this side of the House. However, unlike our predecessors who went running to the Cabinet to get heads rolled, we respect the doctrine of the separation of powers and ensure that our representations on issues are in accordance with our roles as elected members of this Parliament. Therefore, no longer does the average teacher feel threatened with unfavourable transfer if he or she dares to speak out against this Government, and that is the way it should be.

As honourable members know, prior to my election to this place I was a full-time official of the Queensland Teachers Union. I am proud to say that I am still an honorary member of that union. I say that because I believe that that union supports its members well. However, the previous Government treated the Queensland Teachers Union like dirt. Under the Nationals, the QTU lost the right to represent its members on promotional panels and other advisory bodies. Since our election, the QTU represents its members in all departmental forums which impact on the daily lives of teachers. As I said in my maiden speech, relationships with the QTU will not always be harmonious. It is inevitable that they will not be, but this Government recognises the right of the QTU to represent its members and, of course, that means that not always will there be agreement between the department and that union.

This Government recognises that the best thing a Government can do for education is provide the proper funding base. In the past two Budgets, more than $261m extra has been appropriated to education. This has taken our Education budget from being the lowest in Australia to being equal with the highest in Australia. Of that $261m, $100m has gone towards increased salaries for teachers. As a former teacher, I fully comprehend the job that teachers do. It is a shame that we cannot afford to pay all of our teachers $100,000 a year, as it is my view that that is what they are worth. Prior to 2 December 1989, Queensland teachers were the lowest paid in the country. For example, when I left teaching in 1985, I was paid $29,000 compared to my interstate counterparts who averaged $32,000. If I were teaching now, I would be paid in excess of $38,000—a significant increase by any standard. Our Government understands that, if we want first-rate teachers, we must pay them properly and, for the first time in decades, the QTU was able to go before the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission with a claim supported by the department.

This is not to say, however, that there are not some disputes between the department and the union regarding advanced skills teachers. The notion of advanced skills teachers is a Federal initiative hatched out of the Dawkins plan. It is intended to

provide an incentive for quality teachers to remain in the class room rather than seek other positions either within or outside the department. Whether the benchmarks created by the commission will do this is another matter, but I will say that there are certainly more incentives now to stay in the class room than there ever were before. This is evidenced by the fact that the department now has the lowest resignation rate for years.

The main source of contention between the Queensland Department of Education and the Queensland Teachers Union has been the notion of quotas for advanced skills teachers. In other States—notably Victoria, where criteria referencing was used—the fact is that some 95 per cent of those who applied managed to become ASTs. Either they have some pretty good teachers down that way or, as I suspect is the case, the criteria assessment has ensured that virtually all who were called were chosen. However, in my view, the Victorians could not hope to claim that what they have ended up with is what was intended with ASTs and, in the process, the extra funding required blew out the Victorian Education Department budget. Nevertheless, I am not necessarily promoting quotas as the be-all and end-all of all AST establishment.

I am well aware that the system employed in Queensland schools has encountered many problems, most of which I think could have been overcome with better in-servicing and communication between head office and the regions. I was particularly unimpressed by the presentation video to explain to staff the role of the school panels. But this ought not to reflect on this Government as, after all, these administrative matters are the province of senior public servants who I believe should have known better. However, the fact is that there will be ASTs in our schools next year. It is up to the department now to iron out the difficulties with the QTU to see whether there can be a better system than the quota-based one and, of course, when this is evaluated later this year, I hope that a joint department/union submission can be made to the Industrial Relations Commission.

I now turn to address the issue of school conditions in my electorate of Rockhampton North. As honourable members would know, safe Labor electorates such as Rockhampton North fared badly under the previous Government. Who will forget the Honourable the Minister for Administrative Services, Ron McLean, holding up the three-metre long computer print-out of money allocated to schools just prior to the last State election. Of the $90m allocated, only one small project went to a Labor electorate. Nowhere to be found in that list were Frenchville State School or North Rockhampton State High School. The Park Avenue, Lakes Creek and Berserker Street schools were not there, either. In fact, it is years since any real funding has been available in Rockhampton North to upgrade our schools. Since 2 December 1989, more than $3.5m has been spent on upgrading schools in my electorate. In fact, just 16 days after the election, I wrote to the Minister for Administrative Services calling upon him to place a relocatable class room at the Frenchville school for the commencement of the 1990 school year. It was made available in March 1990. Further, a music block to cater for the school's excellent instrumental music program was also constructed following an inspection of that school by the Minister for Education, Mr Braddy. Since this Government was elected, over $446,000 has been spent at Frenchville State School.

I am in regular contact with the Frenchville State School principal, Alan Knox; his deputy, Brian Sanderson; and union representative, Brendan Cook, who continue to apprise me of the situation. Similarly, I receive regular updates from the president of the p. and c. association, Darryl Metcalfe, and secretary, Robyn Morgan, who play a very important role as leaders in the school community. So concerned am I for the neglect that this particular school has suffered in the past that I arranged with the Honourable the Premier, Wayne Goss, that he visit the school on 16 October last. The Premier also took a view similar to mine and convened two meetings between the Minister for Education, Paul Braddy, the Minister for Administrative Services, Ron McLean, and me to address the

problems at the school. Already these meetings have borne fruit, with the Administrative Services Department granting approval to extend the school playground area so that the children at Frenchville will have a larger play area at the beginning of the 1992 school year. Other urgent works, such as the replacement of at least seven class rooms, are also on the drawing board, and I hope that an announcement for the construction of same is not far down the track.

I well understand the impatience with which this Government's attempts to raise the standards of class room accommodation in Rockhampton North is greeted by the various school communities. However, it is doing all it conceivably can to repair the damage of 32 years of neglect of the schools in my electorate by the National and Liberal Parties. Unfortunately, given that there are other electorates in the same boat, and also that this Government is faced with an unprecedented number of new enrolments in Queensland, it is obvious that it will take all of the next three years before I can stand in this place and report that all our schools are up to scratch.

Finally, this Government has the runs on the board in terms of education. Certainly, there is some disgruntlement by those who are uncomfortable with change or personally disadvantaged by it, but my view is that this will dissipate as the changes start to show improvement for all those involved in education in this State. As I have said before, in just two years there have been many changes in education. This Government now has the highest capital works budget ever. Queensland teachers are among the best paid in Australia. Overall, this State has one of the best funded education systems in Australia, and, of course, there has been an end to direct political interference in the day-to-day affairs of the department. This, I submit, puts the education of our children in this State on a very promising footing indeed.

Federal Coalition's "Fightback!" Package

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (11.40 a.m.): It is important for the community to understand that the Federal coalition's "Fightback!" package is just that—a package that places this nation in a position to fight back from the totally unacceptable and untenable position in which it finds itself at the commencement of the decade leading up to the year 2000. The rhetoric of the Hawke and Goss Governments over the last few months in respect of the proposals by the coalition to introduce a package of economic reforms has centred around spreading misinformation and fear about the impact of a goods and services tax for Australia. The proposal has been lambasted by every Labor politician in the country, and the crescendo culminated in Canberra this week when both Bob Hawke and John Kerin blasted the package in one breath, and then admitted in the next breath that they had not read a word of it. What hypocrisy and deceit! Similarly, during recent weeks, the Premier of Queensland has been one of those calling for reforms and flexibility between the States and the Commonwealth, but his immediate reaction was to condemn the package without even a cursory glance. So much, I would suggest, for responsibility and reason!

The package does have individual winners and losers. The package does have pluses and minuses, as John Hewson, Tim Fischer and others have acknowledged; but, above all, it seeks to make sure that the Australian nation as a whole ceases to be the loser it currently is. The National Party in Queensland has adopted a conservative and considered approach to the development and subsequent endorsement of the package. The party that guided this State to pre-eminence over 30 years of Government was not about to desert the principle of a cautious and considered approach to the development of what was undoubtedly going to be a radical and innovative approach to setting the country back on the rails of reality and recovery. The National Party at no time believed that the

process of development would be easy, and at no time moved from its resolve to ensure that the people it represents—the people of Queensland—would lose out in any reform process of the magnitude envisaged, a process that had to be broad, and had to be acceptable to an increasingly desperate community which was paying dearly for the excesses of the Whitlam Government, the indecision of the Fraser Government, and the three-card tricks of the Hawke/Kelty Government. The Goss Government has been playing similar games of three-card tricks with an increasingly sceptical electorate. The Goss Government is a Government of change—and I admit that—but it is a Government of lawyers, academics and cronies, a Government that is "getting square", and which is still in a time warp with the clock stopped at 1957. It is a Government that sees gay rights, social justice, international covenants, trendy issues, change for the sake of change, and the multitude of other divisive and disruptive processes tearing this State apart, as the major issues for the day.

The fact is that the ordinary people of this State are crying out for stability, normality, order, and, most of all, jobs, jobs, jobs. What the "Fightback!" package does is address that very need. It is not possible to overcome the ills of the nation and the perilous direction being adopted by the negative and indecisive Goss Government by adding to the national parks, by imposing more charges on the rural and business sectors, by tearing local government apart, by stifling development to appease a handful of rent-a-crowd greenies, by paying lip-service to law and order, and by allowing the basic traditions of this Parliament to be treated with flippant disregard. Earlier this year, in a spirit of concern and constructive development, I led a group of State and Federal members, together with others from the professional and business fields, to New Zealand to assess the concept of tax reform as implemented in that country, and more particularly the impact of the development of a goods and services tax regime. That experience, together with much study and communication since, has allowed me, along with the Queensland National Party, to play a constructive role in the development of the "Fightback!" package. Those experiences have placed the National Party Opposition in a unique position in Australia to fairly assess the impact of the package on the State and nation. Our experiences as businesspeople in our own right give us the further capacity to adopt a considered approach to the final package, an approach that now allows a positive endorsement, as against the hysterical and misguided comments of the Queensland Premier and his fellow "Whitlamesque" travellers—travellers, I remind the House, who include at the Federal level the son of a former Federal Treasurer, Frank Crean, who was the deliverer of the "Whitlamesque" Budget of destruction in 1973, a Budget that commenced the downward track of this nation's prosperity by its incredible attack on the productive sector of the nation in the name of social justice; travellers in concert who include John Cain, Neville Wran, Brian Burke, Peter Dowding, Paul Keating, Bob Hawke and, perhaps the greatest fraud of all, now exposed, John Kerin. What a motley crowd of failures—failures who have turned this nation from its once proud position into a bankrupt land of despair!

What the "Fightback!" package does is provide a life raft of hope for millions of Australians. It shows that there are means by which the order of economic disaster can be turned around. It shows that there are politicians prepared to bite the bullet, be innovative, be positive and lead. Most of all, it provides the chance of a positive future for millions of young Australians who previously were looked upon by the Labor Party as permanent members of the dole queue. It is being recognised by the ordinary man and woman who, under the management of Labor, have lost identity and character to become a neuter gender person; it is being recognised by business as the means by which it can survive, expand and create employment; it is being recognised by primary producers who are on their knees after almost a decade of Labor; and it is being recognised by those commentators who have the capacity to adopt an apolitical and honest view.

Let me read to the House excerpts from a commentary by the Queensland Graingrowers Association yesterday, which will be published this week—

> "The Federal Opposition's economic reform package is impressive in its scope and detail. I want to congratulate the Queensland National Party for the role it has played in ensuring that the package addresses the issues of concern to Queensland's farmers."

Further on, it stated—

> ". . . I was pleased to watch the Queenslanders stand firm on ensuring that the package was not against the interests of our members and other battlers."

And again, it stated—

> "There were real dangers in the development stages of the package and the role of the Queenslanders cannot be overstated."

The important factor to place in perspective is that the endorsement of the package does not imply that every person is happy with every facet of what is a huge and comprehensive proposal. There are, as John Hewson and Tim Fischer say, winners and losers, but in the end, if Australia is better off, then we are all better off.

Let me address some of the negatives that have been suggested and anticipate some of the tactics that desperate Labor Governments around Australia, such as the Goss Government, will adopt. I table a copy of information received yesterday from the Chief Executive of the New Zealand Tourist Industry Federation, Mr Tony Staniford. The figures are in direct conflict with the prediction of the Queensland Premier, who has stated that the State's tourist industry will be devastated. For instance, during the 10-year period 1982-91, total arrivals into New Zealand in respect of holiday visitations have been virtually unaffected by the imposition in the exact middle of 1986 of a GST. Tourist visitations were just over 52 per cent of the total in 1982 and, even with the horrific economic conditions applying throughout much of the catchment area, are still in excess of 50 per cent. The year after the introduction of GST, holiday visitations rose to almost 58 per cent of total visitor numbers into New Zealand—a figure that duplicated the figure for the period prior to the implementation of the New Zealand GST in September 1986.

The vital difference in the "Fightback!" package is that the scope of reform does not centre on GST per se; the undoubted cornerstone of the coalition's proposal is industrial relations reform and other similar reforms. It is vital to recognise that the coalition's package is that—a package in which the goods and services tax is but one of the components. Undoubtedly, the Labor Party will find a blind lift-driver from Timaru who is not happy—as will be the case with a number of Australians after implementation of the "Fightback!" package—and he will be held up as living proof of the devastating effect such an horrific proposal will precipitate.

Finally, I have developed a series of detailed cameos that identify the end-user costs for five specific groups of people. The cameos are not hypothetical—they are real people. One of those instances relates to a young girl in her mid-twenties who has a home in the outer suburbs and drives a car into the city each day. If one applies the most conservative approach to this package, one discovers that her overall benefit is $19.16 a week, or $1,000 a year.

Time expired.

Federal Coalition's Tax Reform Package

Mr HAYWARD (Caboolture) (11.50 a.m.): I rise in this debate to draw attention to some of those aspects of the Federal coalition's package which impact adversely on this

State Government's finances. Last week, Dr Hewson wrote to the Premier drawing attention to aspects of his package which impact on the States. He spoke about the abolition of payroll tax, to which I will return later. He spoke about the possibility of giving the States access to the personal income tax base. What concerns me is that, in that two and a half page letter, he omitted to draw attention to any of the other aspects of his package which impact on this State's finances. As far as I can see, all the other impacts are negative. Indeed, as I will show, even the offer to fund the abolition of payroll tax is not what it might seem.

I turn first to the cut-back in State financial assistance grants to be found buried in the fine print on page 293 of the coalition's policy documents. General purpose assistance to the Queensland Government would be cut by $130m. As the Premier said last week, that $130m comes straight out of the State's revenue. It means $130m less available to fund essential State services such as education, hospitals and police. It also means $10m less in funding for Queensland local government. I was intrigued to hear the new Leader of the Queensland Liberal Party say last week that, because they would be exempt from the goods and services tax, there would be no impact on health and education. On Wednesday afternoon when I was driving along in my car, I heard that radio interview. From that interview, it was clear that the Leader of the Liberal Party completely missed the point. She fails to comprehend that the income tax cuts and other proposals in Dr Hewson's package will be partly funded by cuts in funding to the States. Perhaps she would be good enough to nominate which services the Government should cut or which other taxes should be increased to meet that loss to Queensland of a total of $140m.

Let us consider the proposal to fund the abolition of payroll tax with the proceeds of the goods and services tax. I assume that that was what Mr Cooper was referring to this morning in his question to the Premier. Nobody likes payroll tax. Most politicians are on record as saying that they would like to see it abolished. However, I question the economic wisdom of replacing one tax on employment—payroll tax—with another tax on employment—the goods and services tax. It should not be forgotten by anyone in this Parliament that the economic case for a goods and services tax is actually to reduce consumption, to reduce demand and, of course, the effect of that must be to reduce employment.

In embracing Dr Hewson's goods and services tax proposals, Mr Cooper—and I do not include the Leader of the Liberal Party in this because it seems obvious from her comments in recent days that she has either failed to read the document or fails to understand what it is all about—argues that all ordinary small-businesspeople will become tax-collectors. Throughout Australia, that will mean the creation of another two million tax-collectors. Grocers will have to collect a tax of 15 per cent on everything they sell. Builders will have to collect a tax of 15 per cent on anything they do. Hairdressers will have to collect a tax of 15 per cent from every customer with whom they deal. People who are involved in any of the professions will have to collect a tax of 15 per cent on anything they do.

What have we heard about that from members opposite or from Dr Hewson? Nothing! If one uses the New Zealand example, which Mr Stoneman is so prepared to cite, in collecting that tax individual businesspeople will suffer an increase in their costs. There will also be an expanded bureaucracy that will have to check that the tax is being collected. None of those points has been made by members opposite. Nothing has been said about the increased bureaucracy that is generated because of this tax or the effort that is required to collect it.

Dr Watson: What about the wholesale sales tax?

Mr HAYWARD: I invite the honourable member to tell me the wholesale sales tax that is applicable to hairdressing, for instance, or to butchers. It does not exist. Businesspeople will be turned into tax-collectors. With an increased bureaucracy and with businesses having to pay extra costs, there will be a negative effect on the employment generated by those businesses. About the only thing that will increase is the employment of tax-collectors and inspectors to check that the amounts have been collected.

A goods and services tax will do nothing to stimulate economic activity. The Opposition cannot point to any country in the world where a goods and services tax has contributed to increased economic activity. Instead, members opposite read the document's preface, which says all these things, and fail to understand how it will work. The statement in the preface which should be understood is that this tax will raise prices. Make no mistake, it will raise prices. What occurs as a result of that? Higher inflation. It is already admitted by the people who embrace this goods and services tax so well that inflation will increase by 4.4 per cent. But they just gloss over that. In a world-competitive environment in which the rate of inflation needs to be low or reduced, what do members opposite do? They argue for an increase in the rate of inflation and admit that that increase will be at least 4.4 per cent. It is an absolutely ridiculous contention for them to argue about the benefits of such a proposal. Prices for basic foodstuffs such as meat, fruit and vegetables will rise. What will happen as a result of rising prices and the consequential increase in inflation? It will impact on the Australian economy in the form of higher interest rates. What will that do? It will do what it has done everywhere else in the world. It will act to further stifle economic activity and will result in a reduction in employment activity.

There is the obvious concern that, at a time when the States have been pressing the Hawke Government to reduce vertical fiscal imbalance, Dr Hewson's proposal will increase it. For an economic illiterate such as Mrs Sheldon, I point out that, in simple terms, that means the State will be more dependent on the Commonwealth for its revenue. But there are two other particular stings in the tail for Queensland from this payroll tax proposal. The first is that what Dr Hewson is offering is a Federal grant which will grow with goods and services tax revenue, replacing our own payroll tax. Such a proposal takes no account of Queensland's faster employment and population growth. We would need to negotiate an alternative growth factor so that Queensland is not disadvantaged.

The second and potentially more important concern is the Grants Commission treatment of the proposed payroll tax abolition grant. Because this State has a lower payroll tax rate, Queenslanders will be severely disadvantaged by the proposal. Dr Hewson's proposal, which has been endorsed by Mr Cooper and, naturally, by Mrs Sheldon, will result in Queensland being penalised for being efficient and for having a competitive advantage over other States. Our rate of payroll tax is lower than that in any other State. Indeed, on some quick figuring done by the Queensland Treasury, if the new grant is excluded from fiscal equalisation, Queensland could lose $160m, mainly to New South Wales and Victoria. Members opposite, who embrace this proposal wholeheartedly, need to clarify this matter. If they cannot do it—and I know that they will not be able to do it—they should talk to their Federal coalition colleagues and obtain the information from them, because it must be spelt out and made clear to all Queenslanders.

To sum up—Dr Hewson's proposals are not as magical as they may seem. The superficially attractive parts of his package are made possible by extensive cuts in Commonwealth funding. Directly and indirectly, much of the load for those cuts will be carried by the States. Queensland needs much more information from the Federal coalition. Because members opposite are proponents of the Federal coalition, why do they not tell us what these issues will provide to us in Queensland? On present indications, Queensland would lose $130m a year in Federal general purpose assistance grants, $10m

a year in local government funding and $30m a year in functions transferred back to the States.

Time expired.

REFERENDUMS AND ELECTIONS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 31 October (see p. 2568).

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the member for Tablelands, I advise members that this Bill relates to the conduct of referendums—for example, the funding of "Yes" and "No" cases. This is not a debate on whether or not the House is in favour of daylight-saving. In fact, members will have the opportunity to discuss their views on daylight-saving during the debate on the notice of motion in the name of Mr W. K. Goss that asks that the question be submitted to the electors "Are you in favour of daylight saving". In stating this, I stress to the House that these comments are not directed specifically at the member for Tablelands. I am sure that, as usual, he will direct his comments to the Bill before the House. I call the member for Tablelands.

Mr GILMORE (Tablelands) (12.01 p.m.): The amendment of this legislation is the first step in the holding of a referendum in respect of daylight-saving. It is an act of faith in respect of the people of Queensland, in both cities and rural areas. But it is more an act of faith in respect of National Party constituents in remote areas of Queensland, simply because for many months the National Party has said that if it were in charge of the business of this Parliament it would offer the people a referendum on the matter; that we would go to the people of this State and suggest to them that it is up to them to determine whether or not this State should have daylight-saving. In deference to the ruling that Mr Speaker made prior to my being called on to speak, I would like to raise a couple of issues simply to indicate how the National Party came to this position.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! The Speaker gave a ruling on this issue, and I must uphold that ruling. If the member wishes to speak about the pros and cons of, or the need for, a referendum on daylight-saving, he should wait until there is a discussion on the motion in the name of Mr W. K. Goss.

Mr GILMORE: Mr Deputy Speaker, in deference to your ruling, I will continue with a discussion of the legislation. The legislation before the Parliament today allows for some changes to the referendums legislation under which other referendums have been conducted in this State. From anybody's perspective, it is clear that this referendum could have proceeded under the existing legislation and that there is no necessity for change. However, acting in good faith, the National Party agreed to a once-off change in terms of the conduct of this referendum. The National Party made that commitment to the people of Queensland because it felt that, in respect of this referendum, we are not entering into a political process. In fact, this is a process of the people. The people have already determined how they will vote in this referendum. They have determined their vote by the way in which they are affected by the subject of this referendum. As an act of faith, members on this side of the Parliament agreed—on a once-only basis—to forgo the instruction in the existing legislation that a mail-out of the "Yes" and "No" cases be conducted. I refer to those publications that are usually mailed to each household so that people individually can read the views of people who are for or against a particular issue that is coming before the people of Queensland by way of referendum.

In retrospect, I believe that the National Party acted somewhat naively, because it did not expect the Government to grasp the opportunity to try to cheat the people of

Queensland. The National Party did not expect that its action—which was taken in good faith—would be grasped upon and, by way of this amendment to the legislation, used in respect of all future referendums; that the Government would take away the right of the people of Queensland to receive a mail-out. In fact, the National Party considered that any amendment to the legislation would simply take the line that this will be the case in respect of this referendum. But that is not so. In a very underhanded way, the Government chose to take away that right of the people. It has changed the legislation so that the Government effectively has been given a veto over people's rights to receive "Yes" and "No" cases by way of a mail-out. The National Party is somewhat offended by that. It does not consider that to be the reasonable action of a reasonable Government. The National Party believes that it is an underhanded method of giving unto the hands of the Government of the day a veto over people's rights. I do not believe that the Government is entitled to do that.

Mr Beattie: What about the cost?

Mr GILMORE: The member for Brisbane Central asks, "What about the cost?" There are some costs associated with democracy. There are also some costs associated with giving people their democratic right to express an opinion and, most importantly, to express that opinion from a position of knowledge and strength rather than from a position of bias, misunderstanding or misconstruction of the facts associated with a particular issue.

As the Speaker so rightly pointed out—and you, Mr Deputy Speaker, so correctly upheld that ruling—this debate is not about daylight-saving, it is about future referendums in this State. So we must ask: what does the Government have to gain from what the National Party considers to be a rather underhanded act? It is underhanded and it is a shame, because in my view this referendums legislation will be used more and more in the future. At the present time, the whole social fabric of Queensland has been dragged apart by some very contentious issues that have been rattling around in the closets of Queensland for 100 years, not the least of which is the prostitution debate. That debate is about one of those issues that just might have come to settlement had it been put to a referendum of the people of Queensland. The reason is simply that it is such a divisive issue—similar to the issue of daylight-saving and similar to those other deep-seated moral and ethical issues that divide our State and our nation. It is my view that from time to time in the future—more than they did in the past—Governments will resolve those difficult questions, if they are able to be resolved, by holding a referendum. I applaud that. It is a good way to go. Probably only five or six contentious issues need to be resolved. With this Bill, the Parliament is quite rightly moving forward to a referendum to resolve or to attempt to resolve one of those very difficult issues.

Nonetheless, I foreshadow that I will move some amendments to clause 5 of the Bill to ensure that a number of things happen and to take away the attempt in the legislation to give a right of veto to either the Opposition or the Government. The reality, however, is that the Government has the numbers in the Parliament and it is therefore in control over the rights of the people. I trust that the Minister will accept the good faith of the Opposition in moving its amendments. It is not too much to ask that, given a coincidence of views—a commonality of views—in the Parliament of this State, a post-out should take place. The Minister will suggest that, if there is a commonality of views, a post-out will happen—because both sides of the House will agree. However, let us contemplate this: if one of those other very difficult questions such as prostitution and abortion on demand were to come before the Parliament and there was very great division within not only the community but also the Parliament, the need for a mail-out to take place——

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GILMORE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Fairly obviously, if such a contention were to occur, the Government may well indicate that it would not want people in the community to be issued with a "Yes/No" mail-out clearly elucidating the arguments for both sides of the issue; so a mail-out would not happen. That is entirely wrong. I am ashamed to think that the Government would come into this place and attempt that action. I am ashamed, indeed. I foreshadow that, at the Committee stage, I will move some other amendments aimed at redressing some of the clauses in the Bill that take away the right of people to understand, to be told, to hear and to speak. The Opposition will try to redress those problems. If we cannot get satisfactory approval of our amendments, I regretfully suggest that the Opposition will divide the Chamber. I say "regretfully", because the National Party has acted in good faith in respect of the legislation. As I said previously, when National Party members first agreed to the changes proposed by the Bill, we did not imagine in our wildest dreams that the Government would take advantage of our good intent. Apart from that, the Opposition considers that the first referendum that will flow from the legislation is important. Future referendums, of course, will be of equal importance and equal distraction to the people of Queensland. I trust that, as honourable members debate the legislation, the Government will see the need to ensure that all of those issues in such an essential piece of democracy are nailed to the floor properly so that the people of Queensland can have some respect for a responsible Government that is prepared to listen, to learn and to undo the untold harm that might be done by the Referendums and Elections Legislation Amendment Bill.

Dr WATSON (Moggill—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (12.13 p.m.): I rise to speak to the Referendums and Elections Legislation Amendment Bill. Having listened to the Minister making his second-reading speech and having also read that speech, I came to the conclusion—at least initially—that the Bill had something particularly to do with the daylight-saving referendum. The first paragraph of the Minister's second-reading speech states—

> "The purpose of this Bill is to address issues which could arise and cause difficulties in the effective conduct of a referendum which will be held to allow the people to determine the issue of daylight-saving."

That is quite explicit. In that context, the Liberal Party would have been quite happy to support unequivocally the provisions contained in the legislation. Liberal Party members recognise that, because of the position of EARC and the changes to the boundaries which are yet to be gazetted, or even finally recommended, and because of the difficulties of creating rolls, in this instance there is a case to allow some flexibility with respect to running the referendum. Although Liberal Party members have some difficulty with the concept in general, we may have even been willing to consider in this case the possibility of altering the way in which we contact the people after the daylight-saving question is put to this House. When one reads the legislation, one finds it is much broader than the Minister indicated in the opening paragraph of his second-reading speech.

Mr McGrady interjected.

Dr WATSON: I have already said that I will get to that in a moment. When one looks at clause 5 of the legislation, one finds that this will affect every referendum conducted in the future and not just the referendum on daylight-saving. The Liberal Party has some concerns, particularly in relation to clause 5. Presumably, referendums are put to the people because a critical question that concerns the functioning of our society and the future development of the State must be resolved by the community because it has been found to be too difficult for this Government or the Parliament. It could be an extremely controversial question and one on which the community is divided, or perhaps it

is not easy to gauge the community's real feelings as to how it would like the Parliament to proceed on the question. Conducting a referendum is an important decision in itself and this must be seen as a critical decision. The members of this Parliament debate issues full-time and try to understand them. Presumably they have as much information as anyone in the community on a particular issue, but they cannot make a final decision. In these circumstances, there is a responsibility on the Parliament and the Government to ensure that the community itself is as fully and substantially informed on the issues as possible.

Mr McGrady: Are you objecting to the cost of the referendum?

Dr WATSON: I believe that the community has a right to know and to be informed impartially on this particular issue. I understand the costs involved and this was one of the arguments put forward. The member for Mount Isa should understand that there will be a cost. There is a cost involved in conducting all referendums and the more people are informed, the more costs will be involved. It must be understood that when an issue is put to the people, it must be a critical issue that is of fundamental importance. In that context, one has to say that if, on the information provided to them, the issue cannot be decided by people who are being paid a reasonable amount of money and a Government that is supported by taxpayers' money, then the cost must be borne. It must be borne, and those people who ultimately make the decisions—that is, the people, through the referendum—must be informed in a proper fashion. They have a right to be informed. If the Government is asking them to make a decision, they have not only the right to know but also the right to be fully and properly informed by the Parliament of this State.

Therefore, the question that remains is whether or not the proposed amendments provide adequate safeguards and proposals for the dissemination of that information. I would assert—and my colleagues would assert—that the proposal to simply publish the arguments in two newspapers is not sufficient. This may be part of a process. There is no argument that the insertion of the cases for and against a referendum question could be—and perhaps even should be—displayed in newspapers and circulated that way. However, given that this is a critical question, is that sufficient? The Liberal Party would argue that the answer to that is, "No." It does not matter which two newspapers in this State are picked, or even if every newspaper in this State is picked; they will not necessarily be distributed and read by every elector who has to make a decision. Every newspaper in this State has limited coverage and is not read entirely even by those people who purchase them on a regular basis. For one reason or another, people are distracted on a day-to-day basis from reading all of the newspaper. It does not matter how brilliantly these articles might be displayed; sometimes even those people wishing to find them in a newspaper will miss them. No-one can guarantee that even the best displayed advertisement will necessarily be seen by people.

Mr Beattie: Are you trying to say that the stuff in the letterbox is more effective?

Dr WATSON: I will answer that interjection. The question is not simply that one is better than the other. The question is: do we go to all lengths to ensure that people are properly informed? This legislation permits the Government or the Parliament to unnecessarily restrict the coverage of the "Yes" and "No" arguments. That is the important point. I am not arguing that one or two advertisements is not appropriate. I am asking whether it is sufficient. That is a different thing. The fact is that it does not matter how widely newspapers are circulated; newspaper advertising is insufficient. This must be understood in context because a question that is going to be put to the people must be an important question. If it is not an important question, why are any resources being wasted on putting it to the people? If it cannot be decided by the members of this House, the referendum question must be something that is of fundamental importance to the people of this State. Under those circumstances, they have the right to be as properly informed as is humanly possible. If a referendum process is to be conducted, we must be assured

that we are doing everything possible to make sure that the populace are informed of the pros and cons of the question put to them. We must attempt to give them all the information in an impartial fashion and ensure that the information is disseminated as widely as possible.

Members of the Liberal Party believe that one part of that process can be fulfilled by the newspapers and that another important part of the process is to inform every potential elector in this State individually through the mail. Every person whose name appears on the roll and who is entitled to vote ought to have communicated to him or her personally the pros and the cons of this issue. After all, we want to obtain an informed decision; therefore, everything possible should be done to ensure that the information is forthcoming. The information should also be provided to electors in a timely fashion so that they have adequate opportunity to consider the issue in private and in a thoughtful way and, if they wish, to discuss it with their neighbours or undertake further research. This is an important issue, and the only way to ensure that people are properly informed is to send the information through a variety of media that are used to communicate the question and the pros and the cons of the issue. Members of the Liberal Party do not agree with the provisions contained in clause 5 of this Bill. It is our intention to vote against it at the Committee stage, but we will be looking closely at the amendments presented by the member for Tablelands. If the Government accepts the amendments, we will reconsider our position in relation to support for the Bill.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order!

Dr WATSON: That is the rabble on the Government side. Clause 5 of this Bill strikes at the heart of the democratic process and the right of people to be informed when they go to the polls to decide an exceptionally critical question. Members of the Liberal Party believe that when that issue is considered objectively, the Government must come down on the side of providing more detailed information through a larger number of channels in respect of the pros and cons of any issue that this Parliament asks the people of Queensland to decide in a referendum.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (12.25 pm): At the outset, let me say that if this Bill is not about daylight-saving, then I could have been fooled by the Minister's introductory speech because he stated—

> "The purpose of this Bill is to address issues which could arise and cause difficulties in the effective conduct of a referendum which will be held to allow the people to determine the issue of daylight-saving."

I believe that the Minister was being quite honest when he made that statement, and I will not attack him for that. I want to go directly to the issue that has caused most of the problems, which is that if referendums are held on any other issue, people could be—not "would be"—deprived of the right to have a "Yes" case and a "No" case being posted to each individual. The member for Tablelands mentioned that there could be a referendum on prostitution, and I think he mentioned another issue.

Mr McGrady: Abortion.

Mr BOOTH: I can think of issues of much greater importance that could warrant a referendum.

Mr Nunn: GST?

Mr BOOTH: That might be a good one, because it would enable the Labor Party to test the temperature of the water. However, the issue I had in mind—and I make these remarks with all sincerity—was one that emerged not very long ago in northern Queensland when there was a prolonged debate on whether this State should be

separated and a northern Queensland State created. If that issue were the subject of a referendum, I believe that voters would be entitled to have a "Yes" case and a "No" case posted to them. Of course, the real issue is that irrespective of whether the information is published in newspapers or the cases for and against the proposal are posted individually, a good, fair case must be presented for both sides of the argument. I would not be very concerned about information being published in the newspapers in relation to daylight-saving.

Mr Beattie: You agree with us, then?

Mr BOOTH: I am not bitterly opposed to newspaper publication in relation to daylight-saving, but I would not like to see that standard applied in relation to all referendums. Every referendum is different. A referendum concerning an issue that is not as emotive as daylight-saving might well result in people voting with very little knowledge of what they are doing. The member for Brisbane Central has suggested that everybody burns everything that comes into the mailbox, but I do not think that is quite right. The member for Mount Isa mentioned the costs involved in referendums, but I point out to him that everything to do with democracy is costly. It could well be argued that State elections or any other elections are a waste of time. They cost money——

Mr McGrady: Some of your colleagues have been complaining about the cost of the referendum.

Mr BOOTH: I am not complaining about the cost of the referendum, and I am not going to complain about the cost of the last referendum which produced a result that the Government was not expecting. I think this Government will get another result it is not expecting from the referendum on daylight-saving because I do not believe it will even be carried in the electorate of Mount Isa.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member will address the Chair.

Mr BOOTH: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The point I am trying to make is that at least when the occasion suits the issue, the method of using direct mailing should be considered. In relation to the issue of the separation of the northern parts of this State from Queensland, it might have been better to have informed the voters by direct mail, but in relation to daylight-saving, the issue has been aired so long that informing the electorate through the newspapers is satisfactory for this referendum.

Mr Beattie: That is right. That is the central point.

Mr BOOTH: However, a referendum issue that is more complex requires a more significant form of presenting the cases for and against the proposal. Newspaper advertising would be inadequate in those circumstances, and I certainly would not support that.

Mr FitzGerald: In relation to constitutional matters, the Federal Government always mails the cases out, doesn't it?

Mr BOOTH: It does. We have become accustomed to having the cases mailed out. The point I make in relation to this Bill is that its provisions should apply to the daylight-saving referendum only. I do not think it should shut down the practice of direct mailing in relation to other issues. I believe that people support the idea of having the daylight-saving issue put to a referendum. On three or four occasions, the Premier has made the very surprising statement that the only result that would be significant is that everybody would know that the State is divided on the issue. The result of every election is the same as that, and when the Premier was successful at the last State election, he did not complain. If he is not successful after the next State election he might complain, but up until now he has not said anything. I believe that his statement was a mistake. I notice

that he is not emphasising that point of view now, so I will not belabour the point. In conclusion——

Mr Beattie: Hear, hear!

Mr BOOTH: That is a very good response. At least the member is listening. I believe that the referendum is not a bad idea. The Government has to be careful, but the referendum could, perhaps, be used for a number of issues. If it is a complex issue, then people have every right to have mail-outs posted to them. In relation to this issue, if the referendum is going to be advertised, it will be all right. I would not like to see this method used for every referendum. It is something that needs to be examined. I know that the Justice Minister is not a person who wipes everybody else's ideas; he listens to them. I am confident that he will consider some of the alterations that the Opposition would like to make to this legislation to make it a little fairer. I certainly think the Government should be looking ahead. One just cannot base the legislation all on the one issue. I understand that the Speaker has ruled that this is not a daylight-saving Bill——

Mr Beattie: He is quite right.

Mr BOOTH: I do not think he is quite right. Has the honourable member read the Minister's second-reading speech? He ought to read it before he arrives at that decision. However, the idea of the referendum is good, although I am a little worried about the aspect that people may not be fully briefed before they vote.

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong) (12.32 p.m.): I rise to speak on this very important piece of legislation. Although it contains some minor amendments, it certainly includes one major amendment. Today, honourable members have referred to amendments to referendums—not just the daylight-saving referendum, but to referendums per se, whenever they might occur in the future. That is what makes the major amendment to this legislation very important to the people of Queensland. It contains a major change to the democratic processes of this State. No-one in this State, including the members in this Chamber, can deny that. I believe that the Goss Labor Government must hold its head in shame. Today, I was not surprised that the list of speakers did not contain the name of one Labor backbencher or Minister who was going to speak in support of the Minister's legislation. It may be that after my remarks someone is prodded to rise and speak. Let me assure the House that, according to the list of speakers that has been circulated, not one Labor member of Parliament has the courage, the guts or the fortitude to rise and support this legislation. I can understand why. The Minister, Premier Goss and the other members of Cabinet ought to hang their heads in shame with this legislation. Of course, the changes are designed to suit the political interests of Mr Goss and the ALP. For over 50 years in this State, the Labor Party did things to suit its political interests. That is why Queensland had the gerrymander back in 1949. The Labor Government introduced it to suit its political interests, just as it is introducing this major amendment that is currently before the House. It is being introduced to suit the political interests of the Labor Party.

During the term of this Labor Government, this is the second time that a referendum will be held. For 60 years there had been no referendums in this State. Suddenly, out of the blue, for the second time in the term of this Government, Queensland will have a referendum. It is the second time that Mr Goss has campaigned to stop both sides of the argument being sent to electors. At the last referendum, only a few months ago, at the same time as the local government elections, Mr Goss tried to stop the same thing from happening. Mr Goss and the Labor Government then sought to stop the electors of this State from being informed of both sides of the argument. Mr Goss and the Labor Government failed. Because they failed then, they are now out to ensure that they do not fail again. They want to deny legitimate information being given to the people of this State.

Of course, a very spurious argument has been put forward that the Government wants to save taxpayers' money. Not even a bureaucracy would put that argument forward, let alone the Government of the day. No-one could push forward that very spurious argument. If the Government was concerned about saving taxpayers' money, a referendum would simply not be held in the first place. I will not canvass the issues relating to the referendum. However, it is quite clear that the referendum is being held because Mr Goss and the Labor Government do not have the guts or the courage to make a decision. A committee was set up and Mr Goss sought to set up another committee to investigate that committee's decision. He then decided that it was all too hard, so it was put to the people of Queensland. That is exactly what happened. If the Government is concerned about saving taxpayers' dollars, why does it not cancel the whole referendum and look at other solutions to this problem? This issue will not be solved by a referendum. If the issue is that taxpayers would be saved $5m by not holding a referendum, the Government has a way out. Of course, the Government is concerned not about saving $5m, or $1m—whatever the cost might be for mail-outs—but about denying the information to the people of Queensland. The Government knows that information is knowledge. Once one has knowledge, one is able to give serious consideration to the issues of the day.

It is worth while noting that mail-outs are used for Federal referendums. Every Australian elector receives a mail-out. Not even Bob Hawke tries this swifty, this shonky action, this rort that is being tried by Mr Goss and his Government. They know it; the people of Queensland know it. No issue is so simple that people do not deserve to be advised of the full details of the arguments. Today, I have heard other members canvass a range of issues. All these issues can be examined. The issue of daylight-saving—which will be raised in the near future—is not a simple issue as the Government of the day might like to make out. It is a very complex issue that affects the State of Queensland. It affects not only the quality of life of Queenslanders but also their jobs. It affects whether or not Queenslanders will have jobs, whether there will be business in Queensland to provide jobs, and so on. Daylight-saving is a very complex issue. If the Government is going to ask the electors of this State to vote on this issue in a referendum, they have the right to be fully informed of all aspects of the argument. Costs are associated with the democratic process and democracy. The denial of information to people and their right to be properly informed strikes at the very heart of democracy. All power goes to those who have information and knowledge. We know how easy it will be for a Government, particularly a Labor Government, to manipulate the people and media with its arguments and to manipulate the democratic process in this State. This is another instance of Goss and Labor arrogance, arrogance and more arrogance. Mr Beattie smiles because he knows it is true and he can see the day coming when that arrogance will bring down the Goss Labor Government. We are witnessing the Government of the day using its power to manipulate the people of this State.

There must always be a mail-out to all electorates on any issue being put to a referendum and not just when a majority on one side supports the argument. This legislation requires that both sides—the side that supports and the side that opposes the referendum—must agree to a mail-out to all electors. That is not good enough. The democratic process does not support that stand. Government backbenchers have been browbeaten by the Ministry on this issue. I cannot remember previous debates in which not one Labor backbencher has taken part. I am sure that the Minister has already sent the message out to the Whip to get Government backbenchers to speak. I made a check back to when I became a member and I could find no instance of at least one Government backbencher not supporting legislation. But that is what is happening today. Not one backbencher is listed to speak to this legislation. The Minister does not have that backbench support.

According to the legislation, on two occasions prior to the referendum the arguments will be published in newspapers circulating throughout the State. Only four Brisbane newspapers fit the bill. They are the *Courier-Mail*, the *Sun*, the *Sunday Sun* and the *Sunday Mail*. But they are not circulated to every part of the State and they reach some parts of the State many days after publication. This is the case in many towns in the north and west of the State. In addition, the vast majority of people simply do not read newspapers. Many watch television and listen to radio instead, yet the legislation does not provide for advertising through those media. What is so special about newspapers, which many people do not read any more? That is a fact of life. This is the new era of communication and the newspaper is not necessarily the medium preferred by many people. Many people, particularly politicians, continue to read every line of newspapers, but many members of the public do not bother to buy a newspaper from one day to the next. The Minister is denying thousands of Queenslanders the opportunity to be informed of what referendums are all about. This is not the first or even the second time that this has happened. I mentioned a previous occasion on which the Government sought to deny the people of Queensland the right to mailed-out arguments in a previous referendum. This Government held one referendum in which ticks could be used on ballot papers. This legislation does not contain an amendment to overcome that problem. The votes of tens of thousands of electors at the most recent local government elections were declared informal because they used ticks, and they did so because of the actions of this Government.

The most recent referendum was held at the same time as the local government elections. The informal vote in the mayoral election in Toowoomba was 22 per cent. The figures were 10 560 informal and 25 356 formal votes. It is clear that Mr and Mrs Informal received more votes than the votes received by the second and third candidates. The informal vote in the Doboy ward in the Brisbane City Council elections was 2 681 out of a total of 17 643 votes. In the mayoral election, there were 40 210 informal votes—more than the formal votes cast for the third and fourth candidates combined. Yet this legislation does not attempt to tidy up that mess. Shame on the Government and the Minister for allowing that legislation to stand. When the legislation was being amended, the Minister and the Government were warned what would happen if an election and a referendum were held simultaneously. At the most recent polls, people believed that they cast a valid vote but found later that it was informal because they had used a tick, not through any fault of their own but through the confusion resulting from the Government allowing ticks to be used instead of "Yes" and "No" as was previously the case. Today, we are again going down the path of putting before the people of this State a situation of which any Government should be ashamed. The Government is denying the people the right to be properly informed and to be properly part of the democratic process.

The Labor Party loves to quote Mr Fitzgerald. In his report, he said—

> "Good Government is more likely to result if opposition, criticism and rational debate are allowed to take place, appropriate checks and balances are placed on the use of power and the administration is open to new ideas, opposing points of view and public scrutiny."

He went on to say—

> "Public opinion can be an important check on the powerful. It is a fundamental tenet of a democratic system that public opinion is given effect in regular free and fair elections. But public opinion must be informed to be effective
>
> . . .
>
> public opinion must be informed to be effective."

It cannot be "informed to be effective" if mail-outs to people are not to be allowed on whatever issues are being put in a referendum. There is no question put in a referendum which does not involve a complex and detailed issue. Is the Premier or the Minister supporting this amendment for some ulterior motive? Many people in this State do not read newspapers and will not be informed. They may not read the section relating to the referendum. We do not know what size the advertisement is to be—whether it is to be a full-page advertisement. Often, people turn over full-size advertisements and move on to the next page. There might be only a handful of people who obtain a newspaper and read the advertisement. I believe that this is one of the most shameful acts that any Government has perpetrated on the people of this State, and something the Minister ought not be smiling and laughing about. It is something about which this Government and this Minister should hang their heads in shame.

Hon. G. R. MILLINER (Everton—Minister for Justice and Corrective Services) (12.48 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate today. I am actually quite astounded at the contribution of the member for Toowong. Losing the leadership of the Liberal Party has had a devastating effect on him. Obviously, it has affected him.

Mr FitzGerald: Don't get nasty.

Mr MILLINER: I will not get nasty. There seems to be only one issue which has been raised, and that is this question about informing the voters. To date, Queensland has had five referendums: one in 1908 concerning religious education in State schools; one in 1917 concerning abolishing the Legislative Council; one in 1920 and one in 1923——

Mr Beanland interjected.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr MILLINER: Honourable members are getting very excited. In 1920 and 1923, there were referendums regarding liquor; and, this year, there was a referendum on four-year terms for this Parliament. Only once has there been a mail-out to electors, and that was this year. Western Australia and Queensland are the only States that have provisions for mail-outs. The Commonwealth also has a provision for mail-outs on constitutional issues. This is a quality-of-life issue. Everybody is affected by daylight-saving. Everybody has an opinion on it one way or the other.

Mr BEANLAND: I rise to a point of order. What issue is the Minister talking about? We are talking about referendum legislation. What issue is the Minister talking about when he says it is a quality-of-life issue?

Mr MILLINER: I am sorry, Madam Deputy Speaker. There is something obviously affecting the member for Toowong. I do not know what it is.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Power): Order! The member for Surfers Paradise.

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. Earlier, there was a ruling in this debate that reference cannot be made to daylight-saving, and I would respectfully request the Chair to apply the same rules to the Government as are applied to members of the Opposition.

Mr MILLINER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am referring to the legislation and talking about why we are not having a mail-out on this issue, which is very relevant to this legislation. I am not going into the pros and cons of the issue about which the honourable member seems so worried. That issue is very much a quality-of-life issue.

Mr Borbidge: What issue is that?

Mr MILLINER: The honourable member for Surfers Paradise knows what issue that is, and he will have his opportunity to talk about that at a later stage. That is very much a quality-of-life issue. Everybody has an opinion on it, because it affects everybody. I have grave reservations about the suggestion that a mail-out will convince people one way or the other. The member for Toowong was all fired up in saying that there is a requirement to advertise in only two newspapers. He obviously has not read the legislation, because it states

" . . . at least 2 newspapers circulating throughout the State . . ."

So, "at least 2" is the minimum requirement.

Mr Beanland: Make it 5; change it to 10.

Mr MILLINER: We might make it 5 or 10; but what we are saying is that that is the bare minimum—at least 2. The advertisement will be placed in more than two newspapers. That is the bare minimum.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr MILLINER: This Government will do it properly. Honourable members know that it will be done properly. The arguments will be publicised through the newspapers, and to suggest that mail-outs are the panacea and the way everybody has been informed in recent referendums is just an absolute nonsense. The best contribution to this debate was made by my friend the member for Warwick, who said that each referendum should be taken on its merits. Obviously, when referendums are being considered, there will be amendments to the Act. The previous Government was contemplating a referendum to extend the term of that Parliament. It introduced legislation in the Parliament to facilitate that referendum, but it got cold feet at the last minute. However, that is beside the point. The previous Government was going to amend the legislation to facilitate the conduct of that referendum. This year, legislation was introduced to facilitate the conduct of the referendum on four-year parliamentary terms, and we are doing the same here today. No doubt if there is a referendum in the future, legislation will be introduced to facilitate the conduct of that referendum at that time.

Mr Gilmore: But do you accept that we could have had a referendum under the old legislation?

Mr MILLINER: No. There were a number of amendments which this Government desired to put in place, and they are being put in place, and the same thing will occur in the future. Honourable members have suggested that we constantly have referendums about issues of the day. We have a referendum every three years; it is called an election. Governments stand or fall on their performance. The honourable member for Barambah was elected to this place on a platform of holding a referendum on everything, including what time of the day it is. It is a nonsense to suggest that we should hold a referendum on every controversial issue. The reason that this referendum is being held is that this issue is very much a quality-of-life issue. Before Opposition members get excited, I indicate that that is all I intend to say about the matter.

The other matter raised by the honourable member for Toowong related to the high informal vote at the last council election. It was extremely high and there was confusion. Honourable members are being wise in hindsight. It probably would have been better if we had amended the legislation. However, prior to the election, nobody raised the prospect of a high informal vote. It is amazing how clever people were after the election. The very reason that we are not amending the Elections Act at this time is, quite simply, that EARC is in the process of rewriting that Act. It would be crazy for us to be coming here today with major amendments to the Elections Act when we are not about to hold an election or a by-

election; we are merely holding a referendum. The contribution by the member for Toowong amazed me. He obviously needs a decent holiday.

Mr Gilmore: Don't be patronising.

Mr MILLINER: I am being kind to the honourable member. I did not mean that remark to be nasty to him in any way, shape or form. It is obvious that he has had a very difficult year. I wish him well. I hope that he has a relaxing holiday and returns in a better frame of mind. This is sensible legislation which will allow the referendum to be conducted in an orderly way. The Government wants the people of the State to have their say on this important issue. The legislation will facilitate their having that say.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. G. R. Milliner (Everton—Minister for Justice and Corrective Services) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5—

Mr MILLINER (12.56 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

"At page 3, omit lines 18 to 28 and insert—

'(b) within 4 weeks after—

(i) the Bill is passed by the Legislative Assembly; or

(ii) the Legislative Assembly resolves (whether before or after the commencement of this section) that the Question be submitted to the electors qualified to vote for the election of members of the Legislative Assembly;

there is to be forwarded to the Electoral Commissioner—

(iii) an argument in favour of the Bill or an affirmative answer to the Question to be submitted to the electors in accordance with the resolution, consisting of not more than 1 000 words, authorised by a majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly who both—

(A) voted for the Bill or an affirmative answer to the Question; and

(B) desire to forward such an argument; or

(iv) an argument against the Bill or an affirmative answer to the Question to be submitted to the electors in accordance with the resolution, consisting of not more than 1 000 words, authorised by a majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly who both—

(A) voted against the Bill or an affirmative answer to the Question; and

(B) desire to forward such an argument;'."

Mr GILMORE: I move the following amendment to the amendment moved by the Minister—

"Omit '1 000' where twice occurring and insert—

'2 000'."

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We were dealing with clause 5 and with the amendment moved by the member for Tablelands to the amendment moved by the Minister.

Mr GILMORE: Clause 5 is very broad and sweeping, and a number of amendments will be moved in relation to it. In fact, I thank the Chair for allowing these amendments to be dealt with one at a time instead of en bloc. The Minister has moved an amendment which in part resolves the difficulties that the Opposition had in respect of this clause. That part deals with the fact that the question of any referendum is to be put to the Parliament. That is covered by the Minister's amendment. We acknowledge that and accept the virtue contained in it. Subsequent to that, I moved an amendment to the Minister's amendment and sought to omit the expression "1 000 words" where it appears in two places and to insert in its stead the expression "2 000 words". The reason for that is quite simple. As I said during the second-reading debate, the Opposition's view is that, if a referendum is to occur, it is absolutely imperative that the people who will vote on it do so from a position of knowledge and strength and not from one of their age-old held perceptions, whether they be accurate or otherwise. Knowledge is strength, and knowledge is the only basis upon which a proper determination of a referendum can be made. After all, it has to be understood that a matter must be of great import before it is put to a referendum of the people. On that basis, it is not too much to ask that when the matter is put to the people they should be given access to sufficient information.

The original legislation allowed for an argument of 2 000 words on the "Yes" and "No" cases. It seems to me that, in making this amendment to the legislation, the Minister and the Government have in some kind of churlish way decided to reduce the number of words that are available to people to explain what might in the future be a technical and difficult question that is being put before the people. I ask the Minister: what would be the difference in terms of cost? Earlier in the debate, the member for Brisbane Central raised the question of cost. He asked, "What about the cost?" I say to the Minister: what about the cost? There is a cost for democracy and there is a cost for getting the message across. Quite clearly, if "2 000 words" is inserted, to paraphrase what the Minister said earlier about his determination that advertisements be placed in a minimum of two newspapers, we are talking here about a maximum of 2 000 words. We are not suggesting for one moment that those persons who are espousing one side of a particular argument should avail themselves of those 2 000 words. However, should the matter be of such a technical nature or so difficult as to require 2 000 words to explain adequately one side or the other, it seems to me that there is no sensible or reasonable reason why this Government should move to stifle the debate on that subject. It is for that reason that I have moved an amendment to the Minister's amendment. I believe that it would be perfectly reasonable for the Minister and the Government to accept and acknowledge that that is a reasonable amendment to the amendment.

Mr MILLINER: The Government cannot accept the amendment moved by the member for Tablelands. Any figure, whether it be 5 000, 10 000 or 2 000, can be plucked out of the air. We felt it best that there be no more than 1 000 words in a newspaper advertisement. I come back to the fundamental question about what this particular issue is all about. It is an issue on which all of us have an opinion. I am not going to mention daylight-saving. Obviously, the member for Surfers Paradise has an opinion and the member for Tablelands obviously has an opinion. They may have different opinions; I do not know. Whether the argument consists of 1 000, 2 000 or 5 000 words, I doubt whether those honourable members would convince each other to vote another way.

Mr Borbidge: I should have the right to read his opinion.

Mr MILLINER: The honourable member probably will have the right to read his opinion. I am asking: how many words does he want? Does he want 2 000, 3 000 or 4 000?

This issue affects all of us. Everybody to whom I have spoken has an opinion one way or the other. I honestly do not believe——

Mr Borbidge: What about future referendums?

Mr MILLINER: I have no doubt that the legislation will be changed to suit future referendums. There may not be another referendum for a long time. We might have cable television or we might have available a number of other avenues by which an argument can be put forward. Every time there has been a referendum, the legislation has been amended. No doubt, in the future there will be further amendments to the legislation. The question of the number of words is academic. We believe that with 1 000 words an argument can be adequately put in a newspaper advertisement. If more words are available, the advertisement could occupy pages of a newspaper. We are saying that 1 000 words are sufficient to adequately put forward an argument and give people an opportunity to have a look at what the arguments are. I believe that everybody has a point of view on this matter.

Mr BORBIDGE: I support the comments that have been made by the member for Tablelands and express some disappointment at the response made by the Minister. I do not know whether Government members in the Chamber realise exactly what they are doing in respect of this clause. We are not talking about just a forthcoming referendum on a matter that we are not supposed to be discussing during this legislation; we are talking about any referendums that may occur in the future.

Mr Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: What the Government is doing—and what seems to enjoy the support of the great democrat opposite who interjected—is to say that in future the rule that has applied in the past whereby 2 000 words, or up to 2 000 words, can be used for the case for and the case against an issue will, by the action of this Government today, be reduced to 1 000. In my view, that is quite wrong.

It is not necessary to use 2 000 words on this occasion. However, it may well be that next year or the year after a substantially more complex referendum question will need to be explained to the people of Queensland. Why in heaven's name would it be necessary to bring the legislation back before the Parliament to substitute "2 000" for "1 000"? Why tamper with a piece of legislation that is designed to ensure that the people of Queensland are adequately informed about the cases for and against? Why cut the number of words back from 2 000? I accept the Minister's proposition that in this instance 2 000 words are probably not needed. But on the next occasion, 2 000 words might be necessary. It is a waste of the time of this Parliament, the resources of the Parliamentary Counsel and taxpayers' money to have to amend the legislation at some future time. The comments of the member for Tablelands are entirely appropriate.

Mr Elder interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: When I have the opportunity to do so, the member will find out. I am looking forward to learning how he votes on the issue.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Manly! I have brought that to the member's attention.

Mr BORBIDGE: Thank you for your protection, Mr Chairman. I urge the Minister to give this matter further consideration. In my view, what he is doing is quite senseless.

Mr GILMORE: I rise to support my colleague and to point out to the Minister that a couple of points appear to have escaped him. This referendum could well have been held under the existing legislation. There is apparently no reason for this amendment other than that the National Party agreed to a once-off non-publication of the "Yes" and "No" cases through the mail. That was the only reason for amendment of the legislation.

On a number of occasions during this debate, the Minister has said that the legislation may well have to be amended for future referendums. That is a quite improper statement for the Minister to make. Indeed, it is an attempt to mislead this Parliament. In fact, once this legislation becomes the law of the land, future referendums can be held under the substance of this legislation as it stands. There is no reason for it to be amended further. The Minister's assertions that it should or will be amended by future Governments at future times for future referendums relating to other matters bear very little weight. I accept the Minister's assertion that the legislation is being amended in relation to the daylight-saving referendum because the Opposition agreed to a once-off operation. The Government has taken the opportunity to make some fundamental changes to the basis of the legislation which the Opposition believes are quite improper and should not have been undertaken. For that reason, the Opposition is vigorously opposed to the kinds of things that the Government is attempting to achieve.

Mr BEANLAND: It is quite clear that the Government is amending the referendums legislation. If the Government has no reason to amend the current legislation, it is a nonsense for the Minister to say that there is no doubt that future amendments will be made to the legislation. Future Governments—particularly Labor Governments—will not have to amend the legislation for future referendums. I am sure that if the Government fixes up the legislation in the way that it wants to, the legislation will not be changed in the future—although, at the rate that things are going, a couple of referendums will be held each year under this dithering Government. Members know what the Labor Party said about the previous Government's dithering. This Government seems unable to make a decision.

It is quite clear that the Government is devoid of argument. The Minister's cheap shots before the luncheon recess about my playing the man and not the ball were typical. The Minister has provided no arguments on this issue. He has given no reasons for the proposed amendments. Now he has moved an amendment to his amendments. As has been rightly pointed out, we are dealing with referendums legislation. This has nothing to do with the forthcoming referendum, but all future referendums. It is about time that the Minister took note of that and did not try to mislead the Parliament by saying time after time that in some way this is peculiar to a particular referendum. It certainly is not. The legislation is quite clear for all to read. It refers to all future referendums. The issue is not one of daylight-saving or anything else. The issue is the referendums legislation itself. There has been a lack of supporting argument for this whole case. There has been a lack of supporting argument for making a change from 2 000 words to 1 000 words, and a lack of supporting argument for this amendment.

Mr MILLINER: As to the point raised by the member for Tablelands—the referendum could not be held under existing legislation. The legislation had to be amended because we are now using Commonwealth rolls under a joint roll agreement with the Commonwealth. The member for Surfers Paradise made a very pertinent point when he spoke about the complexity of the issues. A referendum some time down the track may relate to a very complex issue that would require an explanation in more than 2 000 words.

Mr Borbidge: Why block yourself off?

Mr MILLINER: This particular referendum relates to such a quality-of-life issue that everybody has an opinion on it. The Government believes that the cases for and against can quite adequately be put forward within 1 000 words. In the future, there may be a referendum about some other issue that we cannot even contemplate in this day and age, and more than 2 000 words may be needed to adequately explain the cases for and against that issue. Each referendum must be taken in isolation on its merits. The Government cannot include in legislation providing for a referendum something that may

or may not occur in future years. That is why the Government believes that the 1 000 words will be adequate for both sides to put a case.

Question—That the amendment to the proposed amendment be agreed to—put; and the Committee divided—

DIVISION

Resolved in the negative.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! For all future divisions, the bells will ring for two minutes.

Amendment (Mr Milliner) agreed to.

Mr GILMORE: I move the following further amendment—

"At page 4, line 3, omit—

'and'

and insert—

'or'."

This is probably the most fundamental part of the legislation with which the Opposition disagrees. The amendments to the legislation as presented to the Parliament ensure that the Government has a right of veto as to whether future questions are put to the people by way of a mail-out, that is, the "Yes" case and the "No" case being posted to individual electors.

The Opposition feels that this is the most offensive and dangerous clause in the legislation. The rights of the citizens of this State are being trampled upon by this uncaring Government. This is what I was talking about when I said that the Government took the opportunity to take advantage of our good intentions and move an amendment to the legislation. This amendment allows the Government of the day to deny the right of people to have these arguments sent out to them. The Government then proceeds to use the whole of its resources to gag opposition to this question and spread the good word as the Government of the day perceives it to be. I acknowledge that on a number of occasions the Minister has said that in future the legislation will have to be amended for each referendum question as we come to it. However, I put on the record of this Parliament the fact that this clause is not one that will need to be amended from time to time. This clause

is fundamental to the business of referendums and the way in which they have been conducted in Queensland. This clause takes away the expectation and the reality of the past.

As the Minister said today, we have had only one mail-out, but that does not mean it was a bad idea. The Opposition applauds the view that the mail-out is the most appropriate way of getting the message across to the vast bulk of members of the community who are concerned with, responsible for and affected by the question that is going to referendum. We have suggested this very simple amendment to the legislation to put the Government back on the right track and to ensure that in future the people of Queensland will be entitled to a mail-out of the "Yes" and "No" arguments, unless there is unanimous agreement on the question on both sides of this Parliament. The Parliament also represents the people who hold an opposing view to that which is promoted by the Government of the day. That is a very important point to make. The opposing views expressed on the floor of this Parliament are important to the people of Queensland. This is a democracy. It does not matter to the Opposition whether there is widespread agreement on a particular question because, in a democracy, even if there is a single dissenting voice, that voice is entitled to be heard. We change the laws, rules and regulations of this community by allowing dissenting voices to be heard. We are giving those people the opportunity to change the opinion of the vast bulk of the community, so that they make the right determination by means of referendum and by voting within the walls of this Parliament.

It is for those reasons that the Opposition indicates its very strong offence at the clauses as they presently stand in this legislation. I indicate that if this amendment is not addressed and accepted by the Government, once again the Opposition will divide the Chamber on the issue. It is absolutely fundamental to our democratic processes that the Government recognises that our democratic right must not be sullied by allowing the Government of the day the right of veto over the rights of the people in the street.

Mr MILLINER: The Government will not accept the amendment put forward by the Opposition. We believe that this legislation is adequate for the conduct of this referendum.

Mr Gilmore: This is the law of the land.

Mr MILLINER: I know, but people will be able to express their point of view, as is their right. We have indicated that quite clearly. The "Yes" and "No" cases will be published.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr MILLINER: That is right, but the "Yes" and "No" cases will be published. I do not know what the honourable member is getting at because I have given him an assurance that the cases for the "Yes" and "No" arguments will be published.

Mr BORBIDGE: I am appalled by the Minister's response. Today, the Government is entrenching its own position in regard not only to a referendum to be held early next year but also to all future referendums to be held in Queensland until such time as amending legislation is brought before this Parliament.

Mr Smyth: You never had a referendum.

Mr BORBIDGE: I thought that honourable members opposite—including the member who interjects—believe in a sense of fair play. When we talk about having a referendum in this State, all the people of Queensland should have the right to be properly informed in respect of the arguments for and against the proposal. I am getting a little bit tired of the honourable member opposite and the Minister saying, "Oh yes, but this is only for the next referendum—the referendum on daylight-saving." This legislation entrenches

the Government's intention in relation to all future referendums in Queensland unless the Parliament decides otherwise. Today, the Minister is entrenching in the Government of the day—whether Labor or conservative, as the honourable member for Tablelands said—a right of veto in respect of the democratic rights of the people of Queensland, including their right to know both sides of the story. As the honourable member said, this is a fundamental issue. If the Government proceeds with its stated intention, it will take away from the people of Queensland a right that they have enjoyed and a right that they should continue to enjoy.

Mr Ardill: When did they enjoy it?

Mr BORBIDGE: The Minister has entrenched in his party's caucus room the Government's right to veto the say of people who may be opposed to what the Government wants to do. Members of the Labor Party have vetoed the right of people to have the pros and cons mailed out to them. I say that this is a sad day for this Parliament. Once again, this is an example of the double standards and hypocrisy of the Labor Party.

Mr Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: Once again, we see these greedy people opposite entrenching more power in their caucus room and taking away power from the people of Queensland. This is a sad day.

Mr Ardill: You never held one.

Mr BORBIDGE: The honourable member is such a joke around the place that I feel sorry for him.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr BORBIDGE: If he wants to take me on——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the member for Surfers Paradise and the member for Salisbury to stop making personal insinuations against each other. I ask the member for Surfers Paradise to stick to the issue.

Mr BORBIDGE: If the honourable member who interjects would like to enter into the debate, I would be more than pleased to oblige him. However, if he is going to indulge in making inane comments, then that is not my fault.

Mr Ardill interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr BORBIDGE: Once again, the credibility of this Government is on the line. Members of this Labor Government are taking away the basic referendum rights of the people of Queensland and are entrenching those rights in their caucus room and in their party room. This is the case not only in respect of daylight-saving, as the Minister suggests, but also in regard to every future referendum that will be held in this State unless and until such time as a conservative Government comes to power and repeals this inane clause.

Dr WATSON: I support the amendment moved by the member for Tablelands. I ask the Minister: if his argument is that legislation will have to be introduced every time a referendum is to take place in Queensland, why is this clause drafted so widely? Why did the Minister not frame a clause restricting this legislation to the particular referendum to which he has referred? The reason he did not do so is that it is not his intention to restrict this legislation. As the member for Surfers Paradise said, his intention is to try to entrench a practice provided for in the Bill without having to come back to the Parliament. If the Minister had wanted to restrict the application of this legislation to the daylight-saving referendum, he should have drafted the clause accordingly and included a sunset provision.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The question was that clause 5, as read, stand part of the Bill——

Mr BEANLAND: I rise on a point of order in relation to this matter. I want to ask the Minister some questions. I was waiting for the Minister to reply.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member has had his chance. I am putting the question.

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. With respect, the Minister was not in his place when you started to put the question, Mr Chairman. He was conferring with his advisers.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask both honourable members to resume their seats. I asked the Minister whether he wanted to respond and he indicated to me that he did not. That is why I put the question.

Mr Dunworth: What would you expect?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am putting the question.

Mr GILMORE: With respect, Mr Chairman, you did mention "that clause 5 stand part of the Bill". There are further amendments.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. There are further amendments, but I have not got to that yet.

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

DIVISION

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr GILMORE: Some of the amendments as circulated by the Opposition are consequential upon the last amendment. Those amendments are 3, 4, 6 and 7 on my sheet. I move the following amendment—

"At page 4, line 12, after—

'State'

insert—

> 'and such regional and local newspapers circulating throughout part of the State as the Electoral Commissioner considers necessary to bring the notice to the attention of all electors.' "

The Opposition considers it absolutely imperative that people who live outside the metropolitan area are given adequate access to the question and the explanations of both sides of the argument. Everyone in this place has heard what the Minister has put up about the referendum and about how everybody really knows that it is not a political matter. The Opposition is moving an amendment to this legislation simply to facilitate this particular referendum, which is being discussed today——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will honourable members please return to their usual seats and carry on conversations quietly so that the Minister can hear what the Opposition members are saying.

Mr GILMORE: The amendment as moved by the Opposition is a direct take from other legislation that has already been passed. It clearly outlines the difficulties that are faced by people in remote areas of this State. I point out that if the statutes as laid down were followed, the *Courier-Mail,* and possibly a regional newspaper such as the *Cairns Post*, would be used in my own electorate. These newspapers are so poorly circulated throughout that vast area that many people would be disfranchised. I understand that the Minister has said that that is the absolute minimum. All I am suggesting is that this amendment is perfectly reasonable so that the expectation of this Parliament is fulfilled in terms of the Electoral Commissioner. This is where the Electoral Commissioner receives his instructions. This individual must not read into the legislation that he can quite properly proceed, as required, to place advertisements in two newspapers. The Opposition is concerned about the way the Government has proceeded, in a sneaky and childish way, with amendments to this legislation. The Minister is now saying, "It is only an absolute minimum. Trust me." The Opposition does not trust the Minister. It is a great shame. What the Opposition is suggesting is that this legislation gets nailed to the floor to make sure that if they are not going to receive mail-outs, all of the people in remote Queensland have access to information in their weekly throw-aways, their daily newspapers, or whatever medium it is from which they obtain their news. That is all the Opposition is asking for.

Mr MILLINER: I am deeply wounded by what the member for Tablelands has said. I am not prepared to accept the amendment because it does not add anything to the clause. The amendment states "as the Electoral Commissioner considers necessary". The Electoral Commissioner may consider that none of the regional papers are necessary. The amendment is not enshrining anything in this legislation; it is just another group of words that really do not add anything. The Electoral Commissioner—who is an independent person—has given me an assurance that he is going to advertise widely throughout the regional press. The clause is written so that the Electoral Commissioner will have to identify the types of publications that will most successfully relay the message to the entire population. That method may be regional daily newspapers, it may be regional weekly newspapers, it may be regional monthly newspapers, or it might even be a local progress association news-sheet.

The legislation gives the Electoral Commissioner every opportunity to advertise wherever he considers necessary in order to get the message across. With all due respect to the honourable member for Tablelands, I point out that the amendment does not add anything because the Electoral Commissioner already has the authority to do it. The amendment contains the words, "as the Electoral Commissioner considers necessary". Really, that adds nothing to it. The Electoral Commissioner has given that undertaking and I understand that he is prepared to meet with the Leader of the Opposition. I know that,

upon his appointment as Electoral Commissioner, he met with the honourable member for Toowong. I believe that he will do everything in his power to make sure that the population is informed in the best possible way. I cannot accept the amendment because it adds nothing.

Mr GILMORE: Earlier in the life of this Parliament, amendments to other legislation have allowed for the interpretation of the legislation by the courts and other bodies to include the preamble and the second-reading debate. Reference to that was allowed so that the intent of the Parliament was clearly understood, and so there was no doubt in the mind of the courts or the other bodies that, from time to time, are responsible for the implementation of the legislation. The Electoral Commissioner is an entirely honourable man. What honourable members are talking about here is the law of the land. On many occasions, the legislation that has gone through this place has been half-baked, ill-considered and poorly drafted. I am suggesting that this part of the legislation does not properly reflect the opinions that the Minister expressed a moment ago. He said that it might even get into a local club newsletter. For goodness' sake, let us give that instruction so that the feelings of this Parliament, which is the forum wherein laws are made, are clearly laid out in the legislation. If the Electoral Commissioner wanders off next week and another person takes his place, he should have no doubt about what this Parliament intended for the advertising of these questions.

Mr MILLINER: The Electoral Commissioner is an independent person operating under a statute of this Parliament. He will do everything he considers necessary to inform the public. The amendment does not add anything.

Mr Gilmore: The intent is there.

Mr MILLINER: Yes, but the intent is well known by the Electoral Commissioner.

Mr Gilmore: But not in law.

Mr MILLINER: It is, because it says that it has to be put in at least two newspapers. That is the bare minimum. The amendment also allows the commissioner to go back to the bare minimum because it contains the words "considers necessary." If the Electoral Commissioner, in his wisdom, decided that it was only necessary to publish the argument in at least two newspapers circulating throughout the State, so be it. He would do that because that is what, in his opinion, he was required to do. This amendment contains the words "as the Electoral Commissioner considers necessary". They are the important words in the amendment. That gives the Electoral Commissioner an out. If, at some future time, the Electoral Commissioner does not want to do the right thing, this amendment gives him that out.

Mr Gilmore: Well, accept the amendment without the words "as necessary".

Mr MILLINER: No, I will not, because the way the clause is written is adequate to allow the Electoral Commissioner to identify how best to inform everybody of the arguments for and against, and that is the better way to go.

Mr BORBIDGE: I am disappointed that the Minister is not prepared to put his money where his mouth is. Time and time again the Government and this Minister say, "It is our intention to do the honourable thing and we will make sure that the right practices are observed." But when the Government and the Minister are given the opportunity to enshrine that in legislation so that it becomes the law of the land, they are not prepared to do it. Once again, the Minister's comments clearly demonstrate the double standards and the hypocrisy of the Government. The amendment proposed by the honourable member for Tablelands is a direct grab from other legislation enacted by this Government. In some cases the Government is prepared to say that a certain form of words is acceptable to it but, today, the Minister for Justice is saying that the words are not acceptable, that they are too vague. We are suggesting that the amendment proposed by the honourable

member for Tablelands gives the independent Electoral Commissioner the discretion that he should have and it conveys to him that it is clearly the will of the Parliament—of the elected representatives of the people—that there should be, as much as is practical, widespread advertising along these lines. If what the Minister is saying is correct and the assurances that he is seeking to give the Committee are correct, what is wrong with accepting the amendment proposed by the honourable member so that it becomes more than the Minister's word—with respect, the present Minister may not be the responsible Minister next year, the year after, or in 10 years' time—and becomes a statute of this place?

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided—

DIVISION

Resolved in the negative.

Mr GILMORE: I move the following further amendment—

"At page 4, omit lines 21 to 23."

I am most concerned about proposed new section 3 (4), which reads—

"The format and printing style of a notice under subsection (2), or a pamphlet under subsection (3), are to be as the Electoral Commissioner determines."

As I said a few moments ago, the Electoral Commissioner is a man who can be trusted implicitly. Regrettably, though, the Opposition believes that the format of any advertisement should properly be the business of the person putting up the argument, be it for or against the question to be decided. Surely the Electoral Commissioner should simply print the argument as presented to him.

Mr Milliner: That is what he will do. That is the format. We are not interfering with all that.

Mr GILMORE: How does the Minister know that? Where in the legislation does it say that the words are to be provided by one person or another? It is stated that the format and printing style are then subject to the tender mercies of the Electoral Commissioner. Opposition members have some major concerns in respect of that, and I would very much appreciate the Minister putting those concerns to bed. We want to have

it recorded in this place that the words, whether they be for or against the question, should be provided by the persons who are most affected. In regard to format—the Opposition has no difficulty with whether it has a heading, the number of paragraphs and that sort of thing. However, it must be clearly stated, and clearly understood so there can be no doubt whatsoever, that the words in respect of this question should be provided by those who are affected by it.

Mr MILLINER: Proposed new section 3 (4) states—

"The format and printing style . . ."

In no way, shape or form will the Electoral Commissioner interfere with the words that are presented to him. The reason this provision is included is that at some future time a person responsible for writing a "Yes" or "No" case might, for argument's sake, present the case to be printed in massive type. The document would virtually be the size of an encyclopaedia. That is a ridiculous analogy, but that could occur. This provision allows the Electoral Commissioner to determine the format and the printing style. It does not mean that in any way, shape or form he will interfere with the words or the number of paragraphs, but it will allow him to reject some ridiculous idea that may be presented to him. For argument's sake, if that provision were not included and someone put to him a "Yes" or "No" case in a ridiculous format, he would be required to publish that. This provision allows the Electoral Commissioner to determine the format and printing style so that situation does not occur. For argument's sake, someone may present to the Electoral Commissioner a case in a foreign language, or half in one language and half in another language. If the legislation did not allow the Electoral Commissioner to determine the format and the printing style, he would be forced to publish a ridiculous article for or against the proposal. I assure the honourable member that this provision does not allow the Electoral Commissioner, in any way, shape or form, to interfere with the arguments that have been put to him.

Mr GILMORE: It seems somewhat curious that the Minister has not taken the opportunity to suggest the size, whether it be three columns by 10 centimetres or whatever else. We do not want the publication printed in Swahili one column by one centimetre in the personal column of the Saturday afternoon newspaper, because only members of the Labor Party would read it. Members on this side of the Chamber do not read those sorts of columns. However, seriously, it is imperative that the instructions that go from this place are clear. The advertisement must be of sufficient size and be in such a form as to ensure that it is clear. It should be framed similarly to the EARC advertisements, which are clear. The people need to have some clear direction so that they can determine the matter.

Mr MILLINER: Because of the attack made on Government members by the member for Tablelands about perusing certain newspaper advertisements, I have been provoked to re-enter this debate. From his contribution, it is quite obvious that he knows where those advertisements are. The idea of the legislation is to allow the Electoral Commissioner to put the argument in an acceptable form. If he has to publish a case which is not legible, he cannot do that. This clause has been inserted so that the Electoral Commissioner can ensure that a presentable case and not a ratbag case is put forward.

Amendment negatived.

Mr BEANLAND: The Minister has not advanced suitable reasons as to why his amendment is so necessary and why he would not accept some of the proposed amendments to his amendment. Why does the Government want the right of veto over any information that might be sent out? It is clear that this is a grubby little exercise by the Government to stifle opposing views. The Minister knows that I am not talking about the forthcoming referendum; I am talking about all future referendums. If the legislation

related only to the proposed referendum on daylight-saving, a clause would be included to stipulate that. However, there is no such clause. If I am wrong, I invite the Minister to say so. Throughout the whole debate, his arguments have been flawed. Previously, he indicated that, although the clause states that the arguments should be inserted in at least two newspapers, that does not stop the Government from putting it in more than two newspapers. If he intends to put it in 10 newspapers, he should put that on the record. Of course, he does not want to do that because, at the end of the day, he has the intention of funding advertisements in only two newspapers that supposedly circulate within the State. Earlier, I canvassed that argument. In fact, there are no such newspapers. The Minister is indicating that there will be limited advertising of the "Yes" and "No" cases in newspapers. Clearly, this is a grubby little clause in the legislation that will apply not only to the daylight-saving referendum but also to all future referendums.

I believe that there is nothing wrong with clause 3.1, which clearly provides for the distribution to electors of arguments. I do not know why the Minister brought forward this proposal. He has failed to gather support for it and failed to advance adequate argument supporting his case for the amendment. It is worse than disappointing; it is deplorable. It reflects arrogance on the part of the Government towards the people of this State and is simply not good enough. I oppose strenuously the Minister's proposed amendment to the clause.

Mr MILLINER: I am absolutely appalled by the contribution by the member for Toowong. He has brought into question the integrity of the independent Electoral Commissioner. The independent Electoral Commissioner has given a very clear undertaking that he will do everything within his power to ensure that all electors are adequately informed of the arguments for and against. For the honourable member to suggest that I am going to direct the Electoral Commissioner to take certain action is very wrong. I find that offensive, and I find it offensive on behalf of the Electoral Commissioner. The Electoral Commissioner is an independent person whose position has been set up by this Parliament. As I understand it, that person visited Mr Beanland when he was Leader of the Liberal Party. He is a man of integrity. I trust his word. He has given a clear undertaking that he will do everything within his power to identify where the advertisements should be placed to reach the maximum number of voters—all voters in this referendum. For the honourable member to suggest that I am going to influence the Electoral Commissioner is offensive to both the Electoral Commissioner and me.

Mr BEANLAND: I am forced to rise again on this clause. At no time did I reflect on the Electoral Commissioner of this State. At no time did I notice set out in the legislation that the Electoral Commissioner intends to do what the Minister says. I do not for a moment back away from what I said previously. We are not talking only about the forthcoming referendum but about all future referendums. The Minister seems to have some major block—he has a lot of blocks. I notice that this time he is trying to hide behind the Electoral Commissioner. That simply will not do in this place. We are not talking about what Electoral Commissioners might or might not do. We are talking about what this Government is doing with this legislation to the citizens of this State. Everyone can read this legislation and see what it says. It spells out quite clearly what actions are anticipated. In relation to the advertising of the "Yes" and "No" cases, the legislation states that they must be published in at least two newspapers. The Electoral Commissioner can give undertakings to the whole Parliament and he can abide by those undertakings for the next referendum. So be it. But we are not talking about one referendum. At the rate this Government is holding referendums, there will be at least two more next year, probably before it can squeeze in the early election. After all, this is the second referendum that is proposed in the term of this Government. Before that, there had not been any for 60 years. It is quite an outrageous and frivolous argument for the

Minister to start referring to the Electoral Commissioner and hiding behind him. It reminds me of how the Minister hides behind the Corrective Services Commissioner. Like Little Boy Blue, he is always hiding behind somebody.

Let us find out what it is all about. Right here and now we are talking about the future of referendums in this State—all future referendums—until this Parliament decides otherwise. That means until the Government of the day decides otherwise. That might be 5, 6, 10 or 20 referendums down the track—who knows! There should be no nonsense from the Minister trying to hide behind the Electoral Commissioner saying that he or someone else is going to direct the Electoral Commissioner. It is all a furphy and a nonsense, and the Minister knows it. Quite clearly, this clause spells out exactly what the situation is and it spells out that the Electoral Commissioner needs to advertise in at least two newspapers that circulate throughout the State—no more than two. It does not say "25" or "provincial newspapers". Sure, the present Electoral Commissioner may very well advertise in 25 or 55 newspapers for the forthcoming referendum. That is only one referendum. This legislation refers to all future referendums. Again, that is a furphy. The Minister is trying to hide behind some undertaking in relation to the current referendum and that simply will not do. Again, I raise the point that this legislation relates to all future referendums. The Government is stifling opposing views. This legislation sets out quite clearly what the Government's position is—nothing more and nothing less.

Question—That clause 5, as amended, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

DIVISION

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clauses 6 to 12, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

Third Reading

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

CHILD CARE BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 4 September (see p. 807).

Mr SLACK (Burnett) (3.51 p.m.): The Opposition acknowledges that, when formulating this legislation, the Government and the Minister consulted widely with child-care groups throughout the community. The Opposition recognises that the Minister gave an undertaking to those groups and to other people who were pressing for changes to child-care regulations and child-care legislation that the legislation would be introduced into this House and debated in September. That did not eventuate. However, the Opposition does not take issue with that. Rather, it commends the Minister for taking the step of appointing a consultative committee comprising representatives of various child-care groups throughout the industry and attempting to get the legislation—to put it in colloquial terms—right.

The Opposition is disappointed that the Minister did not table the regulations in conjunction with this legislation prior to the debate on the legislation today. The Minister has given me a copy of those proposed regulations, and I acknowledge that they are not part of the legislation before the House. The regulations are available for perusal by Opposition members and members of the public so that they may understand what they will mean in relation to the legislation. However, by not circulating the regulations earlier the Government has to some degree restricted community input in relation to them. I acknowledge that the Minister did not have to introduce the regulations into the House. At a later date, they could have been circulated via the *Queensland Government Gazette*. If the Opposition wishes to disagree with any of the regulations after they are brought to light via the *Government Gazette*, it has the option to move disallowance motions in this Parliament. The Opposition acknowledges that the Minister has been consultative. It acknowledges also that, by bringing forward the regulations at this time, the industry has a chance to look at them. But it is a pity that they were not made available to the industry prior to today. The Minister has claimed that she has the support of the child-care industry and, indeed, overall support for this legislation. But the fact is that the legislation has not pleased everybody. The Minister believes that because she has support for the legislation and regulations from the consultative committee, that ensures that she has community support. Individuals from those community organisations, or child-care organisations, were able to give their support. Unfortunately, however, because the people who served on that committee were put in a position of confidentiality in relation to their peak organisations, those peak organisations did not see the regulations that will be brought forward in association with the Bill and were not in a position to publicly give their support or their lack of support for those regulations. They probably will give their support, but it is a pity that they were not involved and that the Minister could not count on that support. The Minister is shaking her head, but that is my understanding of the situation.

From the consultation and correspondence that I have had with various groups within the community, I think that the legislation is basically supported. It is fair to say that some groups within the community may dispute some parts of the legislation or they may feel that the correct provisions are not included in the legislation or in the regulations that will come forward. However, it is recognised that the Government cannot please everybody, and no doubt the Minister will make that point. She has made a fair attempt to bring forward legislation that would be accepted by the community as a whole. In the past, the Minister made disparaging references to child-care and the inadequacy of regulations under the National Party Government. She will appreciate that, although the control of child-care was under the auspices of the Department of Family Services, licensing and the

construction of buildings were the prerogative of the shire and city councils. The Bill will correct that position and bring those areas under the control of the Department of Family Services. I wish to place on record that I have no problem with the issuing of licences by local authorities. Basically, the local authorities provided the service that was applicable at the time. It is often argued within the community that it is not that the regulations were at fault or that the local authority licensing procedure was at fault; rather, that the Department of Family Services fell down in its overall servicing supervision.

Ms Warner: Only under your Government.

Mr SLACK: I am not arguing about what has happened in the past. I am taking an objective approach to the legislation before the House today and the questions that arise about it. Although it is claimed that that happened only under the National Party Government, in that respect the Labor Government has yet to prove itself.

Ms Warner: We are in the process of doing that.

Mr SLACK: The legislation that will be passed today will tighten the provisions regarding overall control and supervision. That will not necessarily ensure that the facilities for child-care will improve. As I said, it comes back to supervision. No doubt, there were some problems with shire councils but, by the same token, those same shire councils have told me that the matter was under their control and that they were to be visited by people from the Department of Family Services, who were to assist them, to supervise staff, etc., but that did not happen. I am not saying that that will not change. A certain amount of money is allocated to the Department of Family Services. As the Minister well knows, that is not a large cake, and that cake must be cut up between the various areas of need. It is a matter of judgment on how to apportion cuts from the cake to all of the issues, such as domestic violence, youth homelessness and disability services. It was not necessarily a case of the regulations being all that bad; it was a matter of supervision at the time.

Claims are made that the legislation will result in the industry being overregulated and that it provides for overpolicing of the industry. If the provisions are applied to the letter of the law, that could happen. The Minister has indicated to the House, and had indicated through the press previously, that it is not a matter of policing; it is a matter of servicing. Consequently, particularly with the amendments that were proposed subsequent to the legislation being introduced, we will see a sympathetic, flexible approach to allow some of the regulations to be implemented over a period. The industry should take some comfort from that, in that the Department of Family Services will not necessarily take a heavy-handed approach and tell child-care centres that they must upgrade their facilities within two years, or whatever the case may be. The Opposition does not believe that the provisions of the legislation should be implemented harshly or unjustly. I understand that that is not the intention of the Minister, because she has been prepared to listen to industry input.

There is no doubt that there is more demand within society for child-care places and more demand for regulation and supervision of child-care centres. A definite need for supervision has evolved. The industry certainly should not be overregulated. As the Minister has often said publicly and has stated in her second-reading speech, there is no doubt about the need for quality, affordable child-care. There is also no doubt that child-care must be accessible. The Opposition asks the question: what additional cost will result to the industry through the implementation of this legislation and these regulations? In the press the Minister has mentioned a figure of $6 to $7 per week per family. I suggest to the Government that an additional $6 or $7 per week is quite a substantial cost for many families. I ask the Minister: is this increased cost calculated on the basis of a new structure to fulfil all the requirements of the regulations, or is it relevant to the upgraded

system that will come into effect over a period of 10 years and the phasing-in of the qualifications of staff over an eight-year period, as the Minister has indicated? On what basis did the Minister arrive at that estimated increase of $6 to $7 per week for families and individuals whose children attend child-care centres? A figure more in the region of $15 has been quoted to me. The ultimate result of this legislation could mean a net increase of $15 per child per week in a child-care centre.

Ms Warner: How did you do your figures?

Mr SLACK: Could I ask the Minister a question? I understand that a group of people supplied the Minister with costings.

Ms Warner: Yes.

Mr SLACK: Is the Minister prepared to table those costings in this House? The Minister asked how I did my figures, and in response to her question, I ask: is she prepared to table the costings and the figures that she has arrived at?

Ms Warner: Where did you get your figures?

Mr SLACK: It is immaterial how I arrived at my figures. I ask the Minister to table her costings because she is the one who is suggesting the $6 increase. I am questioning the validity of this figure because even a $6 increase will result in a considerable cost impost on many people. The Opposition does not doubt for a moment the necessity for increased supervision of child-care centres. We question the timing. There is never a right time for anything, but this comes at a time when many people are out of work and are suffering a reduction from a wage of $500 a week to unemployment benefits of about $120 a week. They are now facing the additional cost of child-care centres.

Ms Warner interjected.

Mr SLACK: That is fine. There is no doubt that the Minister knows there would be an increase in costs.

Ms WARNER: In response to the honourable member's request, I seek leave to table the costs that he asked for.

Leave granted.

Government members interjected.

Mr SLACK: There is no problem with that. I accept the tabling of the figures. I have asked for them and I have absolutely no problem with them. I said that an increase of the order of $15 per week had been suggested to me and, as a member of the Opposition, I have a responsibility to question the Minister's figures. I have done so, and the Minister has been prepared to table them. I take it that the figures are accurate. The Minister has tabled them in good faith and I am pleased that has happened. The Opposition supports this Bill and recognises that the constituents of Government members will bear the cost. We recognise the Government's commitment to introducing this child-care legislation and that this is a Government decision. The decision has been made by the people whose constituents will pay the costs. The Government must strike a balance between quality child-care and affordable child-care with the extra costs involved. The Opposition recognises that the legislation before the House falls into line with the legislation in the majority of the other States of Australia and supports that position. There needs to be practical, uniform legislation concerning child-care regulations throughout the Commonwealth. The Opposition has no problem with that. We support the Premiers Conference in its endeavours——

Ms Warner: Ministers conference, actually.

Mr SLACK: Yes, the Ministers conference. The Opposition welcomes the amendments which provide the capacity to give more exemptions. The legislation

provides that the Act should not be implemented harshly or unjustly, but rather act as a guide. I say that objectively, because many members of this Parliament have within their electorates small country communities which have kindergartens or child-care centres. I can cite the example of one in my electorate which is typical of many centres throughout this State. This centre has grave concerns about the upgrading and the requirement for extra qualifications on the part of staff. For the benefit of honourable members, I will quote from a letter that I received recently from this centre. A covering letter went to the Minister outlining this centre's concern. The letter is from the Wallaville Kindergarten Association, and it states in part—

"Our greatest concern is the employment of qualified staff. It states in the Paper"—

that is the discussion paper—

> "that exemptions would be granted to centres where suitable qualified staff could not be attracted to vacant positions. Whether or not that would be the case in this area I could not say. However the committee and I know that it would be impossible to pay the wage of a part-time qualified teacher plus an assistant. We budget all year round to enable the centre to continue to pay my wage, insurances, upgrade equipment and maintain our assets, etc.
>
> . . .
>
> Our committee really would like to know how the Department of Family Services . . . expect the small town of Wallaville that consists of one hotel, one shop and a population of approximately 250 adults and children will be able to cover the increased costs of the changes as outlined in the Paper."

I bring that letter to the attention of the Minister and this House not by way of criticism but simply to introduce material which outlines the position of centres throughout the State such as this one. In such cases the Minister and the departmental officers involved in child-care will need to be sympathetic about the clauses that permit exemptions concerning qualified staff. The Minister may find that, in small centres, qualified staff will not be available even within the next eight years. It may be the case that the only qualified staff available to fill the positions are married women who are former teachers or former nurses. The Bill does not clearly set out the position of nurses who may act in a supervisory manner in small centres.

Ms Warner: It is here.

Mr SLACK: I know it is mentioned in the regulations, but it is not clearly explained. The position of nurses when no other qualified staff is available in the areas to which I have referred is not clear. The Minister has referred to the support she has received from child-care organisations, but I am aware of concerns felt by the Creche and Kindergarten Association in relation to this legislation. I am sure that the Minister and the Government are aware that this Bill will place creches and kindergartens under the control of two Ministers, namely, the Minister for Education and the Minister for Family Services. Kindergartens are part of the education system, but they come under the control of the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs in relation to licensing.

Ms Warner: There is no change.

Mr SLACK: There may not be, but I am passing on the concerns that have been expressed to me. I do not mean to indicate that the association is happy with the situation that exists presently, but in relation to this legislation, members of the association feel the need to express their desire to be under the control of the Department of Education, independent of the Department of Family Services. These establishments have always been recognised as being part of the Department of Education. The association asks why

it is necessary for the Department of Family Services to issue the licences, which seems to be an unnecessary overlapping of the functions of those two departments. This position is creating some confusion for that association.

I would also be interested to know which department will bear responsibility for community kindergartens. There are several kindergartens in my electorate and, just as an aside, I bring to the attention of the House a problem that has evolved in relation to fee relief for kindergartens and child-care centres. Community creches and kindergartens have to charge a fee to provide services for the children who attend, and the fee has been much higher than that charged by child-care centres, particularly when the rebates paid by the Commonwealth Government are taken into account. People have taken children away from creches and kindergartens and have placed their children in child-care centres at a greatly reduced cost. Creches and kindergartens charge $1.20 per hour per child whereas with fee relief child-care can centres charge as little as 30c per hour, and this has caused the problems. I understand that in January next year changes will be made in an attempt to overcome some of those problems associated with people who wish to opt out of the system, take time out, and just put children into child-care centres.

The Opposition questions the encouragement of parents to go to work, particularly when unemployment is so high—in excess of 10 per cent. In effect, it could be said that that priority favours the parent and not the children because it appears that the highest priority of people is for parents to go to work. Within our society, many problems are developing which are caused by young people who obviously lack parental control and discipline. The problems come to notice when they are dealt with by the courts or when attention is drawn to homeless youths. As much as possible, parents should be encouraged to keep children at home. There is no doubt that if even half the money that is being provided to child-care centres was given to parents to keep children at home—in particular, to encourage mothers to keep children at home, without wishing to be sexist—it would be much better for families, generally. There is no doubt that during a child's formative years, he or she should be at home and not, as happens in some cases, dumped in child-care centres.

Ms Warner: Are you a child-care expert? Quote where you got that from.

Mr SLACK: Child-care can be a problem if a mother or a father who uses on-site child-care ceases to be employed. The question could be asked, "What happens to the child who is looked after by on-site child-care when the parent's employment ceases?" The Opposition does not question for a moment the encouragement of firms to provide those facilities, but these are some of the social problems that have developed with the provision of child-care facilities and the growth of child-care over the last 20 years. During that time, there have been tremendous advances in the provision of child-care. If the Minister wants to question the National Party's record on the provision of child-care, it must be remembered that 20 years ago Queensland was the second State in the Commonwealth to actually introduce child-care regulations. It is fallacious and erroneous to accuse the National Party of not being aware of, or responsive to, the issue of child-care. At that time, Queensland was the only State to introduce funding for three-year-old children within the creche and kindergarten system. It is therefore erroneous to suggest that the National Party is not sympathetic or understanding in relation to child-care.

In conclusion, let me state that there is no doubt a need exists for the provision and improvement of child-care facilities. However, in their hearts Government members must know that at a time when people are unemployed, the question of timing arises in relation to the provision of child-care. By virtue of the lead-time for the presentation of this legislation, there is no doubt that the Government is aware of the industry's inability to cope with additional major costs. The Opposition also recognises that fact, and that additional costs must be kept to an absolute minimum. Each honourable member would

know that in his or her electorate, the bottom line is that families are struggling to pay fees. They certainly cannot afford any increases, nor can the taxpayer afford any increases in taxes or charges that will be used to supplement child-care fees. The Opposition recognises the role played by the Commonwealth Government in the proposal to make child-care fees tax deductible. The Opposition welcomes that move and has always thought that that should be the case. The Opposition recognises the input of all the organisations into this legislation. It recognises the Minister's preparedness to consult with those organisations and it supports the legislation and the intent of the legislation. The Opposition will not be voting against it. The Opposition has copies of the amendments proposed to be moved at the Committee stage. I have the proposed child-care regulations before me. Obviously, this is not the place to debate those regulations. However, unless they are debated now, or there is some reference made to them, the opportunity to discuss them will not really arise unless there is a motion to disallow them.

I note that on page 2 of the regulations reference is made to school-age children and a staff/child ratio of 1 to 12 and the maximum group size. I am just wondering what the methodology in arriving at that figure was, because I do not believe it applies to schools where there is more like a 1 to 30 staff ratio. The Minister is requiring a staff/child ratio of 1 to 12 with a maximum group size of 24, with mixed age groups having a maximum number of 21 children with a staff/child ratio of 1 to 7. In small schools there would not be a staff ratio of 3 to 21. These figures demonstrate an inconsistency with the educational requirements.

Ms Warner: These are younger children.

Mr SLACK: The Minister is saying "school-age children" with a ratio of 1 to 12 with a maximum group size of 24.

Ms Warner: It is also child-care.

Mr SLACK: Yes, but it is not consistent with the educational circumstances. Licensees of existing centres will be given two years to comply with the new staff/child ratios and maximum group sizes. Existing staff/child ratios cannot be exceeded during that time. I understand that there are provisions to allow exemptions from that regulation. I appreciate that in these regulations there are staff qualifications and programs, but as in the case of Wallaville, which I have mentioned, there may be in rural areas the situation in which there is an eight or ten-year lead up and the provisions may not be able to be complied with. I see that the Minister has acknowledged that in these regulations where it states—

> "Discretion will be used in rural areas or other situations in which licensees cannot attract suitable qualified staff. Such staff without appropriate qualifications will be assessed and issued with certificates of endorsement."

The Opposition supports that wholeheartedly. The regulations also mention the proposed time limit of eight years to obtain qualifications. Page 4 of the regulations states—

> "Centres currently licensed will be given up to ten years to comply with floor space and other structural alterations. If this is physically impossible exemptions will be granted."

That raises the question of who makes the assessment as to whether an exemption will be granted. Other transitional arrangements are stated as follows—

> "Centres currently licensed will be given up to two years to conform to fence and shade requirements. Other major requirements will have to be met within 10 years, unless it is physically impossible, in which case exemptions will be granted."

The Opposition supports that. It also supports the regulation which states that criminal history checks will be made on coordinators, care-providers and other adults in the care-

provider's household. My only other question relates to the tribunal. Has the Minister made a decision as to who will be the chairperson of that tribunal when the legislation comes into effect next April? The Opposition hopes that the Minister will appoint to the tribunal practical people who understand the limitations and the need for flexibility in these child-care regulations and the legislation that is before the House.

Mr HOLLIS (Redcliffe) (4.21 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I rise to speak in this debate. This legislation will bring into Queensland a new era of child-care. This Bill is the result of many hours of consultation with all groups connected with child-care in this State. The result of that cooperation is evidenced by the number of people in the gallery today who have consulted with the Minister. I mention the names of those people because they should be congratulated on the consultation, assistance and input that they have given to the Minister. These people are: Bev Ollson from the Advocates for Quality Care; Sue Yarrow from the Miscellaneous Workers Union; Shirley Baker, Chris Buck, Leneave Groves and Marj Day from the Queensland Professional Child Care Association; and Di Henrix, Jenny Sheward and Anne Milner from the Queensland Independent Child Care Association. It has been great to see the community input because sometimes people most affected by legislation have no input into it. I am sure that these people will be as happy as the Minister is for this joint effort to bring this legislation to fruition.

When I was a child, there were no child-care centres or creches. In those days, mum stayed home if there was sufficient income to maintain the family, or single parents—as it was in my case—cast around frantically for someone to care for their kids while they worked. Invariably, the care offered by these casual carers was exactly that—casual. Indeed, that type of care is still common in Australia. That is what this Bill is all about—total care for Queensland children using child-care facilities. This legislation does not reflect the minority views—I repeat "minority"—and financial desires of some private day-care operators. This legislation does not pander to the penny-pinching practices which deny children space in which to play and allow unqualified staff to supervise them. The Bill has been drafted with one thought in mind—total quality care and equality in that care so that all children requiring child-care in this State can expect the very best of facilities. Parents in Queensland today are fortunate in having a number of quality child-care options for their children. Parents can choose to have their children cared for in child-care centres or through family day care schemes. Many, many Queensland parents choose to use family day care for their child-care arrangements believing, quite rightly, that it offers quality of care with flexibility, close supervision and lots of love and attention.

Family day care is home-based care catering for small groups of children in a family setting. The maximum number of children cared for in a family day care home is seven with no more than four of them under school age. Because of the small numbers of children in family day care, strong bonds grow between the parents and the day-care family. This provides parents with extra security and confidence about their children's care and also allows for specialised care to match the particular needs of the family and child. Family day care in Queensland began in 1975 with a small number of schemes. The success of family day care as a child-care option is attested to by the fact that, now, 64 family day care schemes operate in Queensland. These schemes cover the whole range of communities from inner-city Brisbane to Charleville and Weipa. Approximately 14 000 children are cared for through family day care schemes in Queensland, utilising 7 649 family day care places. These family day care schemes are sponsored by agencies in the community such as church groups, local authorities, educational institutions and community committees. This community-based focus allows the development of services which reflect the needs of local communities, are responsive to changes in the local community and foster the active participation of parents. One of the biggest benefits of

family day care as a care option is its flexibility and grassroots approach which allows it to cater more readily to the needs of the community. For example, in my electorate of Redcliffe, we are experiencing an increase in the number of young families with children. However, only four of the child-care centres in the Redcliffe area cater for children under two years of age. Therefore, there is a large, unmet demand for child-care in this age group. Much of this care is taken up and provided by the family day care scheme based at Scarborough which, I am very pleased to say, offers an excellent service and high support for its providers and staff.

Family day care can also adapt quite readily to the needs of individual parents and children. Given its flexible approach, shift workers, itinerant workers and parents in isolated areas often find family day care very suitable. Children and families with special needs also benefit greatly from family day care. For example, many family day care providers come from different ethnic backgrounds. These providers offer culturally appropriate support to children from ethnic origins as well as educate children about difficult cultures, languages and ideas. Children with disabilities are advantaged by family day care. Many providers offer respite care, which is essential to reduce the incidence of family break-down and the admission of these children into institutions. Children with behavioural or other developmental difficulties, or even children who are a bit shy and find it hard to settle in big groups, achieve well in family day care schemes.

This Government has recognised the invaluable role of family day care in the formulation of the new Child Care Bill and accompanying regulations. This Bill will positively promote the benefits of family day care and set up licensing, penalties and appeals processes to ensure that high standards are maintained. The Bill, when enacted, will allow officers of the department to close down the illegal, backyard care operators who are putting children at risk. These illegal operations have often put the name of family day care into ill-repute and, I am happy to say, after the enactment of this Bill, the Government will have the power to deal with them effectively. This Bill, recognising the positive aspects of family day care, will expand the potential provision of this type of care. The restrictive licensing arrangements will be loosened from the current situation where Commonwealth-funded schemes were licensed. Workplace schemes or small community schemes can be set up and licensed for the provision of home-based family day care. This new benefit will again broaden the options for care and encourage workplaces to implement child-care arrangements.

The new family day care regulations also recognise the professionalisation of family day care which has occurred in recent times. Family day care schemes employ professionally skilled coordinators who recruit, assess and support suitable care-providing families. Coordinators undertake the matching process of children and parents with family day care families. They visit care-providers regularly to support them and ensure that the care is of high quality. They also organise play groups, in-service training and support networks for care-providers. Family day care providers come from a diverse range of backgrounds and bring many different skills with them. Their skills and commitment will be acknowledged and supported by this regulation. Under the new regulations, coordinators will be required to have professional qualifications with provisions for those places where the pool of qualified applicants may be limited or even non-existent. For the first time, it will be compulsory for family day care schemes to provide suitable in-service training for care-providers. This will greatly enhance the quality of care provided to children and will improve the working conditions of those women who are care-providers. The rights of family day care providers have been strengthened with an appropriate appeals process built into the Bill. Thus, care-providers who feel they have been unfairly dismissed will have proper avenues of appeal.

Another aspect of the Bill and regulations which will aid Queensland parents is the encouragement of parent involvement in family day care schemes. All schemes will now be required to produce written material about their policies and programming. Parents will be encouraged to participate in management and advisory committees which formulate these practices. This involvement should further alleviate the anxiety that parents feel about leaving their children in other people's care. This Government has already given substantial support to family day care in Queensland, which will be augmented by this Bill and regulations. I particularly mention the $97,000 which was granted to the Family Day Care Association for care-provider training by the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs. This funding included money for the development of training videos on communication with parents and health and safety infant care. A greater degree of participation in the Commonwealth-State strategy for the allocation of new family day care places has been given to family day care. This recognises the important role of people working in this area of the industry. A greatly increased level of resource staff in the regions will substantially improve the service delivery and provide support for care-providers and coordinators.

As already mentioned, family day care is a particularly suitable type of care for children with special needs, such as children from non-English speaking backgrounds, Aboriginal and Islander children and children with disabilities. The Government is aware of the difficulties that are currently faced by children with special needs and their parents in seeking suitable, accessible child-care. In recognition of their dilemma, the department has employed access and equity workers. These officers work in close partnership with the access and equity worker employed by the Family Day Care Association.

I would like to publicly acknowledge the fine work undertaken by the Family Day Care Association of Queensland. This association has been operating for about 10 years. In that time it has proven to be a very effective lobby group for the child-care industry. The Queensland Family Day Care Association was chosen by the Commonwealth to write the nationwide guidelines for sponsors of family day care. It has also provided invaluable assistance in the establishment of new schemes and in providing support and training for existing schemes. The association plays an extremely useful role in providing training for the management committees of family day care schemes. This ensures that all people involved in the provision of child-care understand the issues and processes involved in providing quality child-care. The Family Day Care Regulations were formulated during and after extensive and ongoing consultation with the community, and with the Family Day Care Association especially. The association entered fully and positively into these discussions. It supports the new regulations and, I believe, made many suggestions which were taken up by the Minister and included in the regulations. I congratulate the association on its fine work and cooperation. In conclusion, I congratulate all officers of the department and the general community on their very fine work evidenced in this Child Care Bill. I support the Bill.

Mrs SHELDON (Landsborough—Leader of the Liberal Party) (4.33 p.m.): I begin my contribution to this debate by expressing my disappointment at the way the Minister has precipitated in the House this debate on the Child Care Bill. Although the Bill has been available for a few weeks, its amendments and the regulations, which are the essential machinery to the legislation and actually make the legislation work, were provided to me only this morning, and that by the National Party spokesperson. One of the Minister's staff phoned one of my staff late yesterday afternoon and advised her that the Bill would be debated this morning. The Minister had previously told me and the National Party spokesperson that we would be briefed, and that the regulations would be given to us with adequate time for perusal and discussion. That has not happened. Considering the wide-ranging consultation in which the Minister is so proud to have engaged in the formulation

of the regulations, why were the regulations themselves not available? This is another example of legislation on the run—lack of cohesive management by the Minister and her department. The Bill and the regulations need to be studied in tandem, not separately. We are, after all, looking after, and speaking of, quality child-care in Queensland.

This is not the first time the Minister has acted in this underhand manner. Members on this side of the House were elected to represent their constituents, just as were members on the Government side. However, we are being unjustly subjected to the results of the incompetence of this Government's Ministers. Democracy is not a word; it is the result of reasonable actions—something this Government is unable to achieve. I have stated my objection to the manner in which the Minister has treated my position in this debate, and am forced by it to maintain some cynicism about the direction of this legislation. Nevertheless, I do welcome the more important initiatives of this Bill and the proposals for change as originally provided to me. I support measures designed to achieve a better quality of child-care for Queensland children. The Liberal Party will therefore be supporting this Bill in substance.

Generally speaking, the Bill is, and the regulations I have finally received are, a step in the right direction. In particular, I am pleased with the improved qualification requirement of a three-year early-childhood qualification for directors, and a two-year qualification for group-leaders. Reduction of group sizes and the increases in teacher/child ratios can obviously result in better communication with and attention for the children. The concentration of licence-issuing responsibilities in the hands of departmental officers should ensure uniformity of standards across the State. The quality and design of structural and other surroundings is of extreme importance to any good environment. The doubling of outdoor shade requirements and the improvements in minimum indoor and outdoor space requirements, the pool safety fence requirements around centres, better hygiene requirements, including more toilets, minimum equipment levels, provision of separate sleeping places for 0 to 18-month-old babies, and the banning of smoking in child-care centres are desirable. However, we must ensure that extremism is not entered into when considering the regulations and enforcing the new requirements.

In relation to the banning of smoking in child-care centres, I would suggest that this also be extended to family day care centres, particularly as older children would obviously be affected psychologically in this regard by role models. I do wonder, however, who would supervise and carry out the "adequate" sterilisation of linen, face washers, hair brushes, toothbrushes and cups. I agree with the need for regular checks by the department's officers to ensure that these precautions and requirements are adhered to. However, I ask the Minister to state what specific qualifications and experience will be required by these inspectors. Likewise, the screening of staff should be also extended to regular visitors to family day care providers and volunteers for limited hours care. The establishment of a review tribunal and the screening of possible criminal histories of licensees and prospective staff members should ultimately be in the best interests of the children. However, in the search for better standards for the children, the rights of the adults caring for the children, who must earn a living, should not be violated, and all reasonable access to rights of appeal should be allowed.

I have a number of comments to make in relation to the Bill and regulations, and I will further detail them. I ask: would it not be reasonable to suggest that registered nurses be able to be group-leaders in this 0 to 2-year-old age group without the need for further upgrading of their qualifications? While it is pleasing to see a minimum age of 18 years or attainment of Year 12 required for assistants dealing with this age, it has been suggested to me that 16-year-olds could be given the opportunity to train as assistants for older age groups such as 3 to 5-year-olds. Age does not necessarily confer advantages in caring

for older groups. These 16-year-olds could undertake TAFE or similar courses whilst working part-time and getting appropriate hands-on experience. The minimum staff quota is desirable. However, I do query the upgrading period of eight years, which seems rather excessive. Funding should be made available to universities and TAFE colleges to provide more opportunities for correspondence courses. Preference for a place in these courses should be given to existing workers, so that they might retain their positions and not be disadvantaged by this legislation.

I note the requirement that carers be qualified. Appropriate qualifications are obviously meritorious in any field. However, it may be that if the carer is competent and caring and does his or her work to the satisfaction of the employers, perhaps that carer should be allowed to continue to further his or her qualifications by undertaking extended courses. At this point, however, in most businesses funds are very limited, and many centres may not be able to afford to keep up the standards of carers or immediately encourage further education in the care system outside school hours. Guidelines should be introduced to allow funding for further education for carers so they may be kept in contact with innovations in child-care. I emphasise the need for priority to be given to existing staff for training and/or retraining. It would be unfortunate to lose the experience of many child-care workers simply because they could not be placed in an education system that suited their needs. I am unsure as to the grounds on which exemptions would be granted to licensees when suitably qualified staff could not be attracted to vacant positions. I feel that that point needs to be clarified.

The provision for extra space needs for the 0 to 2-year-olds and, in particular, 0 to 1-year-olds, does seem excessive. Although I agree that it is beneficial for older groups, I wonder what advantages it holds for an extra 0.25 square metres or 7 square metres for indoor and outdoor areas respectively for this age group. One would think that smaller space requirements for babies would affect the higher staffing costs and encourage the provision of more places for that age group. Problems could arise in that regard due to dangerous equipment being made available. A small enclosed segregated playground without swings would be needed to comply with the requirement for space increases for the very young. As to family day care—the desirable mix of skills in the coordinating scheme should include at least one teacher trained in early childhood education. I see that that provision is made in the new regulations for new family day care coordinators. They are trained to know the basics in early childhood development and are far more capable than nurses and untrained coordinators in recognising deviations from this, such as cases of child abuse or neglect.

The penalty provision of 100 units for operating without a licence or holding himself or herself out as providing child-care of a prescribed type is a step in the right direction. However, children are surely equally at risk if the applicant for a licence fails to disclose previous convictions or disqualifications. The penalty for this is only 50 units, whereas children might actually be at a greater risk in such a case. There needs to be some liaison system to ensure adequate checks on previous disqualifications as well as convictions. Failure to disclose such ineligibility should mean immediate revoking of the licence plus the maximum 100 units penalty to provide a sufficient deterrent in that regard. The 50 units penalty is possibly more suited where an employee fails to disclose his or her ineligibility. I am concerned at what point a licence is to be suspended or revoked following repeated offences. That should be clearly defined, or the situation may occur that the penalty system might function as a revenue-raiser rather than as a child protection measure—which should be the ultimate goal of this provision. I note that clause 33 (1) states that non-compliance with remediation orders may lead to variation, suspension or revocation of a licence. Although that is meritorious, I think that persistent offenders should surely face the same action as that taken against a person operating without a

licence. If true quality child-care is to be provided to children, there should be a base level of quality care provision standards below which a child-care centre should not operate at all.

As to licensee obligations—I note the need to notify the chief executive officer of changes to circumstances regarding disqualification or failure to provide adequate child-care. This section seems to imply that non-compliance is acceptable if such compliance tends to incriminate the person. Surely the primary requirement here is to protect the child, and that should be the overriding consideration necessitating compulsory compliance. I feel that the penalty of 40 units for a breach of the clause relating to persons engaged by the licensee seems excessive towards the licensee. It may be difficult in the first instance for the licensee to discover that his prospective employee is not a fit and proper person. It is only through a checking system already set and working that that could be achieved. The Commissioner of Police is empowered to disclose the criminal history of a person on request by the Department of Family Services, but I question whether civil liberty considerations would prevent the release of that information to licensees. I think that the licensee should notify the department of his or her intention to employ a person and, at the same time, supply appropriate particulars. That penalty should then attach itself to the failure of the licensee to notify the department of his or her intentions to employ a particular person and receive an appropriate clearance. The onus of providing the clearance should rest with the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs. Perhaps there could also be a penalty on the prospective employee for any failure to divulge relevant information.

Provision is made for the disqualification of, or charges against, certain persons who breach the legislation and who ordinarily reside in family day care provider households. However, there is a failure to mention regular visitors. Those visitors may be a possible source of child abuse and, unless screened and cleared, should not visit during hours when the child-care service is being provided. I note that, where the licensee uses disqualified or non-complying premises, there is a penalty of 50 units. Surely loss or suspension of a licence may be more effective and suitable in this case and therefore discourage further offences during the period until regulations are satisfied. The maintenance of insurance by licensees is vital, and licences should not be granted or renewed unless proof of adequate insurance cover is provided. A mere penalty threat might leave a child unprotected in the event of serious injury. Statistics have shown that a large number of children are injured in care situations. The fact that a certificate of endorsement can be given to a person to act as a director or group-leader, if the person is considered to be a fit and proper person, is inadequate as it stands. This section leaves the whole issue of appointing unqualified people wide open and smacks of tokenism. Surely this section could be qualified by including the idea that such endorsement is only provisional and is subject to that person at least undertaking an upgrading course—if necessary, by correspondence—in early childhood education, and that the endorsement be subject to a system of regular reviews to ensure that the upgrading provisions are continuing to be undertaken.

It is important that the review tribunal remain independent of the Department of Family Services for it to function as an effective, just appeals mechanism. However, despite the wide powers of the tribunal, it is wrong to say that a person before the tribunal may not have the opportunity to obtain legal advice during the hearing. If the tribunal is not bound by the rules of evidence, does this also mean that hearsay evidence might also be allowed? Under proposed section 55 (2), people do not have to reply or submit documents if that might incriminate them. However, if they have not had the benefit of legal advice, how do they know that that reply or submission of documents might do that? Many people may be in a situation in which they might incur heavy fines or, worse still, lose their basis

of a livelihood. Therefore, they should have the option of legal representation or, in the case of junior staff members, perhaps have the aid of the director from their centre. To take the matter further to another court would incur greater expense than that incurred at a tribunal hearing. Would the official records kept from the tribunal be available for any other hearing by another court during an appeal? I am concerned that clause 83 (1) is the only section of the Bill to deal with a time period on exemptions, which is stipulated as being no more than two years. I think that in the proposed new regulations the period for exemption is still two years. Perhaps the Minister could inform me whether that is correct.

Ms Warner: There is going to be an amendment.

Mrs SHELDON: The transitional and savings clause would appear to propose some retrospectivity. Perhaps a legal definition of this phrase would stipulate the meaning of the full clause. I am in agreement with the Register of Child Care Services to be held in the Minister's department and made accessible to parents and the public. However, I do emphasise the need for confidentiality and trust that the Minister will adhere to her promise in this regard, to the satisfaction of all parties.

This Bill gives the impression that it tends to cater more for the preschool and infant category. Any legislation in relation to child-care should not be restricted to the care of children under the age of five years. All children up to the age of 16 years should be entitled to quality child-care, and this Bill appears not to take into consideration children over the age of five years. Another concern of many regional child-care centres is the lack of communication and difficulty in maintaining contact with the department administering the legislation. I trust that coordinators will be available to discuss the new regulations with child-care workers and centres and to assist with their implementation.

I note the concerns of the Creche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland in that, at the moment, it is funded by the Department of Education and therefore regulated by its standards. The association holds the strong view that the principal and primary purpose of community kindergartens or preschools is education and as such should remain under the auspices of that department. I am not sure where this legislation will leave the association. I trust that its views and submissions will be given due consideration in this regard. Quality child-care does not automatically follow from higher child-care costs or more stringent regulations. On the other hand, logic and experience state that good things are not cheap and, indeed, cheap things usually are not good. I encourage the Minister to ensure that a moderate position is held and that, while the costs of child-care need to be made affordable and commercial child-care operations viable, the needs of children and families are not subjugated insensitively to profit motive. Parents must be involved in this legislation process and kept informed of any progress with changes that directly affect their children. The first five years of a child's life are extremely important, and all children deserve reasonable standards of care. In the end, parents are the ones responsible for this, and they should be involved as intricately as possible.

I noted with interest during the Family Services Estimates debate that the Minister has kindly provided for seven new child-care centres to be commenced under the 1991-92 Budget. However, it comes as no surprise that each of these centres is to be placed within current Labor electorates. I had maintained a wishful, if somewhat suspicious, hope that perhaps this Government would at least provide a smattering of the equity and justice policy it so broadly espouses. However, I am sure that the community is not so easily deceived as the Government and its Ministers hope and that it will see through this questionable practice.

The Commonwealth Government should be providing incentives and assistance to place children in good child-care centres by providing tax relief and allowances. Private

child-care centres are not afforded the luxury of subsidised staff wages and other Government funds. Finally, I hope that the Bill will result in the Minister's stated wish, that is, to provide an effective system of licensing of child-care services and to provide a statutory basis for the establishment of child-care regulations. The common goal of both child-care centres and the department should be the care and well-being of the children concerned.

Mrs WOODGATE (Pine Rivers) (4.50 p.m.): I am pleased to speak in support of this Bill. I think it is a Bill that has been well overdue in this State for many, many years. Parents of any child in Queensland can be asked what they want in child-care and they will indicate that they demand high quality in the provision of care. What they want is quite simple. They want their children to be secure and in a warm and loving environment. It is as simple as that. They are also asking that the developmental needs of their children be met and that the child-care services offer stimulating and educational programs. Parents' concerns for the quality of their children's care are strongly reflected in this Government's Child Care Bill and proposed regulations. Parents, especially mothers, still suffer the heart-wrenching dilemma of placing their children in child-care while they work, whether it be by choice or necessity. I believe that we, as a responsible and caring Government, should be taking all steps possible to alleviate that anxiety and guilt about their children's welfare. Queensland parents deserve to feel confident about their child-care arrangements. They deserve to know that their children are happy, safe and well nurtured. In fact, most children do have fond memories of their times in child-care, and they benefit from their experience there.

Much of the research that is available indicates that, if the appropriate quality of child-care is provided, children in child-care have greater opportunity to develop their full potential. Like my colleague the honourable member for Redcliffe, who is not in the Chamber at the moment, I never had access to child-care; it was too many years ago. Perhaps if we had had access to it, we may have done something with our lives and not ended up being politicians. One never knows. Children learn valuable life skills from child-care such as giving, sharing, talking, listening and other social interactive skills. It is a pity my kids did not go to child-care, because they never learnt to listen, they just did the talking. Quality child-care is also about providing an environment in which to stimulate thought and to develop appropriate behaviour and positive interactive skills. I am very happy to see that the child-care industry in Queensland is way beyond merely providing a passive, baby-sitting service.

Most child-care centres offer professionally developed programs and activities aimed at creating a safe yet challenging and interesting locale in which children are able to learn and grow. Most child-care centres select staff who are responsive to children and have knowledge about children's development. Every child learns and develops at his or her own pace and children of different ages have different needs and demands. During the recent debates that have occurred about the child-care industry, there has been little conflict over what constitutes quality child-care. All groups accept that quality care involves providing stimulating programs and interesting activities for children by qualified staff with warm personal qualities. These programs need to be tailored to the individual needs of every child and monitored constantly. Children need sufficient space to be able to move freely without feeling closed in or constantly crowded. The biggest issue involved with providing this quality care, of course, is the cost. The Government is mindful of the current economic recession and the ever-increasing demands made on parents' finances. Child-care should not be such a burden on families that it precludes them from providing other essentials for their children.

In formulating this Bill and the proposed regulations, the Minister was mindful of establishing the right balance between the quality of care necessary for growing, healthy

and well-adjusted children and affordability factors for parents. To ensure that this balance was met, the Minister and officers of her department entered into extensive and extremely productive consultations and negotiations with the general community and peak child-care groups. The right balance has been struck and put together in this Child Care Bill and the proposed regulations.

I, too, would like to congratulate the members of the child-care industry who gave up many hours of their time to help formulate the Bill and the proposed regulations. In particular, I acknowledge the efforts of the Queensland Professional Child Care Centres Association and the Queensland Independent Child Care Centres Association. Those groups both represent commercial child-care centre operators who, understandably, were very nervous about the impact of any changes in the child-care industry. Those groups were particularly anxious about the effects of any cost increases in child-care. I would like to single out especially Shirley Baker from the Queensland Professional Child Care Centres Association and Di Hendrix from the Queensland Independent Child Care Centres Association, who were both thoroughly involved in the formulation of this legislation. In the early part of the negotiations, Shirley Baker, in company with Chris Buck, visited my office. We had healthy discussions about this issue, the outcome of which, in turn, I passed on to the Minister. I thank them for their interest. Their representations on behalf of their members and their creative and constructive inputs have surely minimised any potential cost impacts that may have resulted from this new legislation. As a consequence of those discussions, practical and fair transitional arrangements for existing centres have been negotiated. Existing centres will not be asked to conform overnight to the new requirements, but changes will be phased in at different times to limit the cost effects. I believe that it is important to place on the public record that there will be plenty of time for centres to plan and budget for any changes that they may have to make. If it is not possible for them to meet these requirements, they will be given exemptions. This Government is about encouraging the child-care industry. It is not interested in sending businesses to the wall. In fact, it applauds the work of private child-care operators who, in the main, provide a good quality of care for our children. That quality of care will, in fact, be enhanced by the proposed regulations.

Under the new regulations, all senior staff working in child-care centres will be required to have qualifications in child-care. This will not happen overnight. No-one employed in the industry need be concerned about his or her future as a result of this Bill and the proposed regulations. Existing staff will be allowed to remain in their jobs, and they will be allowed up to eight years in which to acquire the necessary qualifications. Sensitivity and common sense will be used throughout this process, and that will allay any concerns by people who have worked for many years in the industry and have acquired invaluable skills and experience.

It is also proposed to decrease group sizes and staff/child ratios in younger age groups to ensure that children have more individualised attention and greater opportunity for self-expression and development. Babies in particular will benefit from the reduced staff ratios and receive more personalised care during their crucial developmental and vulnerable period. Children in the 2 to 3 years age group, who are developing rapidly, will also be cared for in smaller groups. To offset the reductions in the size of these groups and extra staffing costs, only minimal changes are proposed to the size of groups for older children. Existing centres will not be required to put those changes into place for another two years. This will give licensees time to adjust to the changes and to fulfil their commitments to parents using the centre. One of the major benefits of the proposed new staffing requirements and group arrangements is the extra flexibility that they will give to centres. This means that centres will be more readily able to set up groups based on the needs of parents and the local community.

The proposed regulations will also improve the physical standards for child-care centres. Greater space for children to play both indoors and outdoors, as well as better protection from the sun, safer standards of fencing and improved toilet facilities, will be provided. Whereas these improvements will be mandatory for all new child-care centres, existing centres will be required to upgrade only if it is physically possible to do so. Even then they will be given 10 years in which to complete major structural alterations. Most child-care centres should be able to meet these new requirements without major upheavals. Many centres already meet some of the proposed regulations because they are interested in providing quality child-care and, indeed, because parents have demanded these standards. In my electorate, a number of high-quality child-care services are operated by private licensees, community organisations and the Pine Rivers Shire Council. Those services, which have tried to keep pace with the needs of a rapidly expanding population, will greatly benefit from the new legislation.

The Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs will provide the necessary training, guidelines and assistance to operators of child-care centres and developers of new child-care centres so that there is minimal disruption within the industry. Centres will need to comply with the new requirements before they are licensed. However, as the new licensing body, the department will be using common sense in making its judgment on centres. New centres will need to comply fully with the new regulations. Existing centres and centres that were approved for development prior to the introduction of the new legislation will be subject to transitional arrangements. Exemption may be applied for and granted by the department, if appropriate. Generally, exemptions will be granted subject to approval of a transition plan forwarded by the licensee. Transition plans will be monitored when licences are renewed every two years. Renewal will be subject to satisfactory progress with the transition plan. Staff who are currently without qualifications will also be granted individual transition plans commensurate with their situation and current status. Many staff in the child-care industry have already completed their training or are part way through obtaining some qualifications. Therefore, they may not require the full eight-year upgrading time.

The Department of Employment, Vocational Education, Training and Industrial Relations has advised that recognition of prior learning will be introduced over the next few years, which will be greatly beneficial to experienced workers in the industry. Major structural changes could be phased in over 10 years, and minor changes such as fencing, gates and shade, over two years. Where centres substantially comply and where changes are impossible, permanent exemptions may be granted. Centres currently licensed for more than the maximum number of children will be exempted from that requirement providing that they comply with other regulations. The result of transitional arrangements will be a gradual phasing-in of smaller group sizes within two years, minor structural requirements within two years, staffing qualifications within eight years and all possible structural changes within 10 years. I am sure that members would agree that these requirements will not be onerous on existing centres and, indeed, they are generous. The productive discussions that have occurred between the department and the industry will ensure that those requirements are met with a minimum of upheaval and a maximum of cooperation. Again, I congratulate the Minister and all those within the industry who helped put together the legislation, which surely heralds an even more exciting and dynamic child-care industry for Queensland. I am more than happy to support the Bill.

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South) (5.01 p.m.): Nothing can be more important than discussing the early care of our children. Members of the National Party Opposition support the Bill and we hope that we can make some constructive comments in providing that support. At the outset, it is important that we define the need for secure, happy and quality care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and children up to the age of 12. It is

important also that the parents of those children have peace of mind, that they know that the venue at which they have left their children is secure and that the staff are well qualified and, to some extent, have been vetted so that no unfortunate incidents can occur.

The need for child-care seems to be increasing at a dramatic rate. There is no doubt that it is due to the changing social structure of our life. More males and females look upon their job as a career. One has only to look at the teaching industry to see how difficult it is for a teacher to get back into a career if she has taken time off to have a child. That is one reason why all of the graduates cannot get a job. The position is so tight. There is a recession. People do not want to leave their jobs, and those who want to return to the work force cannot do so. Coupled with the recession, people are paying off home loans, the lino and the car, and we have moved into a two-income society. With that has come the need for child-care. With unemployment and schemes such as Newstart, an increasing number of people are undergoing training operations. Unfortunately, at the end of that training, no jobs are available. However, those people who undertake training must find somewhere to leave their children in quality care. We also have the problem of the loss of the extended family. Families no longer tend to live in the one area. Very often, the grandparents live in different towns. Their adult children have moved on to pursue their careers. Whereas once we saw a social structure of grandparents, children and aunts and uncles, that social fabric is no longer there. Another increasing problem is deserted wives and deserted husbands. Those people are in desperate need of some care for their young children. In a city such as Toowoomba, which has large educational centres such as the university, an increasing number of students require care for their children. In addition, increasing numbers of single mothers, once they find employment, need care for their children.

I turn to Toowoomba, where there is a desperate need for another child-care centre. Some 26 organisations look after young children. Included in that number are three community kindergartens, which have waiting lists of between 120 and 180 people. Of course, kindergartens do not provide the sort of long day care that community child-care centres can provide. Kindergartens provide care only during the school term and for limited hours. In Toowoomba, there are 12 child-care centres, eight of which are private and four of which are Government funded. The major centre is the Kath Dickson Centre, which provides occasional day care and also family home care. There are 1 000 places for family home care and at the moment there is a waiting list of 400 children. That gives some idea of the desperate need in Toowoomba for additional child-care facilities. As I said, of the 12 child-care centres, eight are private and four are Government funded. They receive their Government funding through the Federal Government, but their regulation through the legislation will be by the State Government. Those centres provide long day care. The long day care centres have to provide that care for more than 48 weeks a year. They also provide short day care and, as I mentioned, in the case of the Kath Dickson Centre, family day care.

The cost of child-care is of paramount importance and is crucial to the legislation. No doubt, those who have their children in child-care would perhaps prefer to care for their children at home. Maybe that is not the case if those parents have a career that they see as worth while, but we could safely say that, in the majority of cases, people work for financial reasons. They desperately need the money to meet their commitments—the repayment of their home loan and the raising of their children. Costs are extremely important. Fee relief is available to parents whose children stay at those Government-funded centres, provided that the centres provide care for a maximum of 48 weeks a year and for 40 hours a week. The fee relief is a maximum of $100 a week, and I understand that an assets test will be introduced in January. Fee relief is available to those who have a combined annual income of up to $60,000 a year and the relief is on a sliding scale. The

maximum amount of fee relief paid is $100 a week. At a typical Government-funded child-care centre a person on full fee relief would pay only $15 a week. It can be quite economical to leave a child in that centre all week for a cost of $15, which includes meals. However, to receive that $100, the parent of that child would receive a wage of less than $350 a week. Once people get onto the sliding scale, less and less fee relief is provided, and child-care becomes more expensive. For that reason, when the regulations are brought in, it will be extremely important to consider the costs to people who have their children at Government-funded centres or, more particularly, at the private centres.

Earlier today, the amount of $6 a week was mentioned. I have heard from an organisation associated with child-care that the legislation could result in a 20 per cent across-the-board increase in the cost of child-care. On an average cost of $100 a week, that could mean an increase of $20. The Minister has tabled figures showing an increase in costs of $6 or $7 per week. That will mean a lot of money to someone earning less than $350 per week with no other source of income or no partner earning another income. This is an important point to reflect upon, because Queensland has some 300 child-care centres. One hundred of these centres are Commonwealth funded through fee relief and 200 are private. The fee relief will certainly not cover any increases resulting from this legislation.

Another point to be considered is the concentration on penalties throughout the regulations. At times, it almost seems like a police document. It is important to have some warm and caring aspects in the legislation which come through in the regulations. Those people who draw up the regulations must consider that point. On the other hand, the fact that a penalty point is now $60 will certainly ensure that there will be security around child-care centres. That will be of paramount importance to parents.

I understand that an agreement is due to be signed this month between the State and Federal Governments concerning the continued funding of child-care. I have talked to people at child-care centres and they have stressed the importance of ensuring that any Federal Government funding flows through and does not get lost in the system. The child-care operational grants from the Federal Government are provided quarterly and 85 per cent of them are used by child-care centres in the provision of salaries. Staff training will be a very important aspect of this legislation. The biggest factor in providing quality staff to child-care centres will be adequate training, and the selection of the people to undertake that training. I have been unable to look at the proposed regulations that were provided today to Opposition members of this Parliament, but I understand that a director will be required only to have a Bachelor of Teaching degree and to have undertaken a child-care course through an institution such as that at Kelvin Grove. At the present time, most of the training of people who hold positions as directors is early childhood training based on an education degree. I also understand that those who wish to be group-leaders will be required to hold an Associate Diploma in Child Care. Such a diploma was available this year at the Toowoomba TAFE. There were only 20 positions and 100 people applied. Therefore, it is essential that good contact is made with TAFE and higher-education centres to ensure that appropriate educational courses will be provided for child-care.

I understand that a seven-year transition period for these educational courses and the upgrading of the present day-care centres is provided for in the regulations. Centres with more than 40 places will be required to have a full-time director. In some of the centres in Toowoomba the directors carry out administrative tasks in the morning and teaching and child-care duties in the afternoon. The new regulation will add to their costs. At the moment, some of the directors of child-care centres in Toowoomba would have qualifications based on nursing or education or are experienced mothers. Earlier, I referred to the increasing number of children attending child-care centres and the ever-increasing demand for such centres. This is obviously an industry with a potentially good

career structure. The positions of director and group-leader can be attained by those properly qualified people who enter the industry. In some ways, the child-care industry is almost a case of women taking advantage of women. The day-care mums who provide the day-care service receive between $2 and $2.70 per child per day. They are allowed to have up to five children per day and charge a maximum of $8 per hour. In return they do not get any holidays or superannuation. They provide their house free of charge and they have to repair any damage to the house themselves. They do all the cleaning themselves and four or five children can certainly leave a great deal of cleaning up.

We need to look at the implementation of one simple overall award for the child-care system. At the moment, there are a number of awards. There is the CPEA award and the social workers award. Some of the workers who are licensed by councils come under the municipal workers award. There is a need for a simple award structure. Many speakers have referred to quality child-care. There is a need not just for quality staff and training, but the ratio of staff to children needs to be improved, as does the environment. I was very impressed by one day-care centre which had a chook run in the backyard. I thought it provided quite a homely atmosphere for the kids. They could go out into the backyard where there were trees and plants and feed the chooks in the morning and the afternoon. It provided a friendly, happy environment. New staff-to-children ratios have been proposed. For babies, it is one supervisor to four babies; whereas it is now one supervisor to five babies. It has been suggested to me that one to three would be far better, but that would be costly. Therefore, one to four is not a bad compromise. For two and three-year-olds, the proposed ratio is one to seven; currently, it is one to eight. For preschoolers, the ratio is two to twenty-two. Again, it has been said that a ratio of two to twenty would be better, but that would only increase costs. This is a fair compromise. It is important that regulations be drafted that will allow the development of family groups. That would provide a happy atmosphere within the environment that these ratios are intended to produce.

When discussing child-care centres, it is important to consider the needs of the children. Much has been said about the educational needs of the staff, parents' concerns and so forth. The child-care industry—if one could call it that—plays a crucial role in setting up these young children for life, because many of these children could be institutionalised for their entire childhood. I have heard of children as young as six days old being brought to a centre and of children who stay right through from the age of 18 months until they are five years old. At that age, they move on to school, but when they come home from school, it is the old story of no-one being at home so they have to go into the house to watch TV and videos.

I do not think I can overemphasise the importance of child-care centres and how important it will be when this legislation is passed to get the regulations right to set children up in an environment as good as the environment that exists in a happy home where children can spend the day with their mothers. I believe that the career structures that men and women are involved in these days must be taken into account. I believe also that many people would agree that the most desirable way in which children can be brought up is to allow them to have, perhaps, the first five years at home with their mother, who can return to a career without losing her place in her field. People refer to children being deprived, and it is probable that the deprived children of modern society will be those who do not spend the many days and hours with their mothers or fathers due to the mounting pressures of modern life. For those children, it will be a long haul through institutionalised establishments such as child-care centres right through to attendance at boarding schools or being cared for after school by other people until their parents pick them up at 5 o'clock, or later. This legislation and its regulations are therefore extremely important.

Because some children who attend the centres can have behavioural problems, some form of support should be provided by the regulations. These centres need staff who can pick up those problems and deal with them, or handle the problems in such a way that they do not become any worse. Some centres are asked to take children from crisis homes. The guidelines issued by the Federal Government do not refer to that practice. Such problems should be dealt with by the Department of Family Services. However, it is often the case that children in a crisis situation have to be looked after somewhere, and they are sent to Government-funded child-care centres. I believe that child-care should focus mainly on children aged five years and under. Therefore, there is a need for the Government to consider after-school programs that can cater for school-age children, instead of having child-care places at the family day care centres taken up by students.

Earlier, I referred to the family day care services that are provided and the meagre wages that are paid to day-care mums. It is my opinion that out of all the services, family day care comes the closest to providing what might be described as normal or home environment care. If this service is looked at in a purely fiscal light, it must be acknowledged that it saves the community the expense of capital works associated with the provision of suitable buildings, because the children are cared for in the environment of the day-care mum's home. It must be also be said that the children are cared for in a normal household that might have the normal standards of tidiness or untidiness, a backyard and a sandpit. Moreover, at 3 p.m., the children who are being cared for can go in the car with the day-care mum to pick up her children from school and can do the chores that create a more normal environment for a child who is being cared for. I believe that the family day care or home care system has much to recommend it.

In conclusion, let me say that the important aspects of this extremely crucial legislation are that quality care should be provided for children in an environment that is as close to a home and family environment as is possible. I cannot overemphasise the fact that I foresee changes impacting on society that will make it harder and harder for young children to have access to what might be regarded by many of us as the ideal environment for children. If children are to be cared for in a day-care centre, quality must be paramount. The day-care centres must reflect as much as possible the environment that most people would regard as a good home-life environment. Economic changes are also on the horizon, particularly for private day-care centres and Government-funded centres where fee relief does not cover all the costs.

Again, I stress the need that exists in Toowoomba for another day-care centre. I understand that the possibility exists for two of the centres—the one in Bridge Street and the one in Darling Heights—to be extended to take an additional 20 to 25 children each, but when one takes into account the waiting list of 400 names for the Kath Dickson centre, the severity of the demand can be appreciated. There is also a need to provide in the regulations adequate time to adjust to the various changes and, most importantly, for the establishment of adequate courses not only in Brisbane but also in regional and more remote areas of Queensland. It will be extremely difficult for teachers who live in country areas to obtain access to these courses. A venue such as the University of Southern Queensland's distance education division would be ideal for administering those types of courses. By constructively supporting this Bill, the National Party Opposition looks forward to this legislation providing security of mind for parents and quality care for their children. In time, members of the Opposition hope that this legislation will help young children to adapt to the changing life-style of working and single parents.

Dr FLYNN (Toowoomba North) (5.21 p.m.): It gives me pleasure to speak in support of the Child Care Bill. During my speech, I will concentrate mainly on the qualifications laid down in this Bill and in the associated regulations for child-care workers. Arguably, one of the most important parts of this Bill relates to the introduction of requisite qualifications for

child-care staff. This is one of the matters about which I am particularly pleased. With the introduction of this Bill, the Government is seeking high quality early childhood programs for Queensland children and their families. For the first time, these programs will be guaranteed.

The indicators of high quality child-care include criteria such as group size, staff/child ratios and physical environment. Staff training—both preservice and in-service—is also recognised as one of the most important determinants of high quality child-care. We need quality staff to deliver quality programs. Staff quality is shown to be directly related to the knowledge and training of staff in early childhood. At present, there is no regulatory requirement for qualified staff in child-care centres. There are centres operating with no qualified early childhood staff and those centres therefore lack the primary ingredient that is necessary to ensure high quality care. If the care-givers do not have early childhood training, who is planning the programs in these centres? On what knowledge and understanding are they based?

Over the past decade, research has highlighted the importance of training in child-care. Research findings have documented long lists of benefits for both young children and their parents which may be related to staff training. The US National Day Care Study in 1979 examined the effects of group care on children. It looked to what extent the experiences of children are affected by regulated characteristics such as staff/child ratios, group size and the experience and training of staff. The study concluded that staff with child-related training deliver better care, which has somewhat superior developmental effects for children. The findings suggested that children in centres with qualified staff showed more cooperation, more task persistence and higher gains in cognitive skills. The findings were emphasised in the baby and toddler rooms. The study found that staff with early childhood training interacted with children more and provided more stimulation. The study recommends that child-related education and training should be required for staff providing direct care to children, and the States should make such training available.

Queensland researchers McCrea and Piscitelli stress the importance of qualified staff in their new book *Handbook of High Quality Criteria for Early Childhood Programs*. McCrea and Piscitelli relate staff training in early childhood care and education to a number of positive outcomes for children, including increased social interactions with adults, the development of pro-social behaviour, and improved language and cognitive development. Cumulative findings support beliefs about the positive value of staff training in child-care.

Some people continue to question the need for those who work with young children to have formal qualifications, although it is very pleasing to see that both the Opposition and the Liberal Party accept this need. Comparisons are sometimes drawn with the parenting role. Caring for young children in groups is different from caring for a child at home. It requires specialist knowledge, skills and qualities. One of the main arguments against qualified staff is that they are more expensive than unqualified staff. Similar arguments were put forward in Victoria and New South Wales prior to the introduction in those States of new child-care regulations. Qualified staff may cost a little more. The cost impact will not be great in Queensland because of the phasing-in of qualifications. Any increase in costs because of employing staff will be an investment in the future. Research has identified the positive outcomes of trained staff and quality care. Studies are also beginning to document the long-term effects of poor quality care.

The proposed new child-care regulations will require a higher proportion of qualified staff in child-care centres than is currently required. Staff will have the knowledge and skills to plan and implement developmentally appropriate programs for children. It is accepted that State preschools and community kindergartens are already staffed with qualified early childhood personnel. Greater emphasis is being placed on teacher

qualifications and it is accepted that by the end of the decade Queensland teachers will need to complete four years of preservice training. It appears that everybody accepts that it is okay for programs labelled "education" to have higher standards and more qualified staff, but some people are still sceptical about this need when it comes to dealing with younger children. They are one and the same. Why should there be no regulatory requirements for qualified staff in child-care? The trend across Australia is towards more qualified staff. Queensland remains one of the only States that has not already introduced regulations prescribing staff qualifications. This legislation will remedy that situation.

With regard to family day care, increasing attention is being paid to the very important role of coordinators. Family day-care coordinators work in a professional capacity with children, parents and care-providers. These coordinators require knowledge and skills in child development, health, hygiene and safety issues, communication, community development, evaluating the needs of children and adults, and management skills. Coordinators also need a sensitivity to special needs, such as disability and cultural needs. The Government is not saying that every person involved in child-care needs to be qualified. The proposed regulations support the view of the Australian Early Childhood Association that a mixture of qualified and unqualified staff enables the sharing of practical experience, together with the additional insights, skills and specialised knowledge to be gained from early childhood training courses. The amount of education required of staff will vary depending on their level of professional responsibility. In line with this, the new regulations stipulate qualifications for family day care coordinators, centre directors and group leaders. These are the people who hold the major responsibility for the provision of quality programs for young children and their families. They can have an enormous influence on the lives of children.

The regulations recognise that advanced levels of competence can result from a combination of training and experience. Training alone is not enough, nor is experience without training. I am very pleased to know that directors of centres will be required to have successfully completed a three-year course in early childhood studies. Similarly, I am pleased that group leaders will be required to have successfully completed a post-secondary course of at least two years in early childhood studies. New family day care coordinators will require at least two years' training in early childhood or social science, or other equivalent qualifications. Where licensees cannot fill vacancies with qualified staff, they will be able to employ other approved staff. Certainly, currently employed family day care coordinators will not need to retrain. Such training is both relevant and practical in enabling staff in family day care and centre-based care to plan and deliver quality early childhood programs.

The Minister is to be congratulated on her stand on the issue of staff qualifications. She is also to be congratulated on the very sensible lead-times that will enable staff without necessary qualifications time to gain training specific to their job. In this way, no-one currently working within the industry will be disadvantaged and at the same time there will be a guarantee that the necessary standard of qualifications will be introduced. Queensland parents have the right to expect high-quality programs for their children. It is true that quality cannot be brought about by regulations alone. However, good regulations are necessary to ensure basic minimum standards in terms of physical setting, group size, staff/child ratios and training requirements for staff. This Bill introduces these changes and will guarantee that child-care in Queensland will improve in quality.

I record my support and congratulations for the Kath Dickson Centre, which is a major child-care centre in Toowoomba. It is already staffed with very skilled and committed child-care workers and, as has already been mentioned, this means a lot to the families of Toowoomba. This centre provides a high-quality service. It gives a lead to and is a role model for other services in the area. I am particularly pleased that a limited-hours

service is planned for Harlaxton in my electorate. It is an appropriate service response to the needs of children and their families in that area who are undercatered for at the moment. I personally attended the child-care consultations in Toowoomba. It was good to have such open and useful dialogue take place. The Leader of the Liberal Party referred to this Bill being rushed into the House. The consultation process has been extensive. The meeting in Toowoomba was well attended by representatives of various child-care organisations, both Government funded and private, and family day care, and they came from a wide geographical area including most of the eastern Darling Downs and the Murgon/Kingaroy area. The Bill has been discussed extensively with the people involved in providing child-care and I know that it has their broad support. I am pleased that the Bill will receive support from all major parties in the House today.

I conclude on another point. Because I am not a political person, I do not want to be political, but I am wondering what effect the goods and services tax will have on child-care in Queensland. The Leader of the Liberal Party spoke about the need for equity and justice in child-care. I certainly agree with her. She then made a scurrilous remark about where certain new child-care centres are being provided. She said they are being provided in Labor electorates simply because they are Labor electorates, and not in areas of need. It is a fact—and I thought we had this out during the debate on the Health Estimates—that a lot of the areas of highest priority in the provision of services, whether they be health, child-care, police or whatever—tend to be the growing areas to the north and south of Brisbane which at the moment happen to be Labor electorates.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: And areas neglected over past years.

Dr FLYNN: That is right. The honourable member for Toowoomba South also alluded to the costs of child-care being crucial. I certainly agree with him. The newspaper reports that I read over the weekend stated that child-care will be subject to the goods and services tax. We do not know the full details yet but, as I understand it, kindergartens and preschools will be exempt but family day care and child-care centres, such as the Kath Dickson Centre in Toowoomba, both Government funded and private, will be subject to the 15 per cent goods and services tax. This automatically means a very hefty price rise for child-care. On top of that, the other great unknown is the effect of the spending cuts. Provision of child-care has been a priority of our Labor Government since we were swept into office, and it has certainly been a priority of the Federal Government over recent years. What effect will the $10 billion worth of spending cuts across the board federally and the forced 5 per cent spending cut on the part of the State, which means a 5 per cent reduction in services, have on the provision of child-care places particularly, as has been pointed out, in most areas around the State we are still struggling to provide adequate numbers of child-care places, and other matters such as fee relief?

The Hewson package promises much. One of the groups purported to win handsomely under that package is the two-income family, in which the husband and wife each earn $20,000 to $30,000, or a combined income of $60,000. Such a couple will have to factor in the cost of child-care before they know whether they are winners or not. They could well have to worry about whether there will be a place for their child, whether the fee relief they receive at present will still be there and the additional effect of the 15 per cent goods and services tax on top of what they are paying currently.

Mr Bredhauer: Once again, it will be regressive because the lower income earners will be the ones least able to afford it.

Dr FLYNN: That is right. Again, it will be regressive because the 15 per cent will apply across-the-board. The goods and services tax poses a major threat to child-care in Queensland and in Australia. As has been pointed out by members from all sides of the House, it is an extremely important requirement in our modern society that families are

able to avail themselves of adequate quality, cost-effective child-care. Our Government is certainly playing its part in doing that job and this Bill provides a legislative framework to make sure it occurs. Basically, the only major threat or cloud on the horizon is the goods and services tax.

Mrs McCAULEY (Callide) (5.36 p.m.): I think I can say, without fear of contradiction, that I have had more first-hand experience of child-care than any other member of the Opposition, firstly, as a mother and then as part of a team that worked very hard to have a child-care centre built in my home town. When my children were small, I was fortunate that Mount Isa Mines provided child-care and that other centres in which I lived had child-care facilities. Although I was not a working mum I found it very useful to put my children into child-care while I did my shopping in peace. That probably kept my sanity and theirs as well.

I had a considerable involvement in obtaining the funds for the Biloela child-care centre, which opened in 1986. I had an ongoing involvement in it during the whole time that I was a member of the local council, until last year, because the council chambers were next door to the centre and the council took and still takes a large amount of the responsibility for that centre. I am very proud of that centre. It has certainly benefited our town greatly. That involvement in child-care led me to the belief that we should be encouraging more private child-care and inhouse child-care. The Government must step into some activities and fill the role because no-one else will, but I believe that we should be encouraging more private child-care. Provisions should be set in place so that private child-care can be regulated, monitored and controlled by the Government without the Government having to provide the money. Through tax concessions and other steps, I believe we could encourage more private child-care and inhouse child-care.

This legislation is to be commended, because it was certainly time that the rights of parents and, more importantly, the rights of children, were protected and met by updated legislation. I believe it is a wise move that all child-care facilities will reach an acceptable standard, particularly in terms of health and safety issues. However, I do have some areas of concern, and perhaps those areas are more pertinent to country areas. As I represent a country electorate, it is only reasonable that I raise those issues. For example, the new ratios of child to staff are an improvement. However, they do not create any new places, and that itself is a worry. In fact, there is a danger that some places may be lost due to the unavailability of trained staff. For example, at the Biloela child-care centre, the new ratio will decrease the number of places in the infant section from 10 to 8, yet that is the area of greatest demand for placement in that particular child-care centre. The improvements in child/staff ratios will ensure quality care. However, again my concern is that, when coupled with training levels and qualifications of staff, major problems could be caused, particularly in rural areas, because trained staff are fairly rare, and to encourage staff into rural placements is extremely difficult. I know that the Minister is providing a phasing-in period and exemptions in areas in which trained staff are simply not available. I hope that is going to be administered with a great deal of compassion in areas such as my electorate of Callide where trained staff are simply not available.

Ms Warner interjected.

Mrs McCAULEY: Yes, that should well cover the situation, and I hope it does. Unfortunately, there seems to be no provision in the regulations for directors to be trained in other than early childhood development, and of course previously they could be trained registered nurses. The present director at the Biloela child-care centre is a trained nursing sister, as were the previous two directors, and I believe they filled that role in an excellent manner. They created an environment at that facility that more than adequately fulfilled the Minister's description of a good child-care facility. I know that the present director is undertaking extra studies, and no doubt she will be able to continue.

Ms Warner: They know what they need. We are allowing nurses to enter the system and then upgrade.

Mrs McCAULEY: I am pleased to hear that. There are always more nurses available in the country areas than there are people trained in early childhood teaching.

Ms Warner: It is over a 10-year period, too.

Mrs McCAULEY: Yes, and I think that probably provides the best sort of person for the job, because they have training in both areas. Of course, as previous speakers have mentioned, the new ratios will increase the costs of care, and that is of concern. It must be remembered that not all child-care places are held by working mothers in second income jobs. In fact, child-care is used extensively by single parents on single incomes, as well as parents who simply need time out from parenting, if perhaps they have a disabled or difficult child, or to resist and break a child abuse cycle. Fee rises in those particular cases could have wide-ranging effects. That is of concern. I know that the Minister has said that the increase will be $7 a week, but I would doubt that it would be as low as that. However, I have not seen the leaflet with the costings which was tabled. I would hope that it is no more than $7, but it would be very difficult for some single parents to come to grips with even that amount.

Ms Warner interjected.

Mrs McCAULEY: The Minister's halo is shining! I believe that the new guidelines for staff training and qualifications need to be considered in conjunction with a revamp in training facilities. Increased places should be made available in existing courses, particularly in rural TAFE centres, because there is certainly no shortage of people wanting places. The member for Toowoomba South mentioned the long waiting list of people wanting to undertake courses of that type. There is also a need for recognition of experience as a substitute for formal qualifications. For example, a mother who has raised six children of her own surely should be seen as having some qualifications when compared with an 18 or 20-year-old who has a certificate. The mother of the six children would probably have a great deal more experience to offer. If she has raised six children, she is probably a special sort of person, anyway.

Ms Warner: You would have to see the kids, wouldn't you?

Mrs McCAULEY: I am not making any judgments, but if she had raised six children of her own and still wanted to work in the field with children, she would have to be a very special sort of person. I think there should be recognition of her experience. I am quite sure that if people of that type were prepared to undertake some external studies, they would be ideal staff to work in such centres. The Minister's concern about parents repeating their negative parenting skills on other people's children is not really an issue in country areas, because in towns as small as the one in which I live the applicants for any of those positions would be fairly well known. Certainly, everyone would be aware of their own children and the types of parents they had been. While that may be a problem in a city area, it is certainly not a problem in a small country town. I believe the answer could be external courses modelled on the apprenticeship-type system, because my feeling is that in the child-care area the best teacher is one with practical experience. Therefore, hands-on learning with perhaps theory block releases, which are made available to apprentices, could provide a workable alternative, particularly in the light of the limited places available in existing institutions and the new demand for staff qualifications which will undoubtedly arise. That would fit in well with the Government's attitude to the phasing-in period and be particularly suitable for rural areas.

I have a query about the provision relating to finding unlicensed premises. The Bill deals only with what will happen after they are found. There is no provision regarding how to find them. Perhaps the State Government is saying that that is the concern of the local

authority. I draw the Minister's attention to that important point, which should have been addressed and has not been addressed. No mention has been made in the Bill of that difficult problem. As well, no mention is made of the encouragement of work-based child-care. As I said previously, that is probably the best option for those women and men who wish to rejoin the work force but still be near their children. It is occurring overseas.

Ms Warner: It is very slow getting off the ground.

Mrs McCAULEY: It is slow. It is probably too innovative at this stage, but it is the way to go. Under that system, if mums want to spend the lunch hour with their children, they can. I read an interesting article about the Jewish population in New York. The elderly Jewish people were very concerned about their grandchildren being left in child-care centres, which meant that they had no input into their development. Because of the strong family ties that they have, they took the step of arranging their own church-based or community-based child-care. The grandparents actually visited the grandchildren and played a large part in the child-care. That system worked very well. The grandparents were happy, the parents were happy and the children had an extra scope to their socialisation.

The member for Toowoomba South mentioned institutionalising children. It could well be that some children go through their whole young life having no contact with older people. Honourable members will not find elderly people looking after children in child-care centres. That is unfortunate. From watching the interaction between small children and elderly people who like being around small children, I have noticed that there is much to be given on both sides. It would be to the detriment of a child if he grew up not knowing someone who was old enough to tell him stories of what it was like in the good old days. For that reason, I was rather concerned when I read that, in the limited hours care section, volunteers would be permitted under certain conditions. That sounded a bit forbidding, as though the Minister was not wanting volunteers under certain conditions. I simply query what the conditions are. I hope that provision is not meant to chase people away. If elderly people wish to volunteer to spend a couple of hours a week sitting in the gardens with children and having some interaction with them, it should be encouraged.

The last point that I raise concerns family day care. In her second-reading speech, the Minister stated that care-providers would be required to obtain first aid training and participate in in-service training. That concerns me. I wonder at the practicality of it. If a particular family day care provider had the number of children allowable, which is up to seven, I would think that, at the end of the day, she would be far too tired to attend first aid training or participate in any in-service training. The provision sounds good, but I believe it is not practical. I commend the Minister for her diligent work on this matter.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN (Nundah) (5.50 p.m.): Having taught for more than two decades, and having five young children, I am very conscious of the needs of young people in our society. I am, therefore, particularly pleased to support the Child Care Bill 1991. I have maintained a close interest in the development of the Bill and associated regulations and I am pleased to say that I believe the Government, through the Minister, has provided the people of Queensland with an excellent example of how to develop legislation of this kind. The process of widespread consultation and feedback in the community with all elements of the child-care industry has, I believe, provided maximum opportunity for participation by parents, staff, licensees, management committees, local authorities, tertiary institutions, unions, Government departments and peak bodies. In my own electorate, I have visited child-care centres to discuss proposals and regulations with both commercial and Government-funded groups. I found that a very worthwhile process and brought suggested changes back for consideration by the Government. It was indeed a worthwhile process. The outcome achieved is a negotiated position agreed to unanimously by the 15 members of the ministerial advisory committee on child-care.

This Bill strikes the appropriate balance between the cost of care and the quality of care which is required by parents of children at the important stage of their most rapid development. This outcome speaks volumes for the patience and skill shown by the Minister in this matter, and I congratulate her and her department on the Bill that is now before us. The Bill and the regulations to accompany it are only one part of the changes brought about in the vitally important and rapidly growing area of child-care since this Government introduced its Queensland Government Child Care strategy. The introduction into Parliament of the Child Care Bill and the development of new regulations for certain types of child-care services demonstrate this Government's commitment to ensuring the provision of quality child-care in Queensland.

The Government's commitment to the development of an integrated, cohesive child-care sector in Queensland can be seen in the objectives of clause 4 of the Bill. Rather than read clause 4, I seek permission to include it in *Hansard*.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Is the honourable member seeking leave to have the clause incorporated in *Hansard*?

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I am seeking to have clause 4 incorporated in *Hansard*.

Mr SPEAKER: The normal procedure is for honourable members to seek prior approval of the Chair before doing that. I cannot allow it. The honourable member may read the clause into *Hansard*, if he wishes. I cannot stop him from doing that.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Because the clause is contained in the Bill, I will carry on. An Act that has such wide-ranging objects will have the strong and enthusiastic support of all Queenslanders who are concerned about the well-being and growth of this State's most valuable resource—its children. As the Minister said in her second-reading speech, children have a right to grow up in a safe, warm, stimulating and secure environment, especially in their most critical formative years. I believe that this Bill will ensure that the quality of care provided for children in child-care services is of a good standard, is affordable, and will help to promote their emotional, intellectual, social and physical development.

Quality child-care must have the interests of the child as its paramount concern; the interests of the child as its first concern. The Labor Party's goal is to build on the efforts already made by the community in the provision of child-care to ensure that child-care is a positive, educational and wholesome experience for the child. My own family's experience with our younger children in the care of the Windsor Neighbourhood Child Care Centre is that it has all of these good qualities. As well, the loving attention of people such as Ro Anderson and her staff has meant that my wife and I have had confidence that our children were well looked after. Our children looked forward to attending such a centre. Provision of child-care centres such as those improves the opportunities for women to enter or return to the work force, whether by choice or by necessity. This has benefits for the whole economy because the skills and experience of women should not be wasted if they have the ability or wish to return to the work force. Child-care options can strengthen and protect the viability of the family unit by offering diverse services which assist families at different stages of their child-rearing. Services must be tailored to the needs of all the family, whether both parents work or just one, whether they be sole-parent families or families in isolated areas of the State.

This Government has already made a good start toward raising the standards of child-care services throughout the State. The Office of Child Care, established in January of this year, is part of that plan. It coordinates, supports and monitors child-care services in Queensland. The Office of Child Care is responsible for administering the $13.4m to be spent on child-care in this financial year. The establishment of the office recognised the Government's commitment to enhancing the number, range, quality and appropriateness

of child-care services available to Queensland families. To meet this commitment, the Office of Child Care has developed links with the child-care sector, other levels of government, other State Government departments, the commercial sector and community organisations. Resource officers have also been recruited to the regional offices to identify the needs for new child-care services and to be a resource to the child-care sector. The licensing of child-care services under the new legislation will be carried out by those officers. Their primary role is to provide assistance, to be a resource to child-care services and to improve the quality of child-care offered. I believe that that will be a benefit, especially to a lot of the smaller rural communities. All resource officers are qualified in early childhood, or a field of behavioural sciences related to community development, and have extensive experience in child-care.

A ministerial advisory committee has been established to provide advice to the Minister on matters relevant to the provision of child-care services. State Government funding of child-care has risen significantly. The allocation of about $825,000 for the 1989-90 financial year was increased to $8.4m in 1990-91 and to $13.4m in 1991-92—a fifteenfold increase in two years. That shows something of the dedication and commitment of this Government to this area. These funds, together with Commonwealth funds, will be used to create the additional 6 000 new child-care places in Queensland and to increase the quality and appropriateness of existing services. Forty child-care centres which were established under the 1984-88 National Child Care Strategy have been upgraded to improve their operation and to ensure their compliance with licensing requirements and local authority by-laws.

A significant new initiative is the development and provision of child-care services specifically designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in the remote areas of north Queensland. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents have played a central role in designing these services. Culturally appropriate consultative mechanisms are being used to support the development of individual services. Funding has been provided to employ specialist staff to develop a range of measures to increase the access of families from non-English-speaking backgrounds to child-care services and to improve child-care services for children with disabilities. Again, that shows that this Government is looking after the widest possible range of Queensland children, especially those in greatest need.

A total of 419 long hour care places were allocated to Queensland under the National Child Care Strategy, and an additional 603 places will be established under the Queensland Government Child Care Strategy. During 1990-91, some 357 child-care places in seven long hour care centres at Coolum, Tewantin, Smithfield, Thuringowa, Capalaba, Loganlea and Salisbury were approved for funding. The Thuringowa and Salisbury centres will be built on land provided by the Education Department. The centre at Loganlea will be built on a TAFE college site. The other four centres are to be built on land provided by local authorities which are the sponsors of the centre. The centres at Loganlea, Salisbury and Thuringowa will include observation areas for use by teachers and students of early childhood development. This again shows the Government's response to a variety of our community's needs. It is anticipated that another three long hour care centres at Rockhampton, Carseldine and one other Brisbane location will be approved in this financial year.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Before the dinner recess, I had mentioned briefly the process of consultation in formulating this Bill. I had mentioned that the interests of our children have been the prime concern of those who drafted this legislation and the regulations which followed. We looked at a variety of child-care arrangements to cater for the differing needs of Queensland children. This Government established the Office of

Child Care, and a fifteenfold increase in funding for child-care places over a couple of years has taken place under this Government. In the last few minutes of my address, I will refer to some of the elements of care for school-age children. This takes two forms: the care outside of school hours, that is, before and after the regular school-time, and the vacation care during the holiday period. A total of over 3 020 outside school hours care places have been established during the 1988-92 time period under the National Child Care Strategy. A figure of almost half a million dollars was committed in the 1991-92 State Budget to assist in the funding of 6 852 vacation care places. I have seen the importance of this initiative at the school my children attend. In a joint venture with the Wavell Heights State School and one of the local Catholic schools—Our Lady of the Angels, it is called—an after school care program was established just this year. There has been heavy demand for it, and it has fulfilled a very important need in the local area. As well, there is a great demand for vacation care at the centre. I sincerely hope that the Wavell Heights after school care centre will receive funding for the coming school recess vacation program.

The TAFE child-care services are important in giving women access to further education and training and, therefore, to enhanced employment opportunities. Before the dinner recess, one of the members opposite—the Leader of the Liberal Party, I think—was talking about equity and saying that this Government was not doing things equitably. I disagree with her strongly. In fact, the 15 places that I have mentioned where child-care centres have been placed, or are going to be placed, are across all representative political parties and in a variety of areas. This, of course, is important for women if they are to have equal opportunity in their occupational choices. The first two TAFE child-care centres at Logan and Bundaberg TAFE colleges will open early in 1992.

Members opposite, especially those who are keen on the business community, would be happy to know that the Government is keen to encourage employers to assist their staff to meet their child-care needs. To this end, funds have been committed to a child-care centre for the children of State Government employees. This centre will provide a demonstration of employer-supported child-care to private-sector employers—a trial run, you might say. Funds have been committed to develop and implement a range of initiatives to encourage other Queensland employers to provide child-care for their staff. Information and seminars about the establishment and operation of such employer-supported child-care centres will continue to be provided by the office of this Minister to private and public sector employers, to unions and to employees.

Three hundred and sixty occasional-care places will be provided. A total of 235 of these will be established in limited-hour care services in existing community facilities. The limited-hour care funding program will be administered by this department. The limited-hour care model of occasional care delivery is this State's alternative to the purpose-built occasional-care centres. Child-care centres will be co-located with other services for families in existing community facilities. These services will assist in meeting the child-care needs of communities too small to utilise a large, purpose-built occasional-care centre. Areas identified include Stanthorpe, Bowen, Harlaxton, Port Douglas, Laidley, Charters Towers, Leichhardt, Mornington Island, Enoggera, Sunnybank, the Red Hill/Paddington area and Hervey Bay. Again, the Leader of the Liberal Party might note that emphasis has been placed on rural areas and areas of need across a whole range of political representation. This Government is looking to where the need is greatest and is trying to address that in as fair and equitable a manner as possible. In 1990-91, only 45 places were approved in 12 centres. In 1991-92, a further 190 places will be allocated. That is further evidence of this Minister's commitment to providing these services. The balance of those 360 occasional-care places, that is, about 125 places, will be located in four purpose-built centres planned for high-need areas for this type of service. Sites in

Thuringowa and Bundaberg were approved in 1990-91, and two more sites will be approved in this financial year. A number of one-off grants were provided to family day-care services in 1990-91 for the development and purchase of resources and the provision of training. In 1991-92, funding will be provided to assist the training of child care providers. This training will reflect local needs, improve the quality of service provision and complement and supplement the training already provided.

I would like to conclude by paying tribute to some of the child-care facilities in the Nundah area. The family day care scheme at Wavell Heights, run by the Uniting Church at Rode Road, is excellent. That scheme has a supplementary worker for disabled children. As well, a pool of workers assist disabled children in the child-care centres. Again, those workers are provided through the Uniting Church. The community-based long day care centre at Tufnell off Buckland Road run by Margie Adams and her crew does an excellent job. Commercial long day care centres at Northgate Day Nursery and Nundah community day-care provide important facilities for people in the area. The after school care programs at Nundah, Virginia and Wavell Heights are excellent.

Finally, this Bill is long overdue. I congratulate the Minister on her initiatives in this area, and I support the Bill.

Mr BREDHAUER (Cook) (7.37 p.m.): As a new parent whose daughter has just started attending day care on a regular basis, I must confess to more than just a passing interest in this Bill. Before I debate the implications of the legislation, I would like to comment on the professional and competent child-care facilities offered by the Children's Centre in Balaclava Road, Cairns. The decision to place our 10-month-old daughter in care for two days per week was not an easy one. I guess that all parents go through that at various times as part of the process of the development of the child. The Children's Centre is staffed by trained and professional personnel, is well equipped and has gone to some lengths to help Alice and her parents adjust to the change of life-style and the vagaries of our new circumstances. In essence, the staff at the Children's Centre have supported the legislation and its intent, although they made some constructive criticisms of the original draft regulations.

At present in Queensland there are some 350 child-care centres and 415 kindergartens caring for more than 50 000 children. Additionally, more than 14 000 children are cared for in family day care. Under the present day-care centres regulations, licences are provided to kindergartens and long day care centres only. The proposed regulations will provide for four types of licences: kindergartens for the care of three-year-olds to children of school age, which operate for up to six hours on schooldays; limited-hour care centres, which care for up to 21 children at any one time, where no child is in care for longer than 12 hours in a week, and which operate for no more than 20 hours in a week; long day care centres, which care for more than 21 children at any one time and operate for more than 20 hours in a week; and occasional care centres, which care for more than 21 children at any one time and operate for more than 20 hours in a week. Current regulations do not differentiate occasional care centres from long day care centres, and limited hour care centres either had to conform with long day care centre regulations or had to operate outside the law. They do not therefore reflect the diversity of child-care needs that the parents of Queensland children demand.

Current regulations not only fail to recognise the broad spectrum of employment, social, respite and life-style factors which influence child-care needs but also, more importantly from my perspective, do not recognise idiosyncrasies in child-care needs in small towns, remote areas or Aboriginal and Torres Strait island communities. Members of the Opposition in particular have made some references to child-care as a requirement of families in which for some economic necessity or whatever both parents work. However, that is not the only reason why people place their children in child-care. People place their

children in child-care for a whole range of reasons. The member for Callide referred to the fact that she put her children in child-care on occasions just so that she could do the shopping in peace. I have no doubt that that is an important reason why people seek the services of limited-hour care or occasional care. People use child-care for a whole range of reasons, and it is important to recognise that. By having legislation that differentiates between the types of child-care offered in centres, more appropriate regulations and conditions can be specified to suit each type of care.

I believe emphatically that Queenslanders are entitled to the delivery of the same level of Government services, irrespective of where they live. In essence, this reflects the fact that our needs and aspirations are not usually predetermined by geographical factors. My beliefs are, however, tempered by a degree of realism and a knowledge and understanding of the cost of service delivery in remote areas. The public purse is not a bottomless pit. To their credit, the people of the Cook electorate seldom make unreasonable demands. They generally recognise either that by living in remote areas they make some sacrifices or that, concurrently, it may take a little longer to achieve reasonable goals. The need for child-care, however, is not confined to cities or provincial towns, and those needs for too long have been unmet.

Government-funded limited-hour care is a new development especially geared for remote areas where the populations would make non-viable a long day care facility or an occasional-care facility. Funded, limited-hour care centres help to address child-care needs in remote and rural areas by responding to local requirements. Child-care places will be co-located with other services for families in existing community facilities. Limited-hour care also includes the type of care offered in conjunction with neighbourhood centre activities in urban areas. It is small group care in more informal arrangements. Parent participation is a feature that is especially encouraged in those services. The limited-hour care model of child-care service delivery is this State's alternative to purpose-built occasional care centres. Places in north Queensland where such centres are to be established include Mornington Island, Port Douglas, Charters Towers and Bowen. In the north, long day care centres are being built at Smithfield and Thuringowa and a purpose-built occasional care centre is almost complete at Kirwan.

At that point, I digress from my prepared speech to answer an issue raised by the member for Landsborough and Leader of the Liberal Party, Joan Sheldon, when she talked about the provision of child-care centres all in Labor electorates as if it was some sort of pork-barrelling exercise.

Mr Coomber: It is pork-barrelling.

Mr BREDHAUER: I reject that implication outright. It follows hard on the heels of the member for Currumbin who stood in this House during the Budget debate and lamented all of the initiatives that the Government was undertaking in Labor electorates, including the Cook electorate, and virtually claimed that the money would be better spent on the Gold Coast or the Sunshine Coast. It is all very well for those members to say that they would like all of the Budget initiatives to be in their electorates, but, as the member for Toowoomba North correctly pointed out, when they make those ridiculous assertions they fail to recognise that those centres are based primarily on the needs of the communities that they serve. The seven child-care centres to which the member for Landsborough referred are in Thuringowa, Smithfield, Coolum, Tewantin, Capalaba, Loganlea and Salisbury. Having spoken briefly to the member for Cooroora, I know for a fact that the Coolum and Tewantin centres were the subject of work by active local committees for quite a long period—in fact, long before Ray Barber became the member for that seat. Thuringowa and Smithfield are in high-growth areas where there is emerging demand and increasing demand for centres. I do not doubt that each member in turn could stand up and list places in his or her electorate where there is demand for child-care centres, and

they would be legitimate demands. The member for Toowoomba South mentioned that 400 children are on the waiting list for one of the centres in Toowoomba. The fact is that limited funds are available and the Government directs those funds to the areas of greatest need.

In the remote areas of far-north Queensland, the impact of Government initiatives on the development of child-care services specifically designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families is increasing the availability and quality of services for children. Parents from these communities have been an integral part of the development process of 13 new services and have assured their cultural appropriateness. The 13 innovative child-care services in my electorate are at Injinoo, Hope Vale, Lockhart River, Mornington Island, Bamaga, New Mapoon, Horn Island, Pormpuraaw, Aurukun, Kowanyama, Doomadgee, Wujal Wujal and Napranum. Adventure playgrounds are being purchased and equipment for activity programs, vehicles and building renovations were funded with the $618,000 made available to assist families with children on these remote Cape York communities.

I had the pleasure of attending the presentation of cheques to the councils of many of those communities on behalf of the women's groups. The process adopted by the Minister's department was that it worked in conjunction with the councils and the councils sponsored the applications for the funds for day care in those communities. By and large, the people who will be responsible for administering those programs are the women's groups in those communities. These days, a feature of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is the fact that the women's groups are becoming very well organised and very active in seeking and demanding the services which have previously been denied them. I mention a particularly touching occasion in Pormpuraaw where I actually presented the cheque to the chairman of the council and he in turn handed it immediately to the chairperson of the women's group in Pormpuraaw. It was a very symbolic and touching evening. In 1992, other new services will be developed in the Torres Strait and will form part of the 6 000 child-care places being provided in Queensland over three years.

I turn now to the issue of licensing. Under the Children's Services (Day Care Centres) Regulations of 1973 and amended in 1980, a complex system of licensing exists where local authorities licence centres and officers of the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs assess and approve senior staff in those centres. Additionally, family day care schemes are approved by the department under the Children's Services (Family Day Care) Regulations of 1982. Obviously, some local authorities have given much greater priority to child-care than others and, at best, the system has allowed for considerable variations in interpretation of the regulations. This is inequitable for child-care providers and is not consistent with ensuring a comparably high standard of care for children across the State. A consistent approach will be possible Statewide by having one authority responsible for the licensing of child-care centres. Every centre can expect the same process to be adhered to for licensing. They can also expect that regulations will carry the same interpretation regardless of where the centre is located in the State. A person or organisation providing child-care of the types that I have mentioned must be licensed to do so and must adhere to the conditions on the licence. A licence is valid for up to two years. Before a licence is issued, consideration is to be given to the facilities and services provided and the appropriateness of the staff and the licensee. The premises may be inspected before a licence is issued.

Personnel involved in child-care will not be considered appropriate if they have convictions for offences against children under Parts IV or V of the Criminal Code and parts of the Children's Services Act, such as those relating to assault and sexual offences. Such information about convictions is to be disclosed by the applicant for a

licence. For the first time, recognition is being given in legislation that a person's criminal history may make him or her unsuitable to be associated with child-care. The licensee will have to display his or her current licence and ensure that advertising about their child-care service is not false or misleading. This gives a guarantee to parents and the community in general of the service offered and the standard of care. The service offered by a licensee must have facilities and equipment that are adequate and maintained for the health, hygiene and safety of children. Staff employed must be appropriately qualified or assessed by the department as suitable. The right number of staff for the children in care are to be employed. We can debate that the ratio of staff to children, particularly for children under the age of two, should be one to three, which I think is the absolute preferred ratio, or one to four, as has been adopted. I am astonished by people who talk to me and question whether there is really any difference between caring for three children under two years of age or four or five children under two years of age. Generally, people who support those arguments are men and probably do not have much understanding of the complications of caring for multiple numbers of children under the age of two. Staff employed for administrative or ancillary duties, for example, cooking, cleaning and gardening, are not to be counted as being in direct care of children. This is a change from the current legislation where no qualifications for staff were specified and junior staff may have been engaged in cleaning instead of caring for the children.

Parents are to be allowed access to the centre at all times their child is there. This is another point raised by the member for Callide in her speech. She referred to the right of the parent whose child is in one of these child-care centres. Access to the records kept on their child is also the parents' right, as is access to information about the policies of the centre. The program offered by the centre is to be developed in cooperation with parents and is to reflect their wishes for their child at the centre. Such delineation of parents' rights is a new development and differs from the current legislation where little, if any, recognition is given to the family of the child who is receiving care at a centre. A mechanism has been built into the Bill to allow licensees and applicants for a licence to apply for a review of administrative decisions made in relation to their licence and thus their livelihood. The member for Landsborough and Leader of the Liberal Party referred to the rights of adults to appeal against decisions, and this is incorporated in the legislation. It would be inappropriate for the chief executive to hear appeals against the administrative decisions of the department. Current legislation does not allow for such a review of decisions. This is being included in the new legislation to provide a way for licensees and applicants to address issues when they believe the decisions made were unfair or unjust.

A review tribunal is included in the Bill, rather than having the court system deal with such appeals. This means that the process is low cost and accessible, while maintaining independence from departmental influence in decisions made by the tribunal. The tribunal is composed of a panel which may include persons with legal knowledge and knowledge of the child-care industry to hear applications and act independently, impartially and fairly. Prior to a full hearing by the tribunal, the chairperson of the review panel may choose to conduct a preliminary hearing to help resolve the issues. The sitting of the tribunal is aimed at being as informal as possible. It is not a court of law, so legal representation is unnecessary. This makes it less costly for applicants seeking review to come before the tribunal. In acting as fairly as possible, the chairperson may allow applicants to be represented by someone else, if they cannot put their case clearly or coherently. Some of the review tribunal outcomes could be, for example, to affirm the original decision; to ask the chief executive to reconsider, having regard to matters specified by the tribunal; to set aside the decision; to substitute the tribunal's own decision; or to amend the decision.

I now wish to refer briefly to the consultation process, because it attracted some criticism from the Opposition spokesperson and the Leader of the Liberal Party in terms of

the manner in which the Bill has been presented to the House. Their criticisms referred mainly to the fact that the final version of the regulations was not made available to them until today. I wish to address the consultation process that has been undertaken by the Minister and officers of her department, because I believe this has probably been one of the most comprehensive and well-canvassed pieces of legislation that has been brought before this Parliament in the last two years. In an unusual step, the draft regulations were tabled during the Minister's second-reading speech, which has given people ample opportunity to consider their content. I believe that the issues have been well debated. Officers of the department have also travelled throughout the State. Other speakers in this debate mentioned that they conducted meetings to discuss the implications of the legislation in their electorates or regions with anyone who was interested in attending the meetings, so I really think that the issues have been canvassed extensively and exhaustively.

The point I make is that some people seem to think that merely by having a consultation process before legislation is introduced, in the end everybody has to agree with its contents. In my view, that is a misconception. This is a good Government, but I do not subscribe to the view that it is a perfect Government. Any legislation that is introduced will have its critics and detractors. It is not possible to please everybody, but the consultation process provides people who disagree with any part or intention of the legislation with a forum and an opportunity to air their views and have them heard. In effect, the Government is giving those people who may disagree the opportunity to air their views publicly and bring them to the attention of the legislative draftspersons. This does not necessarily mean that all their concerns will be addressed, because somewhere along the line the Government has to make the hard decisions on what should be incorporated in the legislation or in the regulations. I believe that this is an important point not only in relation to this legislation but also for all legislation and all consultative processes involving the distribution of Green Papers, or whatever form that consultation process takes. The fact that an open and public consultative process is undertaken does not mean that everybody's needs or demands will be satisfied by that process; in fact, it would be impossible to do that.

I have mentioned the member for Callide a couple of times during my speech, and I hope she does not mind my doing so. I thought her contribution to the debate on this Bill tonight was quite good. She also mentioned the need for the private sector to get involved in the provision of child-care, and I could not agree more. Major corporations, in particular, have a responsibility to their employees to begin to become involved in the provision of child-care. To be honest, I also believe that the Government should be setting an example and that at any time it constructs Government office buildings, it should ensure that provision is made for child-care facilities either within those office buildings or in premises within close proximity to those officers for the children of the employees who work there. This is an important matter that should be considered carefully. I agree with the member for Callide, who said that we should be encouraging private industry to take an active role in the provision of child-care, because employees actually having their children close to them is an important issue for many people who seek child-care. In conclusion, I commend the Minister for bringing this Bill before the Parliament. I commend also her staff and departmental officers who have worked very hard to bring it to the stage it has reached today. I believe it will be supported.

Time expired.

Ms SPENCE (Mount Gravatt) (7.58 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to speak in support of the Child Care Bill. Along with other members of this Parliament, I have had a good deal of experience with child-care and certainly a great deal of recent experience in working through the child-care system in Queensland. I have two young children whom I

have had in family day care centres and in private kindergartens in this State. As a mother, I know—and other women have said the same thing to me—that child-care is a matter that every parent cares about very deeply. Women have told me that they have shed more tears over child-care and worrying about child-care than over anything else in their working lives. The quality of child-care is a matter about which all working parents and those who desperately need child-care facilities care.

I thought that the contribution that the Opposition spokesman, Mr Slack, made to the debate was very good. However, I must take him to task over a couple of comments that he made. He mentioned that, in fact, parents often dump their children at child-care centres. He also stated that some of those parents should keep their children at home. It has certainly not been my experience that people have dumped their children at child-care centres. I think that most people think carefully about the type of care they want to give their children and choose child-care after giving the matter a great deal of thought.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: Some have no alternative.

Ms SPENCE: A lot of these people have no alternative. Obviously, some people choose to go to work, but others are forced to go to work. However, for all parents who place their children in child-care centres, the quality of child-care is central not only to their lives but also to the quality of their children's lives. I also wish to take to task the member for Landsborough for the contribution she made to the debate. She scurrilously stated that the new child-care centres were being constructed in Labor electorates throughout this State. That may be true in itself, but I believe she made a very sad and misinformed attack on the Government. I can inform the House that the Minister's department has performed very well in assessing the areas of need in this State. I know that I have been trying to get another child-care centre in my electorate, but without much success. I am constantly being told that my electorate is not yet an area of greatest need, so I commend the Minister and her departmental officers for their method of determining the location of child-care centres. Hopefully, my electorate will get another child-care centre soon. I notice that the Minister is not making any promises.

Generally, I wish to address the consultation period, because I believe that this legislation has been subjected to an exhaustive and comprehensive consultative process. As a result of the consultative period that preceded the presentation of this Bill, the main players in the child-care business in Queensland are very happy with the legislation that is being debated tonight. It is to the credit of the Minister and her departmental officers that Opposition members feel that they can support this Bill and that the industry, generally, has accepted the legislation. I would just like to talk briefly about the consultation process. At the beginning of this process, the child-care industry was divided and extreme in its views on the new regulations. Although these views and underlying philosophies have not changed dramatically, the consultation process has enabled a compromise position to be reached by the industry. This compromise takes into account all the views expressed during the consultation and achieves the balance that was sought between quality and affordability considerations.

Prior to the establishment in January 1991 of the Office of Child Care, consultations took place on the broad direction of the Child Care Bill. In November 1990, meetings involving representatives of the commercial and community child-care sectors, local government and other Government departments took place. Throughout 1990 and 1991, comprehensive consultation occurred throughout the length and breadth of Queensland. The department issued over 7 000 copies of a paper entitled "Child Care Regulations". It was a discussion paper established by all the main players in the child-care field and the department took note of the recommendations that were made as a result of that discussion paper. All recipients of the discussion paper, parents, and other interested individuals and organisations were then invited to attend consultation meetings

throughout 1991. Participants were requested to express their views openly and frankly. The desire of the Minister to be fully apprised of all views was expressed to the over 1 000 participants. After these meetings, 20 peak bodies were consulted separately on the discussion paper. At these meetings, the cross-fertilisation of views and some acknowledgment of common ground between the various sectors of the industry took place. As a result of a second lot of consultations, a second discussion paper was issued entitled "Child Care Regulations—Proposals for Change". Over 2 000 copies of this discussion paper were distributed throughout Queensland. This document then enabled the industry to relay its further comment and views back to the Government. Private submissions supported the Government's moves in ensuring higher quality standards and many also urged the Government to consider the need for even higher quality standards than those proposed, or the need to consider affordability issues.

The exhaustive consultation process has enabled the Government to present a set of new child-care regulations that have the support of the whole child-care sector. Although there are some individuals and sectors of the industry that may not agree entirely with all that is included in the proposed regulations, all represented bodies have agreed to the negotiated set of proposals. Therefore, the regulations that have been developed have the support of the whole community. The Minister, her department, and the whole child-care sector is to be congratulated on this remarkable achievement. It represents the balance that all have been seeking between the quality and the affordability considerations. I support the Bill before the House.

Ms POWER (Mansfield) (8.04 p.m.): It gives me a great deal of personal satisfaction to participate in this debate. In common with my colleagues, I congratulate the Minister, her staff and the child-care associations on their hard work which has produced this legislation and regulations. My support for child-care has been reported in the media as unusual as I do not have children, but it only shows how little some people understand the need for child-care and the regulation of these services. This legislation supports the Government's commitment to children, who are Queensland's most valuable resource. The experiences that children have in their early, formative years will be the basis for future growth and development.

Governments have the responsibility to ensure that child-care centres are regulated so that they provide affordable and quality services. Children deserve an environment that is safe, warm, stimulating and secure. There have been examples of violations against children in kindergartens, and this legislation puts some safeguards into place. Unlike some of my colleagues, I did attend a child-care centre—although the term should be used lightly in that case. It is important that I set the record straight about who uses child-care. After listening to members of the Opposition, one would believe that it is only married women who work that use child-care services, and that these women should not be working, but should be home looking after their children so that they do not become juvenile delinquents. I resent the implications in the statements of the members of the Opposition. I, in common with many others in this House, went to a child-care facility of some sort, as do many youngsters whose mothers work for a whole range of reasons. I might say that it is not children who get dumped sometimes; it is their parents. The reasons for the use of child-care are numerous and are outlined in the library publication on child-care—

> "The demand for child care has arisen because many women need to work to contribute financially to the family income. Child care facilities are also required by women obtaining educational qualifications/training to obtain better job prospects. Migrants learning English also need child care facilities, and it also provides a break for the parents of disabled children. Parents who care for their children full-time require child care services to attend appointments, and in times of family illness etc.

> Formal child care services imply an expansion of the education system to younger and younger children and wider interaction between young children, particularly for single parent families."

I emphasise that last point—single parent families, most of whom are women. Irrespective of their status, women have the right to choose whether they work or not, and what sort of child-care they wish to use.

Child-care is not a new phenomenon in society. For a multitude of reasons parents have always needed to make arrangements to have their children cared for away from the home. Prior to the industrial revolution in Australia, both men and women took care of the children as they went about their work. The industrial revolution saw the introduction of work outside the home for both women and men. Most of the children of working parents were cared for by a number of informal arrangements with relatives, friends, or older siblings. However, some would care for themselves and the problems of the latchkey child certainly existed at that time. This problem was exacerbated by the industrial conditions for women, which often included a 60-hour working week.

Although the first Australian creche was opened in 1888 in Collingwood, Melbourne, the first Queensland creche was not opened until 1907 in Fortitude Valley by the Creche and Kindergarten Association. This non-profit community organisation concerned with the care and education of children from birth to eight years of age played a major role in the evolution of formal child-care in Queensland with the establishment of both creches and kindergartens. It also established the former Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers College in 1911, thereby contributing to the professionalisation of the early childhood sector. For many years, creches met the needs of working parents or poor parents while kindergartens met the developmental needs of preschool children of middle-class families. The staff chosen for creches had nursing backgrounds, while those chosen for kindergartens possessed early childhood qualifications.

The Great Depression of the 1930s took its toll on the health of young children. In response, in 1939 the Commonwealth Government set up the Lady Gowrie child centres as demonstration centres in each capital city. These centres remain today as a focal point for education and resourcing of other child-care services, although they have moved a long way from the strong influences of the medical model. While kindergartens affiliated with the Creche and Kindergarten Association and State Government preschools are widely accepted for the value of their group experiences for young children, the acceptance of the use of long day care centres by families has been very slow and has been accelerated only by the realisation that economic necessity has propelled many women into the work force.

The 1970s saw the beginning of significant changes in the child-care industry in both Queensland and the rest of Australia. In 1972, the Commonwealth introduced its Child Care Act, under which authority capital funds were provided for the establishment of non-profit long day care centres which were paid an operational subsidy to assist in meeting the cost of the service. At this time, the Commonwealth identified existing non-profit child-care centres in Queensland and other States for provision of operational subsidies. At the same time, the Queensland Government recognised the need to describe standards for child-care centres and kindergartens. Consequently, the Childrens Services (Day Care Centres) Regulations 1973 were introduced, under which the authority to license child-care centres was assigned to local authorities, while the role of the State Government has been to assess the suitability of senior staff working in child-care centres.

In 1971, the Commonwealth introduced funding for family day care schemes under which home-based care is registered, supported and monitored by staff who regularly visit the homes. This form of child-care has proved to be extremely popular in Queensland

where approximately 50 per cent of all children using child-care services attend family day care homes. In 1974, the Queensland Professional Child Care Centres Association was established. This association represents a substantial number of the proprietors of commercially operated child-care centres. It is important to realise that, of the 346 long day care centres that operate in Queensland, 211 or 61 per cent are run on a commercial basis. In no other State or territory does the number of commercial centres outstrip the number of non-profit centres. At all times, these centres have been required to meet the same statutory licensing requirements as non-profit centres.

In the mid-1970s, two important qualifications were established for persons working or intending to work in the child-care industry. They were: the child-care practices certificate for assistants and the associate diploma in child-care for group-leaders and directors of centres. The establishment of these qualifications formally recognised the fact that the group care of young children for long periods requires particular skills and training on the part of staff. Prior to the introduction of these qualifications, the only persons deemed to possess a suitable qualification to work in child-care centres were early childhood teachers and registered nurses. The associate diploma in child-care is now considered to be the minimum qualification that will equip staff with the knowledge and skills to work in responsible positions in child-care centres.

The 1980s was a decade of no less significant development than the 1970s. In 1982, the State Government introduced the Children's Services (Family Day Care) Regulations under which the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs licenses family day care schemes. This formalised the choice that parents have to place children either with registered day providers who are resourced, supported and monitored by staff of a family day care scheme or with an unregistered backyard care provider, as they are often called. With its statutory requirements for family day care, Queensland set a good example for other States to follow.

In 1984, the Commonwealth and State Governments entered into a joint agreement to establish 10 long day care centres in high-need areas throughout Queensland. This was the first foray by the State Government into the funding of long day care centres and was a very modest venture with only about $400,000 of State funds being provided in 1984-85. Subsequent joint agreements between the State and the Commonwealth have resulted in the establishment of a total of 44 long day care centres in high-need areas. In 1986, the Commonwealth amended its Child Care Act in two significant ways. Firstly, the provision of fee relief on a family income test basis replaced the complicated system of special needs funding for families. However, at this stage, fee relief was provided only to families who used non-profit centres in receipt of the Commonwealth Government's operational subsidy. Secondly, the requirement that Commonwealth-funded centres employ either early childhood teachers or registered nurses was removed. The decision was made that the determination of suitable qualifications would be a matter for the States to decide. Unfortunately, Queensland's day care centre regulations do not require the employment of qualified staff in child-care centres. Therefore, this guarantee of the maintenance of quality was lost.

As for the 1990s—judging by the achievement to date, we are in the most exciting and dynamic decade for child-care in Queensland. In January 1991, the Commonwealth expanded the provision of fee relief to all licensed long day care centres, both non-profit and commercially operated. This change recognised the vital role played by the private sector and the importance of the application of an equitable approach to financial assistance for families that require child-care. The State Government has firmly fulfilled its pre-election commitment to the provision of child-care services by injecting long-overdue funds into this area. In 1990-91, the State allocated $8.4m to child-care compared with the $840,000 allocated to child-care in the former Government's last

Budget. That commitment has not wavered with the allocation of $13.4m in the current financial year. Furthermore, the Office of Child Care was established in January 1991 and the number of child-care staff in regional offices was trebled. Hand in hand with the enhanced profile of child-care in Queensland is the increased professionalism of the child-care industry. This has manifested itself by the recent determination of the Child Care Industry Award—State, which introduced a career path for workers in the industry and acknowledged the importance of formal qualifications. At last, the mantle of babysitter can be removed from those people who have had to tolerate less than ideal working conditions. In addition, a family day care award is currently being negotiated for family day care coordinators.

Today, in Queensland, all three levels of government are working together to meet the community's child-care needs. At last it is recognised that it is not simply up to individuals to provide for their children but that families, the Government and the general community must work together to provide those much-needed support centres. In this context, the introduction of new child-care legislation is required to meet the demand from the community for better quality services for its children—services that will provide a standard more consistent with the standard provided in other States and territories. I support the Bill.

Debate, on motion of Mr Beattie, adjourned.

STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (8.16 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to make various amendments of the statute law of Queensland, to repeal certain Acts, to make certain transitional arrangements and to declare certain matters."

Motion agreed to.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER read a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending the necessary appropriation.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (8.17 p.m.): I move—

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

This Bill facilitates minor amendments to 62 Acts of Parliament. These amendments are concise or of a minor nature, and are not controversial. Most of them amend or adjust minor drafting errors in names or spelling. Previous practice with statute law Bills was not to include amendments introducing policy changes or issues of substance—in other words, to limit statute law Bills to amendments of a housekeeping nature. The Government decided that this practice was too restrictive, and that in future minor policy amendments could be included in statute law Bills provided they are concise or of a minor nature, and not controversial.

The format of this Bill differs significantly from that used in past omnibus Bills. The Bill contains six clauses and five schedules. Each schedule serves a particular purpose. For example, Schedule 1 deals with minor amendments—that is, amendments of a minor policy nature. Schedule 2 deals with amendments by way of statute law revision. These amendments correct minor errors ranging from typographical errors to the updating of citations. Naturally, if an Act contains some amendments of a minor policy nature and some dealing with statute law revision, all amendments to that Act are placed in Schedule 1. The Explanatory Notes are now placed at the end of each Act being amended. Each amendment to an Act is numbered, and the note explaining the nature of the amendment can be identified easily. The notes are also given headings to give a general indication of the nature of the amendment. The notes are not part of the Bill.

The review of the statute book as a whole continues. As part of this review, unnumbered provisions in the Auctioneers and Agents Act 1971 and the Credit Act 1987 have been numbered to allow ease of reference. Further amendments to the Acts Interpretation Act 1954 are also proposed. These amendments are explained in more detail in the Explanatory Note that follows them, but broadly the amendments will achieve the following results—

the Act will be reordered to make it more user friendly;

its provisions will be recast in plain English; and

it will allow work to continue on the establishment of a database of Queensland legislation.

The Bill also provides retrospective operation to proposed new section 10.10 of the Workers Compensation Act 1990. This amendment will remove any doubt whether compensation payable under the repealed Workers Compensation Act 1916 can be recovered in cases where the injured worker has been awarded damages for the same injury. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Lingard, adjourned.

STAMP AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns—Treasurer) (8.21 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the Stamp Act 1894."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns—Treasurer) (8.22 p.m.): I move—

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

This Bill provides for a number of amendments necessary because of changes in commercial practice. Other amendments improve provisions of the Act to avoid unintended consequences arising and to eliminate possible avenues for duty avoidance. In summary, these amendments are—

an exemption for transfers of shares listed on a stock exchange which effect securities loans or the redemption of those loans and which are endorsed by the stock exchange or by a member of the stock exchange. These exemptions are to facilitate the meeting of stock delivery deadlines and are to apply from 4 November 1991;

the removal of the nominal duty from policies of reinsurance. This is consistent with the general principle of the Act that duty not apply again where it has already been paid on a primary document. This will apply from 1 July 1988 for reinsurance effected under treaty agreements which would have attracted duty only because of the wider insurance duty provisions introduced at that time;

amendments to the provisions dealing with the acquisition of interests in companies holding predominantly land to—

exclude share issues which do not alter the proportionate interests of existing share-holders—this is to apply from 26 April 1988—or are made to a transferor of land to the company where full conveyance duty is paid on the company's acquisition of the land;

exclude units in a public unit trust holding land from being regarded as land for the purposes of the provisions;

allow a recalculation of duty to exclude the value of land under a contract of sale where that contract is later rescinded;

provide an offset of the conveyance duty paid on the transfer of an interest in a trust or of the shares in a trust company which holds land where that land is also taken into account in calculating duty under the provisions dealing with acquisitions of interests in companies holding predominantly land;

provide for the point of acquisition of shares in a company holding predominantly land being acquired under an agreement to be at the date of that agreement. Where the agreement is rescinded or registration of the share transfer cannot be completed, those shares will be subsequently disregarded in assessing duty under the provisions; and

establish the time within which statements regarding the acquisition of shares are to be lodged with the commissioner and to remove a definitional problem which could have facilitated duty avoidance; and

amendments to the provisions imposing duty on oral property transactions to—

provide that these do not apply to impose duty on an issue of units in a land-holding public unit trust or to an acquisition by a trust beneficiary where conveyance duty has been paid by the trustee in respect of the same acquisition; and

remove from the operation of these provisions acquisitions which also fall under the provisions applying duty to acquisitions of shares in companies holding predominantly land or to which those provisions do not apply because a majority interest or a relevant part was acquired prior to their commencement.

The Bill also contains several measures to assist in the administration of the Act. There is provision for the issue by the Commissioner of Stamp Duties of requirements regarding the information and forms necessary to be supplied when documents are lodged for assessment or requests for refund of duty are made. These requirements, which will replace a number of the existing regulations, will be published in the *Government Gazette* and will provide taxpayers and their representatives with a clear statement of the requirements of the Office of State Revenue. This amendment also provides for a formal objection provision to enable taxpayers to dispute assessments and receive reasons for

assessment without the cost and formality of a court appeal. The provisions which allow stamp duty on documents to be accounted for by return are expanded to allow firms of solicitors to pay certain conveyance duty to the Office of State Revenue by return. The amendment introduces a commissioner-imposed penalty for late lodgement of the statement required upon sale of a business, as an alternative to a court penalty. This provision puts the penalty provision on a basis consistent with the interest-type penalties available elsewhere in the Act for late lodgement of other documents.

As announced in the Budget Speech, along with other revenue Acts, there will be a complete rewriting of the Stamp Act. The State's revenue legislation will be better structured so that it is easier to find relevant provisions. The new drafts will use modern language in line with the general trend in Queensland towards plain English legislation. The legislation will also be streamlined through the elimination of duplicated or inconsistent provisions and of unnecessary procedures. These reforms will be of considerable assistance to taxpayers, their advisers and all who work with the State's revenue legislation. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Lingard, adjourned.

EAGLE FARM RACECOURSE AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. R. J. GIBBS (Wolston—Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing) (8.27 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the Eagle Farm Racecourse Act 1955."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. R. J. GIBBS (Wolston—Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing) (8.28 p.m.): I move—

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

This Bill has been introduced for three reasons. The first is to clarify the power of the trustees to acquire land. The trustees require this power to enable them to effect racecourse improvements. The second purpose of the Bill is to deem the trustees of Eagle Farm Racecourse to be a statutory body within the meaning of the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977. This will require the trustees to account to Parliament, through me, for the resources under their control. The trustees of such venues as Albion Park Paceway and Bowen Racecourse, who are appointed pursuant to the Racing Venues Development Act, are all audited by the Auditor-General. Similarly, the trustees of racecourses appointed under the Land Act are required to be audited and report through the Minister for Land Management. This amendment makes the trustees of Eagle Farm Racecourse similarly accountable. The Bill also clarifies the procedure for appointing, removing and suspending trustees. There is no set term of appointment for trustees. Trustees will be able to be removed or suspended in the same manner as they are appointed, that is, by the Governor in Council by Order in Council. This is consistent with the procedure for trustees appointed under the Racing Venues Development Act. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Veivers, adjourned.

TRAFFIC AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development) (8.30 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the Traffic Act 1949."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development) (8.31 p.m.): I move—

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

This Bill contains initiatives which reinforce this Government's commitment to reduce the road toll in this State and, in particular, to crack down on drink-drivers. The amendments contained in this Bill provide for the issuing of on-the-spot traffic offence notices for first offence drink-drivers when their blood alcohol concentration exceeds the prescribed legal limit but does not exceed .15. Drink-driving remains one of the major causes of death and injury on our roads. However, it is true that in recent years significant gains have been made in reducing the level of alcohol-impaired driver and motor cycle rider fatalities. Ten years ago, over 50 per cent of drivers and riders killed on our roads had illegal blood alcohol levels. The latest figures for January to August this year show that it has reduced to 22 per cent.

There have been many factors which have contributed to this including—

the introduction of random breath-testing in December 1988;

zero blood alcohol limits for new drivers and drivers of heavy vehicles and public passenger vehicles introduced in January this year; and

intensive and hard-hitting media public education campaigns developed and undertaken by the Road Safety Division of the Department of Transport.

The latest weapon to be introduced in the fight against drink-drivers was the introduction of booze buses on 2 October this year. Booze buses will provide greater flexibility for the police in the enforcement of drink-driving offences and enable more efficient processing of offenders. These amendments to the Traffic Act will complement the operation of the booze buses and reduce the amount of time that police currently spend in charging and prosecuting first offenders. Under the present procedures, when a police officer detects an offender by means of a roadside breath test, that suspected offender is then taken to the nearest police station equipped with a breathalyser for further testing. If the suspected offender's alcohol level exceeds the prescribed limit, the police then prepare a bench charge sheet and the person is formally charged at the police watchhouse in the Magistrates Court district in which the offence occurred. Bail slips then have to be made out before the offender can be released. This process can take between two and four hours, depending on the proximity of the station and the number of drink-driving offenders waiting to be processed. Under the present system, it is then mandatory that all drivers charged with drink-driving appear in court.

For first offenders pleading guilty—and about 92 per cent of all offenders plead guilty—the process takes 10 to 15 minutes, and all cases are led by a police prosecutor. If the driver pleads not guilty, the matter is deferred in court to a later date and the police charging officer is required to attend court and give evidence. The on-the-spot traffic offence notice is aimed at eliminating much of this process if the drink-driving offender wishes to plead guilty and not go to court. It has been estimated by the police that with over 13 700 prosecutions per year for first offenders with blood alcohol levels of less than .15, more than 27 000 hours of police and court time will be saved.

In September this year, the Parliamentary Travelsafe Committee tabled its third report in this House. That report made recommendations relating to road safety education and traffic law enforcement. The all-party committee specifically examined drink-driving offences and made the following recommendations—

(1) That offending drink-drivers detected with a blood alcohol content—BAC—above the legal limit be issued with a traffic offence notice after testing, and that court appearances not be required unless the alleged offender so decides or is a repeat offender. This will free up thousands of police hours and remove the present unfair inconsistency in penalties. The penalty should continue to include loss of licence and a fine. Such penalties should be commensurate with the level of BAC and be contained in a set schedule.

(2) That drivers wishing to apply for a restricted driving permit on the grounds of hardship involving isolation or employment which requires the offender to drive have access to a magistrate to apply for such a permit. However, this shall only apply for the first drink-driving offence, and where the BAC was below the prescribed level.

Those recommendations are contained in this amending Bill.

I would like to mention a few of the key police elements contained in these amendments. These amendments do not preclude any motorist charged with a first drink-driving offence from going to court to have the matter heard before a magistrate. These amendments allow the motorist to choose to either pay the fine and accept the licence disqualification or go to court, as is currently the case. If the motorist chooses to pay the fine within 21 days, then his or her licence is cancelled automatically 21 days from the date of issue of the ticket. If the matter is heard by the courts, then the period and commencement of the licence disqualification is determined by the courts. The opportunity to apply to the courts for a work restricted provisional licence on the grounds of hardship has been preserved in these amendments. As is currently the case, these provisional licences can only be granted to first offenders under a blood alcohol limit of .15. However, the offender is required to notify the court and the Department of Transport before the 21-day expiry of his or her intention to do so.

The amendment also allows for a district superintendent of traffic to withdraw a traffic offence notice in certain circumstances. These circumstances would include instances in which it was subsequently found that the offender was a second or multiple offender—in which case the matter would proceed by complaint and summons. However, in these cases, the superintendent has to document the reasons for withdrawing the ticket in a form approved by the Commissioner of Police. In terms of the practical application of the drink-driving traffic offence notices, the police will issue the ticket to the offender and write on the ticket the blood alcohol level with the fine and disqualification period. A schedule in the regulations which relates the different blood alcohol levels with fine levels and licence disqualification periods will be prepared. These fine levels and licence disqualification periods will reflect what is currently being applied by the courts.

While I am aware that there may be some in the community who believe that all drink-drivers should be made to face the embarrassment of going to court for drink-driving offences—and that will continue to be the case for the most serious offences—the research on behaviour deterrence indicates that the certainty of a penalty and the swiftness of its application are more important in altering behaviour than embarrassment. On-the-spot penalties for first offence drink-drivers has the support of the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties. In a letter dated 7 October 1991 to my colleague the Honourable Minister for Police, the President of the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties stated—

> "On a preliminary basis, I would indicate that the Council would not object to a system whereby a person could opt to pay a drink driving fine without having to appear in Court."

Mr Foley: A wise and learned view.

Mr HAMILL: Indeed. As I have indicated to honourable members, this measure is a further step in reducing the level of drink-driving in our community, and I commend it to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Lingard, adjourned.

NATIONAL RAIL CORPORATION (AGREEMENT) BILL

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development) (8.38 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

> "That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to approve and give effect to an agreement between the State of Queensland, the Commonwealth and certain other States relating to the National Rail Corporation Limited, and for other purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development) (8.39 p.m.): I move—

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

It is my pleasure to introduce the National Rail Corporation (Agreement) Bill 1991, which will ratify the agreement signed by the Premier at the Special Premiers Conference in Sydney on 30 July 1991. Under the terms of the agreement, which is Schedule 1 to the Bill, the signatory Governments were required to submit legislation to their Parliaments to ratify the agreement to enable the National Rail Corporation—NRC—to commence operations on 31 January 1992 or such later date as agreed between the share-holding States and the Commonwealth.

Drafts of the Bill have been discussed with Queensland Railways, the Treasury Department and the Office of the Cabinet. This Bill is one of the outcomes of the report from the National Rail Freight Initiative Committee, which was established to examine strategies for the revival of intersystem rail freight. The committee reported that by establishing a national rail freight organisation, improving infrastructure and changing

work practices, a potential profit could be achieved on interstate rail freight, with resultant positive flow-on effects for the Australian economy. This committee had representatives from the Commonwealth and State Governments as well as major rail-users and the unions.

The Government decided that Queensland would not be a share-holder in the corporation while assisting in the formation of the NRC and transferring relevant interstate rail assets to the corporation on a long-term lease basis. The agreement allows Queensland the option to take equity in the corporation during the first three years of NRC operations at no extra cost than if it took equity from the outset. If Queensland decides to participate on a share-holder basis during the last two years of the five-year establishment period, the terms and conditions of the purchase of shares will be determined by the existing share-holders. These existing share-holders are the Commonwealth, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. Queensland is prepared to make a contribution towards the construction of a standard gauge rail link to the port of Brisbane if the NRC adopts this project at a later date, and would consider taking up equity on that basis. Projects such as this extension of the network are a matter for the commercial judgement of the corporation.

Irrespective of Queensland's equity position, if the NRC achieves the performance levels forecast by the National Rail Freight Initiative Task Force set up to sort out financial, equity, operational and labour arrangements, the NRC can be expected to significantly reduce the operating losses currently incurred by Queensland Railways on interstate rail freight. The establishment of the NRC is intended to ensure that interstate rail freight operates without Government subsidies. It is expected to take the NRC three years to break even and to be self-supporting after five years.

The NRC was incorporated on 19 September 1991, with Mr Ted Butcher as the inaugural Chair. The corporation will operate under the provisions of the corporations law as a strictly commercial corporation at arm's length from the Government. Directors will be required to act accordingly to the provisions of the corporations law in the interests of all share-holders. The NRC will be subject to the laws of the Commonwealth and relevant States on the same basis as any private company. It will be subject to the Trade Practices Act.

The NRC network will connect the mainland State capital cities with Alice Springs. The NRC's activities in Queensland are restricted to interstate operations and are confined to a network terminating at Brisbane. The NRC will start operations on 31 January 1992, beginning with marketing and terminal operations. The required functions will be transferred from other rail systems. Under the agreement, the various parties have an obligation to transfer nominated functions, and to provide access to related assets. All functions and assets have to be transferred within three years. In this way the corporation is assured of control over the functions and assets critical to its business. The corporation will have a strong customer orientation and will provide services that meet the needs of existing customers and attract new customers. It has to provide efficient and reliable freight services. The NRC will let contracts for goods and services, including maintenance and operations, on the open market. For the first time, there will be a sole operator of a national interstate rail freight network. It will control marketing and service delivery.

Another advantage is that the corporation will be setting itself up with an enterprise award that embodies best practice labour productivity standards. The task force, in its March 1991 report, estimated productivity gains of at least 35 per cent are possible. During the establishment period, the first five years of operations, the Commonwealth will provide funds totalling $296m to be counted as equity. The bulk of these funds will be provided in the first three years to be used primarily to fund the capital program designed

to overcome past investment deficiencies. The share-holding States will also make equity injections worth $119m. In addition, each party to the agreement has agreed to fund the losses incurred by its part of the network.

The agreement represents real cooperation between the parties in the interests of achieving genuine micro-economic reform in the rail industry. The establishment of the NRC is a significant national achievement. The agreement, to which the Government was a party, will make a major contribution to land transport reform by promoting proper, commercially based competition between transport modes.

I commend this Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Lingard, adjourned.

HEALTH RIGHTS COMMISSION BILL

Hon. K. V. McELLIGOTT (Thuringowa—Minister for Health) (8.45 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

> "That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to provide for independent review and conciliation with respect to services provided by health service providers to health service users and for improvements to those services."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. K. V. McELLIGOTT (Thuringowa—Minister for Health) (8.46 p.m.): I move—

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

The draftsman has well captured the purpose of this Bill in its long title—

> "A Bill for an Act to provide for independent review and conciliation with respect to services provided by health service providers to health service users and for improvements to those services."

The legislation is at the forefront of health consumer protection in Australia. It is watchdog legislation for consumers, and I have no doubt that it will lead the way to the enhancement of health consumer rights nationally. The Bill provides for the establishment of an independent Health Rights Commission to receive complaints over a range of public and private health services, and to assist in the resolution of disputes between users and providers with the aim of improving complaint resolution processes and, as a consequence, the standard and quality of services. The establishment of that commission honours a pre-election commitment of the Goss Government and responds to community demand for greater accountability in the provision of health services and for recognition of the rights of consumers to participate effectively in decisions about their health care.

Under previous Governments, the delivery of health services lacked planning, system problems were ignored or swept under the carpet and, in some cases, considerable distress was experienced by health consumers and their families. The repercussions of Ward 10B, for example, still reverberate around the State. The Bill

therefore is an integral part of the reform of health services undertaken by the Goss Government to make health service providers more accountable, effective and responsive. Honourable members will recall that earlier this year, I introduced into the House health services legislation providing for historic and far-reaching reform of the public health system. Community needs and community participation in the delivery of health services also underpinned that legislation. The majority of health consumers appreciate the health care that they receive and only a very small percentage feel that they need to comment on their experience. However, the reality is that things can and do go wrong. Systems are not perfect and there are some health professionals, for all kinds of reasons, who do not provide health care of the highest quality. Consumers have a right to expect that the service they receive is a quality one. There are also services provided outside the mainstream health system where the level of training, supervision or overall control of these services is not as accountable. These services will come within the jurisdiction of the commission.

The legislation is the result of extensive consultation with the health service industry and with consumer and community organisations. There is broad support for the legislation. I believe that the Bill represents a balanced outcome to protect the concerns of health service providers and the aspirations of consumers. The Trades and Labour Council and the Queensland branch of the Australian Medical Association agree on the need to facilitate passage of the Bill; however, total agreement on some matters has not been achieved. I recognise that many of the concerns will not be overcome by amendment to the Bill, as they relate to issues of protocol and how the newly appointed commissioner will relate to providers.

The Health Rights Commissioner will be equally committed to promoting and protecting the rights of both providers and health consumers. The qualifications for appointment of the commissioner reflect this balance and set the tone for the legislation generally. In the selection process, regard is to be given to the person's knowledge, experience or interests in relation to health services, the resolution of disputes, the needs of users, the needs of providers, and the aspirations, values and special needs of persons who may suffer disadvantage in the provision of services. The commission will be a statutory body and totally independent of the Department of Health. The commissioner will be statutorily obliged to act independently, impartially and in the public interest. The commissioner will report to the Parliament through the responsible Minister, and those matters upon which the Minister can direct the commissioner are limited, specific and clearly set out in the legislation. Any direction that the Minister gives the commissioner is to be included in the commissioner's report to this House, providing clear accountability of the Minister to the Parliament in relation to the independence of the commission.

The Bill provides for the development of a code of health rights and responsibilities within a period of three years of the commencement of the Act. The commissioner is required to consult widely with interested persons and organisations to ensure that the code has broad acceptance among users and providers. No other State specifically articulates a code of health rights or provides a mechanism to deal with any breach of those health rights. It is recognised that the exercise of the powers and functions under the legislation and the protocols developed by the commissioner are critical to the eventual acceptance of the commission among providers, users and the public generally. The Bill therefore provides for an oversighting advisory body, named the Health Rights Advisory Council, to be established. This council has the function of providing advice to the Minister and the commissioner on the redress of grievances relating to health services and will also advise the Minister on the general operation of the commission. The membership of the council will include representatives of users and providers. The Bill also requires the Minister to prepare and table in the Legislative Assembly a report on the

performance of the commission and the operation of the Act generally as soon as possible after the Act has been in operation for two years.

In relation to the handling of health services complaints—the emphasis in the Bill is on assisting users and providers to resolve matters locally or by way of conciliation. We are all aware that the vast majority of complaints are due to poor communication between consumers and providers and that, by a simple process of bringing the two parties together, most problems can be resolved. Conciliation will enable a complainant and provider to resolve a matter with the assistance of a mediator who will be skilled in dispute resolution. The integrity of conciliation is preserved in the legislation by requiring the conciliators to perform this function separately from the other activities of the commission. Conciliators are not to be involved in the investigation of complaints. Anything said or admitted during conciliation is privileged information and there is substantial penalty for unlawful disclosure of information arising out of conciliation.

Health service providers therefore can place their confidence in the system of conciliation to be established under this legislation. The rights of persons have been recognised and comprehensively protected in the Bill. The investigatory powers of the commissioner are regarded as conservative, and we will be monitoring the appropriateness of these provisions in relation to the effectiveness of the commission overall. The legislation gives a central role to the commissioner in providing assessment of all health service complaints, including those made against registered providers. The discretionary power of the commissioner to determine which authority has the most appropriate functions and powers to investigate a complaint will establish a special relationship between registration boards and the commissioner. However, it is important to note that the registration boards will retain all their present functions and powers in relation to disciplinary matters. This emphasises the fact that the commission does not have a prosecutory function. The commissioner's role is to make a report following any investigation or inquiry to an authority that has the ability to take action on matters raised in the report. The commission therefore does not only have the very important function of facilitating the resolution of complaints between users and providers of health services. It also has a key function in identifying areas of health policy, administration or service delivery arising out of health service complaints that can be changed or improved in the public interest. The Bill is designed to provide the commissioner with the opportunity for systems problems to be identified and appropriate action to be taken.

In introducing this Bill, I wish to take the opportunity to thank the Health Services Commissioner in Victoria, who performs a similar function in that State, for his advice early in the drafting process. The Victorian experience has been helpful in the development of legislation in Queensland that I am confident will provide a model for the rest of Australia. This Bill improves upon the Victorian legislation and breaks new ground in our endeavour to develop a health service system of the highest quality. In summary, the Bill achieves this by enshrining the development of a code of health rights and responsibilities; establishing a special relationship between registration boards and the commission; focusing on the public interest and the improvement of health services; maintaining the commitment to groups in the community with special health needs; and maintaining the requirement for consultation and a close working relationship with consumers and providers. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mrs McCauley, adjourned.

JUDICIAL REVIEW BILL

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—Attorney-General) (8.55 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act relating to the review on questions of law of certain administrative decisions, and for the reform of procedures relating to judicial review at common law, and for other purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—Attorney-General) (8.56 p.m.): I move—

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

I seek leave of the House to have my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The principal objective of the Judicial Review Bill is to ensure that duties imposed on public administrators by statute or the common law are performed and that public administrators act within the limits of their powers.

Upon enactment, the Bill will confer an important new right on persons aggrieved by administrative decisions and, that is, to obtain a written statement of reasons from the decision-maker. The Bill will also simplify the process for persons aggrieved by administrative decisions to challenge such decisions on grounds of legal error before the Supreme Court.

In performing the functions of judicial review, it is not the court's task to review the merits of an administrative decision. Rather, the court reviews the decision to see if it was within power and to determine whether the requirements of natural justice have been met.

Accordingly, the Judicial Review Bill seeks to reform the law relating to the review by the Queensland Supreme Court of administrative decisions and actions of public officials in Queensland.

The Judicial Review Bill is part of the administrative law reform package which was recommended in the Fitzgerald report and the proposed freedom of information legislation will complement this Bill.

Judicial review of administrative decisions and actions was examined and reported upon by the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission (EARC) and the Parliamentary Committee for Electoral and Administrative Review. I thank both bodies for their efforts, particularly EARC for its comprehensive report.

The present system of judicial review of administrative decisions and actions is based on the cumbersome and technical procedures for review by way of prerogative writs. These procedures will no longer exist but the Supreme Court will still have the power to make an order, the relief or remedy under which is in the nature of, and to the same effect as, the relief or remedy which could have been granted by means of a prerogative writ.

One of the substantive provisions of the Judicial Review Bill is clause 33 which will require a public administrator, on request, to provide a written statement of reasons concerning his or her decision to a person whose interests are adversely affected by such decision. The written statement must—

(i) set out the findings on material questions of fact;

(ii) refer to the evidence or other material on which the findings were based; and

(iii) give reasons for the decision.

Tony Fitzgerald QC in his report had this to say about the lack of a right to obtain reasons from public administrators in Queensland—

> "any potential litigation may be hamstrung by its inability to discover the basis, the reasons or even the fact of a decision.
>
> In the absence of any legislation giving individuals an enforceable right to obtain reasons and to see unpublished Government documents, including documents about themselves, these documents remain secret.
>
> Unfortunately, the High Court has ruled that a person has no right to reasons for a Government or departmental decision, even where a person's own special interests are affected. In this State both the litigant's ability to sue, and an individual's right to be informed about the Government, are limited by the absence of legislation giving individuals access to information held by the Government."

Upon the enactment of the Judicial Review Bill, a person will have an enforceable right to obtain reasons for an administrative decision where the interests of the person have been adversely affected.

The statement of reasons will greatly assist a person to determine whether a public administrator in making a decision has made an error in law or denied the person natural justice. Accordingly, the requirement to provide a statement of reasons will establish a new avenue of accountability in Queensland's public administration.

The statutory obligation to provide a statement of reasons will be capable of enforcement by a complaint to the Parliamentary Commissioner (the Ombudsman), or by court proceedings. Such proceedings will not attract any court filing fee and special rules as to costs will apply which will favour the applicant seeking the statement of reasons.

To ensure there is no doubt that the Parliamentary Commissioner can investigate failure to provide a statement of reasons, section 4 of the Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1974 has been amended.

The Judicial Review Bill is largely an adaptation of the Commonwealth Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act 1977 except that the Queensland legislation is wider in the following aspects—

(i) decisions made by the Governor in Council pursuant to statutory powers are reviewable; and

(ii) decisions made under a non-statutory program involving funds appropriated by Parliament or raised under the authority of an enactment are reviewable.

An example of this second type of decision would be a decision under a program operated by a shire council funded by rate collections, but having no statutory basis, and where such decision had an adverse effect on the interests of a citizen.

To achieve the purpose of having Governor in Council decisions reviewable, part 2 of the Constitution (Executive Actions Validity) Act 1988 has been repealed to ensure its provisions have no further prospective operation. These provisions gave the executive Government a licence to ignore procedural legislative requirements where a statutory power was exercised by the Governor in Council and the section arose out of the decision of the Queensland Supreme Court in Brisbane City Council v. Mainsel Investments Pty Ltd and the Commissioner for Railways.

The Bill provides for two broad forms of review i.e. The statutory scheme of judicial review and the simplified common law forms of review which will operate in a complementary fashion so that review sought under either scheme is able to be sought in the one proceeding.

The requirement that an applicant obtain leave of the Supreme Court to proceed with an application seeking the common law forms of review has been abandoned. Under both the statutory order of review and the simplified common law form of review, the Supreme Court has been given the power in the Bill to dismiss unmeritorious applications at an early stage in the proceedings.

Another significant feature of the Bill, which is designed to reduce legal costs, is provision for a cause of action for damages to be pleaded in, or joined with an application for judicial review, where they arise out of the same subject matter, subject to the controlling discretion of the Supreme Court to make directions for disposal of each matter in the most convenient manner.

At present, when a prerogative writ of certiorari, prohibition or mandamus is sought, the case is normally heard before a full court. It is considered that this procedure is a waste of judicial resources and the Bill provides that the judge or master, at a directions hearing, has a discretion as to whether the hearing of a judicial review application should take place before a single supreme court judge or before a full court.

On an application for a statutory order of review in respect of a decision, the Supreme Court may make any of the following orders-

(i) set aside the decision;

(ii) refer the matter back to the decision-maker for further consideration;

(iii) declare the rights of the parties;

(iv) direct any of the parties to do, or refrain from doing any act in relation to the particular matter.

The Bill also provides that the Supreme Court has a discretion to make special orders as to legal costs, on the application of a party, at an early stage in the proceedings. For example, the court may order one party to indemnify the other party or that one party is to bear only that party's costs of the proceedings, regardless of the outcome of the proceedings. This provision will assist less wealthy parties who have a meritorious case but are afraid of losing the application and therefore paying the legal costs of both parties to the proceedings.

I am pleased to introduce this Bill to the House today because it provides the average citizen with a simplified means of ensuring accountability and fairness in public administration and is further evidence of the commitment of this Government to the reforms recommended in the Fitzgerald report.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Littleproud, adjourned.

DAYLIGHT-SAVING

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (8.57 p.m.): I move—

"That the House resolves that the following question be submitted to the Electors qualified to vote for the Election of Members of the Legislative Assembly—

'Are you in favour of daylight saving'."

Motion agreed to.

DAYLIGHT-SAVING

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (8.58 p.m.): I move—

"That the question, 'Are you in favour of daylight saving', to be submitted to the Electors in accordance with the Resolution of the House be answered in the affirmative."

In moving notice of motion No. 2, which effectively is that the question, "Are you in favour of daylight-saving"—the motion which the House has just agreed to—should go to the people by way of referendum, I am moving that this question be answered in the affirmative. The member for Yeronga will second this motion and, as one would expect from a keen and agile tennis player, he is very supportive of daylight-saving and the recreational opportunities it brings with it.

Mr Veivers: He walks on his knuckles.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I bow to the expertise of the member for Southport when it comes to one's ability to walk on one's knuckles. In this debate, and in the referendum that will follow early next year, this Government is giving members of Parliament as citizens, and ultimately the whole community, to make for themselves what is very much a personal or quality-of-life decision. I believe that is appropriate for such a controversial and difficult question such as daylight-saving, which evokes a wide range of both rational and irrational responses within the community.

The main issues to be addressed in making this decision tonight, and in the ultimate referendum, fall broadly into two categories. One is the personal quality-of-life category and the second is the category relating to the importance to various sections of the business community of either having or not having daylight-saving. It was because of the significance to the business community that I was one of those who supported daylight-saving at the outset, and on balance I still support daylight-saving. What has weakened my resolve in this regard and made me think again is simply the fact that while there are benefits for some——

Mr Veivers interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: No, that was Emerald.

Mr Veivers: The girl at Wallumbilla, outside the phone box.

Mr W. K. GOSS: No, it was Emerald, which is different to the lady in the Biloela meatworks, but I will come to them. Although there is a benefit for certain sections of the business community, that is not the be-all and end-all of the matter.

Mr Veivers interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order!

Mr W. K. GOSS: The interests of those sections of the business community are important, but they are not the be-all and end-all of this debate. However, they need to be taken into account and I think it is incumbent on the business community—particularly certain sections of the business community, and I nominate the tourism industry, obviously, in this regard—to make a real contribution to this debate and to demonstrate to people when the time comes for them to make up their minds just what the costs to business are. Over the last two years, significant sections of the business community and prominent businesspeople have said to me and to other members of the Government that daylight-saving does not make such a big difference to them. Recently, I was surprised to be told by a representative of members of the Cairns Chamber of Commerce that they, including the people who are heavily involved in the tourism industry, are overwhelmingly opposed to daylight-saving. This took me by surprise because I had assumed, through its connection with the tourism industry, that the Chamber of Commerce would have been supportive of the proposal. The reasons given by members of the chamber varied. In some cases, the reason was their own quality of life and in other cases it was connected with the fact that tourists did not like to get up in the dark to catch the flight southwards, or to catch a boat out to the reef. It is typical of this debate that it evokes such a wide range of responses.

In the northern and western areas of this State, I struck very strong opposition to daylight-saving which was not related to a set of jokes about curtains fading or cows wearing sunglasses. In those areas of the State, there is a serious and adverse effect on the quality of life on many people who live in those areas—a fact which I did not appreciate until about the last year or so. As a State and as a community, Queenslanders have to face up to the fact that Queensland is very big—both north to south and east to west—which makes it very difficult to have a uniform approach and a uniform view of daylight-saving in this State.

Mr Veivers interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Mr Veivers referred to the lady in the phone booth at Wallumbilla. In fact, as I was walking down the street at Emerald, I stopped to make a phone call and this lady tapped on the window and asked if she could have a word. I stepped out of the phone booth——

Mr FitzGerald: With underpants on over the top of the strides?

Mr W. K. GOSS: No. Mr Deputy Speaker, I give the member for Lockyer an unequivocal assurance that I am one of those people who does not wear his underpants on the outside. I do not know what it is like up in Lockyer, but down in Logan, decidedly quizzical looks are given by constituents if a member wears his underpants on the outside. The young lady to whom I have referred happened to be a schoolteacher who was originally from Brisbane but who now teaches in Emerald. Even though she had no children of her own, she spoke to me about the effects of daylight-saving on the children who attend the primary school and about how they were all tired, which had an effect on their family life. I will not go into the details of the conversation except to say from her observation of the effects, as somebody who really did not have a direct interest, it was a very real issue and she thought it was a matter of concern.

I had morning tea at the Biloela meatworks where the ladies work very hard. I did not go there to talk to people about daylight-saving, but I thought that I would get their response, anyway. I made a comment to the effect of just being there for a cup of tea and a chat, and I said to them, "What do you think is going on? How are things going in Queensland?" They were all very polite and said that the Government was doing a good job, and they looked down at their cups of tea. Then I thought I would try to evoke a response, so I said, "Well, what do you think about daylight-saving?" Oh boy, did I evoke a response! I thought I would finish up leaving the Biloela meatworks in the same condition as a number of the other carcasses that come and go from that particular place. If I remember accurately, one woman summed it up by saying that their shift starts at about 6.30 a.m., which means that with two school-aged children, she has to get them out of bed at 4.30 when it is dark and get them over to the neighbour's place, then go to work. She picks them up at about 2.30 p.m. in the heat of the day after the shift finishes. They are all tired and cranky, and the kids still do not go to bed until an hour after the sun goes down. By the end of the week, because they are all tired and cranky, the quality of life for that family is severely affected. I had that complaint repeated to me by various people in numerous places, such as a shop-keeper in Tully and people in the pub at Richmond.

A significant number of Queenslanders have complained that daylight-saving is not a trivial matter and that it has a severe impact on their quality of life. As a consequence, I felt that it was incumbent upon me, as the leader of a Government that is determined to be a Government for all Queenslanders, that I reconsider my position and, in particular, reconsider my position in relation to the desire of many people to have a referendum. A common theme that I heard from people who raised this issue was that they thought they were entitled to have a say and they thought that they had been promised——

Mr Littleproud: You promised them that.

Mr W. K. GOSS: No, I did not, and I will come to that later. They thought that they had been promised a say by most, if not all, the major political parties. If I correctly recall 1989, the position of the major parties was certainly——

Mr Veivers interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Southport—fair go!

Mr W. K. GOSS: Talk about empty vessels! My recollection of the position of all the major parties—certainly the Labor Party—was to the effect that we would see how the

trial, which was brought in by the Ahern Cabinet and subsequently the Cooper Cabinet, went; after that we would make a judgment; and that one way of making a judgment might be to have a referendum. It was certainly talked about, but there was no clear-cut promise. I think a lot of people believed that that was what was going to be offered. They were disappointed when it was imposed on them by the Parliament and, more particularly, imposed on them by the Government. I must take a great measure of responsibility for that. I am now trying, I suppose, to make amends for that. As I said at the time the decision was announced, I think there was a measure of arrogance in the approach that was taken after the initial trial in 1988-89.

Mr Cooper: Oh!

Mr W. K. GOSS: The Leader of the Opposition is very puzzled by this lapse into humility. I do not feel in any way guilty about causing Russell Cooper to feel puzzled because it is a very natural state for him.

With this referendum, the Government is allowing the people of this State the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. The issue of daylight-saving is a very important and, I think, worthwhile democratic exercise to resolve, and it is also important for people to see that the issue has been resolved. In coming to this decision I still, on balance, for myself and for sections of the business community, favour daylight-saving. In coming to the position that I have, and in coming to the position that Queensland should have a referendum, I have been assisted by the careful persuasion of my deputy, Mr Tom Burns, who has a view on this matter. For obvious reasons, I have not asked him to second this particular motion.

Apart from expressing my "appreciation" to the Deputy Premier, I would also like to express my appreciation to my northern and rural task force, chaired by the member for Mount Isa, Mr McGrady. Mr McGrady and his colleagues are members of this Government from northern and rural areas. They have spent a considerable amount of time travelling around this State ensuring that this Government is not just a Government for its electorates, but for all of Queensland. They have travelled to conservative electorates and places that for a long period have never seen a member of Parliament. Much less has a conservative member of Parliament—or any member of Parliament—come along and actually listened to people in those electorates. Those electorates who have had a conservative member of Parliament come along and visit them have certainly had a member of Parliament who has come along and told them in his take-them-for-granted fashion what is best for them. The people that I spoke to in northern and western Queensland really appreciated the fact that Mr McGrady and other members of his task force, together or separately, were prepared to come along, advertise and conduct public meetings, and listen to people. The consequence of that has been a series of reports that have been made to me by the member for Mount Isa and his colleagues which have had a worthwhile and valuable input into Government policy and administration and service decisions in a range of areas.

The No. 1 issue that was raised with those people, and as a consequence, raised with me and other Ministers, was the issue of daylight-saving and the impact that it was having on people who live in various parts of Queensland. For that, I thank all the members of my northern and rural task force. I also thank all the members who are now going to participate in this very important exercise in the democratic process.

Mr FOLEY (Yeronga) (9.12 p.m.): I am very pleased to second the Premier's motion that the question, "Are you in favour of daylight-saving", to be submitted to the electors in accordance with the resolution of the House, be answered in the affirmative. Queensland can no longer afford the luxury of daylight-wasting. There has been daylight-

wasting in this State since 1894 when the Standard Time Bill was introduced. There was a time, following the passing of the Summer Time Act——

Mr Veivers interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I suggest to the member for Southport that I would like to hear the member for Yeronga. I presume that the member for Yeronga is on the side of the member for Southport. May we both hear him? I may be on his side as well.

Mr FOLEY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am delighted at the enthusiastic support for my proposition from the honourable member. I say "daylight-wasting", because the proposition being put is that Queensland should return to those sad days when it was out of step with the rest of Australia. The need to be serious about generating interstate commerce and generating jobs will be apparent to all Queenslanders. When Queensland entered into the Standard Time Act in 1894, it did so for the very same reasons that are now being confronted in this House. Indeed, that Act removed the disparities between the different colonies that had existed up until then. The arguments in favour of generating jobs and assisting interstate commerce have been well traversed in this debate, but I want to draw the attention of the House and the attention of the people of Queensland to another most important consideration, namely, I urge conservationists to support the case for daylight-saving. I do that because in a modern society there is a need to conserve energy.

It is a very funny thing that people in this society should retreat from the sun. People retreat from it, in the words of Shelley—

". . . like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing".

There was a time in the history of western culture when to orientate oneself was to turn towards the rising sun; when the very essence of culture took its meaning from the sun. Instead, people now burn fossil fuels in order to create light and in order to shift our waking hours away from the daylight hours of the sun. It is not an accident that during the First World War and during the Second World War, daylight-saving was introduced. It was introduced in order to promote efficiency and in order to save energy. That is something that should be kept in mind, because the practice of wasting energy simply cannot be tolerated if people are serious about a culture which does not continue to burn fossil fuels in order to supplement the energy which should otherwise be derived in the natural way from the sun. This is, of course, a life-style question and the good citizens of Yeronga, as they flock into Yeronga Park in that extra hour of daylight in summer, will look favourably upon it. I mention that by contrast to the situation in Kowanyama the other day when I had occasion to visit. At 5.30, it seemed truly like 3 o'clock in the afternoon but the local working day seemed to have passed notwithstanding how high the sun was in the heavens.

The case in favour of the public interest is a compelling one. It is a case which says that we should, where possible, use the energy of the sun in our culture and we should avoid, where possible, reliance upon generating electricity and utilising other fuels in order to compensate for the otherwise natural cycle of using our daylight hours. It is a matter, of course, on which questions of latitude and longitude will well and truly divide Queenslanders, for they put them in quite different geographical zones. I urge those Queenslanders concerned about conservation to take a step to support conservation by voting in favour of daylight-saving on referendum day.

Mr COOPER (Roma—Leader of the Opposition) (9.17 p.m.): I rise to speak to the motion that has been moved——

Mr McGrady: You have to be on our side. You really have to.

Mr COOPER: The honourable member took a fair bit of convincing, but we got him eventually. We got to the little people eventually. It was nice of the honourable member to get out among the people and actually find out what they really thought. He certainly found out.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr COOPER: The honourable member should ask him which side of the House he will be on when the vote is taken. The motion reads—

> "That the question, 'Are you in favour of daylight saving', to be submitted to the Electors in accordance with the Resolution of the House be answered in the affirmative."

Obviously there are many speakers on the list. It looks as if it will be a late night. The extra hour will be needed if all of those on the list speak. I listened to the honourable member for Yeronga. As usual, he gave a theatrical performance. No doubt he supports his constituents in Yeronga, and that is what the referendum is all about. I doubt whether we need to talk about it all night. Nevertheless, each honourable member would like to make his or her point. The honourable member for Yeronga mentioned various milestones such as war-time, but Queensland has been round for a long time and, ever since discovery, we seem to have succeeded quite well without daylight-saving. Most certainly Queensland has been the most successful of all the States, without daylight-saving, so I do not subscribe to the argument that we need daylight-saving or we will be set back behind the other States. We have been so much more successful than the southern States that we can well do without daylight-saving and still stay in front. This is a life-style decision that the people have to make, and I am very pleased that the people are being given a choice. That is the way it should be.

The purpose of the motion is to allow honourable members to determine how the referendum question should be worded for the purpose of mounting the respective "Yes" and "No" cases. That is what the debate is all about. It is really so that the "Yes" and "No" cases can be published. Obviously the "No" case will be put together by those who vote against the motion and the "Yes" case will be put together by those who vote for the motion. In any case, I believe that most of the people have already made up their minds. As I have indicated previously, the National Party recognises that daylight-saving is a life-style issue that affects each family individually and differently. In his movements around the State, the Premier has learnt some lessons and has received some advice from his rural task force. The penny finally dropped and we have had the very odd, private, informal discussion about whether to have a referendum or not, and I have indicated to the Premier that that is the way to go.

Mr W. K. Goss: It's your shout next time.

Mr COOPER: That suits me fine, especially if we win. In that case, a lot of people would be prepared to shout, because they would be pleased to see the last of daylight-saving. I am the same as anybody else and am entitled to my point of view. This is a classic example of listening to the people. The people have been most anxious about this whole issue of daylight-saving. In 1971, we had a trial, and at that time my children were attending school. They were travelling from our home into Wallumbilla, and I recall the stress that was placed on them and their mother. That stress has been reflected in other people in the trials that have been held during the last two or three years. It is a matter of anxiety and stress. Remembering the effect that the trials had on mothers and children, we should not be putting them through that stress again. I said then that I would never want to put people through such torture again. Unfortunately, we had another trial last year and we are having another one now. We will find that the same level of stress and anxiety exist, especially for young mothers with young children.

The National Party intends to allow its members a free vote on this motion. We did so with the legislation on permanent daylight-saving. A dispensation was given to members on this side of the House who, because it is a life-style issue, wanted to vote according to their wishes. The party room gave a dispensation to that, and the Opposition believes that was the correct way to go. It is good to hear that the Premier and the Leader of the Liberal Party are allowing their respective members to have a similar free vote. Queensland is a very diverse State, and there will be a diversity of views, certainly on a question such as this. Opposition members believe that the name of the game is to be able to represent people as individual members feel best, and that is only appropriate. As I have said, I intend to vote against the motion, because I do not believe that daylight-saving suits the people of Queensland. There will be a most definite view in the coastal cities, and schoolchildren particularly I have found to be a great testing ground. In any of the coastal cities such as Cairns, Proserpine or Bowen, if schoolchildren are asked how they feel about daylight-saving, they will let everyone know in no uncertain terms just how they feel. While they do not vote, I believe honourable members, as representatives, need to give representation to those people. As I say, let the people decide. The National Party is not in favour of daylight-saving. However, honourable members have been through that. The party has its own view.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr COOPER: I know he is not far away. I am fully aware of where he is, and I am fully aware of how he will be voting when the vote is taken. As I said, this is done in the best interests of democracy. As the Premier has mentioned, the business community, airlines, some sections of the media, be it television or whatever, also have their axe to grind, and the Opposition understands that.

Mr Veivers interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I rise to a point of order. I would like to hear what the Leader of the Opposition is saying. I cannot hear him because of the member for Southport.

Mr COOPER: Thank you for your protection.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear him either. I would like to hear the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr COOPER: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: I am very pleasantly disposed towards the member for Southport—just for the moment; not much longer, though.

Mr COOPER: Mr Speaker, I am fully aware of your generosity there, too, because the member for Southport has to vote later. I know where he wants to vote, and it is very important to him. I suggest he takes note of that as well. I would hate to see you send him out at a time like this. It will not be me who will be worried. It is an extra number, as far as I am concerned, but not as far as the "Yes" case is concerned, so stick around. Well, that is what I am expecting. As I say, just ease off. He would be in such a terrible mood.

Mr SPEAKER: Two pots or so?

Mr COOPER: Yes; a two-pot screamer. He would be in an awful mood tomorrow morning, Mr Speaker, if he gets sent out on this one tonight. He has a point to make, and he wants to make it. As I was saying, certain sections of the business community—the Stock Exchange, airlines, media representatives and so on—do have their cases to put. The Opposition recognises that. It also recognises, however, that there are sections of the business community, such as the Stock Exchange, which operate on a 24-hour basis around the world, be it daylight or dark. In this day and age, with communications and technology so advanced, there really is no real reason why those sections of the business community should have the consideration of daylight-saving as such. I have

spoken to quite a number of business people in this regard, and they have said, "Yes, as far as our business is concerned, we will support daylight-saving. As far as we personally are concerned, as a lifestyle thing, we would not support it." Those people have a decision to make when they go to the referendum. I do not know which way they are going to vote, but the Opposition recognises that. Discussions have been held with television people in regard to making adjustments to the time of the television news. It was virtually impossible for people to see the news at 6 o'clock, which was really 5 o'clock, and therefore it was impossible to keep up with the daily news. I believe that is an important factor. People say they like to be informed; they like to have communication; and that was really denied them during these daylight-saving trials. I have always wondered why the television stations could not move their news times back, and at least have a segment of perhaps 10 minutes at 7 o'clock, 8 o'clock and 9 o'clock to keep people informed.

Opposition members recognise the problems of the business community, airlines, and others. It comes back to what the Opposition said in the first place: it is a people issue, and the people must come first. We recognise the reasons given in support of daylight-saving, but the real position is that the great majority of Queensland, we believe, on the "No" side are disadvantaged by daylight-saving to really accommodate the desires of the minority. Going back a long, long way, the original intention of daylight-saving, I guess, was to conserve energy. That seems to have been lost sight of. It is not necessarily a matter of conserving energy in this State at all. It is a question of providing more leisure time. There is an abundance of sunshine in this State, and if people want to adjust their lives accordingly, they can take full advantage of the extent of sunshine this State has during the summer months. I believe it would be feasible for commercial sectors which benefit from daylight-saving to adjust their hours of operation to link up with the southern states rather than have the rest of this State adjust its livelihood to the life-style of the southern States. Although I have heard comments from political parties in the south that Queensland should join the rest of the States, I simply do not believe that is necessary. I do not believe Queensland should have to tag on to the coat-tails of the southern States. Because it is suitable in Tasmania, Victoria, or southern New South Wales in particular, I do not believe Queensland should necessarily have to follow suit. I simply do not see the need for that. I believe New South Wales has had daylight-saving for 18 or 19 years. They are happy; let them go that way. Queensland does not necessarily have to go that way; nor should they have to do the same as we do. Queensland is a sovereign State; it has sovereign rights; and the people of this State must have their own choice. I believe that is what is being provided. I believe the referendum is the right way to go. Remembering full well that people were told there would be a trial and then there would be a referendum, I do not believe in this instance that daylight-saving should have been foisted upon people by an Act of Parliament. It was the Government's policy to hold a referendum on the issue. We should have gone through with that referendum.

Mr Borbidge: What if the Federal legislation overrides it?

Mr COOPER: That is a good point. The Federal legislation to impose daylight-saving on all the States has gone through the House of Representatives. I believe it is still in the Senate.

Mr W. K. Goss: It's not going ahead.

Mr COOPER: It should not. However, it got half-way. It certainly got through the House of Representatives and into the Senate.

Mr Borbidge: It still got into the Senate.

Mr COOPER: It got into the Senate. We do not believe that the Federal Government has any right to impose upon the States its view on an issue such as this. It

should allow the States to decide the matter for themselves. The decision should be left to the people and, whichever way it goes, it should be adhered to.

It is not necessary for me to canvass the issue further. I have made the point. I notice that the leader of the Government task force has his name on the list of speakers, indicating that he wants to say something about the matter. Obviously, he has made an issue of the matter in the community and he has some votes to get. I suggest that, this time, he stands up for his constituents. Last time, he did not stand up for them, as Opposition members did.

Mr McGrady: Keep it clean.

Mr COOPER: Last time, the honourable member did not stand up for his constituents. He now has the opportunity to put the people first, and no doubt he will. He received a heavy reminder from the people in the Mount Isa electorate which has prompted him to put pressure on the Government to conduct a referendum. He is acting on the views of his constituents, which is the duty of a member of this place. There has been quite a bit of dithering and indecision on this question. Obviously, there have been backflips and people have been confused. People to whom I have spoken in the business community who favour daylight-saving have noted the confusion that the debate has caused. It has caused angst in the community. The referendum is the way to go. It will allow people to have their say, which will put the issue to bed once and for all. I hope that, when the decision is made—whichever way the referendum goes—it is adhered to by the Government of the day.

Mr DAVIES (Townsville) (9.33 p.m.): I have great pleasure in addressing the issue of daylight-saving. At the outset, I state that I am opposed to daylight-saving. I always have been and always will be. For the benefit of honourable members, I will read from a letter dated 27 October 1991 from one of my constituents who is obviously opposed to daylight-saving. I will not mention the person's name, as I do not believe it would be appropriate. The letter, headed "Eradication of the daylight saving scourge", states—

> "I am a very busy practitioner and can ill afford the time to write this letter, but I cannot remain silent any longer, and just have to do something about eradicating this DLS scourge.
>
> Our truly enlightened forefathers (of whom I am proud) introduced Eastern Standard Time (EST) for good reason. We should return to it immediately and perennially. There are more important things that should interest a good Government.
>
> I protest this unnecessary disruption and humbug of having to waste time adjusting my clocks and routine every 6 months forever, and suffering loss of amenity (e.g. finding that the News is over because my day is largely gauged by the sun).
>
> I have 8 clocks and it just took me 10 minutes to add one hour to each. I have better things to do than tinker with my clocks. Next time it will take me something like half an hour as I will have to go through the full cycle since I cannot reverse my digital clocks. I have to get my glasses, go from room to room, up and down stairs, and put lights on and off, and gain access to my car.
>
> Furthermore, all this tinkering cannot do the clocks any good. I know that some of your clever advisers will no doubt think it a wonderful idea (just like DLS itself) to create employment by this demand for new clocks.
>
> . . .
>
> I put it to you that the millions of man-hours lost each 6 months in changing clocks and making all the necessary adjustments and correcting the resulting errors

and mistakes makes the hypothetical power etc. savings of DLS look absolutely and utterly ridiculous. There is a monstrous debit balance resulting."

Obviously, he wrote this letter on the day that daylight-saving came in. He continued—

"Even Telecom put the clock back, instead of forward, this morning, and many others have done, and will do, the same thing.

What, therefore, can be the justification for DLS and the turmoil it causes? What is the net return in benefit for it?

Surely, we have enough problems without this one."

It is well known that, because it would take so long, at least one of the jewellers in Townsville cannot be bothered going through and changing all his clocks. It is obviously a very important question, particularly for the person who wrote that letter to me, and probably should not be dismissed lightly.

Many times in the daylight-saving debate, the benefits for the airline industry and others have been mentioned. In fact, the airline industry was one the sections of the work force that argued very strongly for the introduction of daylight-saving. It was strange to see that, within a very short time after the introduction of daylight-saving last year, the airlines operating out of Townsville changed their schedules by half an hour. They argued that they needed an hour to bring them into line with the southern States. They changed their schedules by half an hour, anyway. Some of the other arguments to make things better for business are a little spurious. Having worked in business, I have never found daylight-saving any hurdle to overcome.

Earlier, the Leader of the Opposition mentioned the communications argument. In this day and age, with facsimile machines, etc, if a person was not able to speak to someone on the telephone, he would quickly send a hand-written fax stating, "I want to talk to you about this." It is probably faster to write and send a fax to someone rather than talk to him on the telephone. It is well known that when people speak on the telephone they tend to talk for longer than they normally would. It is easier to scribble a fax and say, "I want this and I want that." The motor vehicle industry and other industries that have to order goods from the north actually do all their ordering by facsimile. As a result, the facsimile system has changed the communications argument dramatically. However, I know that significant problems are experienced by organisations such as the television industry. I understand those problems. There is a genuine argument that an extra cost is involved for them. I am not seeking to dismiss that.

I turn now to the northern and rural task force. I will not spend too much time on this because I am sure the honourable member for Mount Isa, Tony McGrady, who is the chairman of that task force, will address this matter in more detail. It is well known that the single major issue that was continually brought to our attention as we toured Queensland was opposition to daylight-saving. As the Premier said earlier, he took note of the feedback that he received from us. However, he also went out and experienced that opposition himself. The northern and rural task force, headed by Tony McGrady, did a lot of travelling. It went out and felt the pulse of the electorate. We had meetings in little places such as Kynuna, where I think the population is 20 if the pubs are full. Actually, about 30 people attended the meeting. People thought it was a great that they could actually come and talk to politicians.

Mr Pearce: Some of them travelled up to 50 miles that day.

Mr DAVIES: Some of them did travel up to 50 miles. Mr Pearce and I were at that meeting.

Mr McGrady: Some came from Mount Isa.

Mr DAVIES: Some came from Mount Isa. Some also came from Hughenden or Richmond, I think.

An honourable member: You mean you stacked the meeting?

Mr DAVIES: No, we did not stack the meeting at all. As we travelled round, people raised with us not only the daylight-saving issue but also other problems.

I would like to refer to the report of the daylight-saving task force on the daylight-saving trial held between 29 October 1989 and 4 March 1990. That task force recommended certain things. Firstly, it recommended that daylight-saving be introduced for that part of the State east of the 150 degrees east longitude for the period adopted by other States and that Eastern Australian Standard Time apply to the rest of the State. In essence, that amounted to split time zones. It is well known that the Government considered that split time zones was not the way to go. If the recommendations of the daylight-saving task force had been accepted, the summer-time zone would have included south-east Queensland, the Gold Coast, Brisbane, Toowoomba, Ipswich, Nambour, Gympie, Maryborough, Bundaberg and Gladstone. It would have bisected the shires of Calliope, Monto, Eidsvold, Mundubbera, Chinchilla, Wambo, Millmerran and Inglewood. The second recommendation of the task force was that, at the expiration of that period, daylight-saving in Queensland continue for a further two years and consideration be given to whether a review was necessary at that time. The third recommendation was that the question of a referendum be a matter for consideration at the end of the further period of two years. The fourth recommendation was that the question of daylight-saving be raised at a Premiers Conference and that a proposition be submitted for one half-hour of daylight-saving for the whole year for the eastern States. The fifth recommendation was that a unit of specialist staff be established and that necessary funding be provided.

This Government has not put off what is and what always will be a difficult issue for the Government of the day. We know that the National Party has had a few cracks at daylight-saving as well. One occasion was about 19 years ago when a daylight-saving trial was conducted. After that, the previous couple of Premiers could not make up their minds whether they should or should not have it. That is how we ended up having that trial in 1989-90, and that is how we ended up having the task force. Rather than do all that, the Goss Government decided to introduce daylight-saving but gave individual local authorities the option of making alternative arrangements. That should not be forgotten. Some local authorities, such as those in Longreach and in a number of other places, did that, but a year down the track, the Government has decided to hold a referendum—something for which I and others have been calling for some time. The Government decided to do that because of the division across the State—and I must add that there is considerable division across the State, which was succinctly summarised by the daylight-saving task force a couple of years ago. So, one year down the track, people have found out that a significant geographical part of Queensland is opposed to daylight-saving. As the Premier said earlier, this is a Government for all Queenslanders, not just those who live in the south-east corner. Queenslanders have a right to vote and express their views in a referendum.

The trend of those for and against daylight-saving has been reflected in a consistent fashion in the regional break-up of information based on written and telephone submissions, petitions and input from organisations. Those views were expressed to the daylight-saving task force. The Brisbane and Moreton regions were strongly in favour of daylight-saving. The other regions were strongly against it. However, in the main, business was in favour of daylight-saving. That applied to both large and small business enterprises. Business cited factors of communication, transaction of certain business, computer links and the avoidance of representatives having to travel on the day prior to

business meetings as reasons for their support. Tourism and travel interests—although split between the north and the south—and the media identified specific benefits from the adoption of daylight-saving. Social and community organisations such as parents and citizens associations, senior citizens and pensioner groups, the Queensland Country Women's Association, the Isolated Children's Parents Association and other groups are all against daylight-saving. Certain sporting groups are in favour of daylight-saving, but across the State, generally, those in favour of daylight-saving held the view that all the eastern States should be on the same time. I acknowledge that difficulty is experienced when the States are on different times. Victoria and Tasmania chose to operate daylight-saving for two weeks longer than the period adopted by Queensland and New South Wales. Many suggested the holding of a referendum measuring the sum of individual attitudes. The experience of that trial a couple of years ago brought to notice issues such as problems confronting children at school. The Premier alluded to that earlier.

A Morgan Gallup poll conducted in March 1989 showed that the community was fairly evenly divided on the issue of daylight-saving. At that time, 46 per cent of people supported daylight-saving, 40 per cent were opposed to it and 14 per cent had no opinion on it. After a trial of daylight-saving in Queensland, I suggest that the percentages are a lot closer than that. It is my view that they are probably somewhere around 50/50 for those for and against daylight-saving. It is also my view that, as we get closer to the referendum and go through the hotter months of the daylight-saving period, the percentage against it will creep even higher. If I can make a prediction, I believe that those against daylight-saving will win the day. If I were to predict a margin, it would be somewhere around 55 per cent against daylight-saving and 45 per cent for it. In the main, those people in favour of daylight-saving live in Brisbane and the Moreton region.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr DAVIES: Because he comes from Atherton, I know that the member is at least sympathetic towards us. The other regions do not favour daylight-saving. I will be following closely the speech of the member for Brisbane Central to learn how he votes.

Obviously, the only solution is to give people the opportunity of voting in a referendum. A couple of years ago that was the opinion of the daylight-saving task force after a further two-year trial with split time zones. There has been a call from the National Party to have a referendum, but as usual, the poor old Liberals are out of step. Not too long ago, a certain Leader of the Liberal Party staked his political future on the issue of daylight-saving. We really do not have to worry too much about that, but Denver Beanland is on record as saying that the Liberal Party would be opposing daylight-saving. I find that rather incredible, because Senator Ian Macdonald from Ayr in the Burdekin region has said that he is opposed to daylight-saving. I suppose that is fairly usual for the Liberal Party, because it finds it very hard to make up its mind on anything.

In north and north-west Queensland, central and central-western Queensland and south-west Queensland, people absolutely hate daylight-saving. The daylight-saving task force identified a number of community concerns. However, one that was left out and which has emerged is a concern of police about the increase in domestic violence occasioned by an extra hour of drinking. In terms of the extra hour of drinking—there is no extra hour available, but my experience 19 years ago was that people stay in the pub for an extra hour simply because there is an extra hour of daylight. Put simply, in the past it got dark at 8 p.m., but during daylight-saving it gets dark at 9 p.m. As I said, many people take advantage of that extra hour's drinking-time. The consequences of that in terms of domestic violence are obvious. This genuine cause for concern has been expressed to me in the northern police district.

The north Queensland area will campaign heavily against daylight-saving. We are determined that the "No" case will win out in the referendum. So determined are we that, next week in Townsville—I think it is 3 December—we will be holding an anti-daylight-saving rally at the Civic Theatre. We expect over 1 000 people to attend. The Mayor of Townsville and I will be leading the opposition to daylight-saving. We will be supporting the "No" case. If I can be so bold as to make another prediction—I believe that we will receive massive support at that rally.

Mr Beattie: Not in my electorate—not in Brisbane Central.

Mr DAVIES: For the benefit of the member for Yeronga and the member for Brisbane Central——

Mr Beattie: We are invited?

Mr DAVIES: I am not going to invite them. We will also be urging people in north Queensland to write letters. In fact, I have been doing this for some time now——

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr DAVIES: I believe that the Treasurer will be in Parliament on that day. We will be urging people in north Queensland to write letters to their relatives in the south-east corner—and there are plenty of them—saying to them, "Don't you dare vote for daylight-saving." It is well known that many people in Brisbane have roots in the provincial areas of Queensland. Even if those people had been thinking about voting in favour of daylight-saving, I would expect that when they get that friendly telephone call or letter from their long-lost relatives, they may at least support us. If they really want daylight-saving, they may be so gracious as to stay away from the ballot-box and support us in that way. All of that may sound a little extreme, but daylight-saving is a very emotional issue. We in provincial and western Queensland have decided that it is about time that we had a win over the south-east corner.

Mrs SHELDON (Landsborough—Leader of the Liberal Party) (9.52 p.m.): The member for Townsville has certainly trivialised this debate. First of all, there was five minutes of ticking clocks. Then there was the most incredible backflip and unbelievable hypocrisy from the member. A little over 12 months ago, his whole party—including him—voted for daylight-saving. Now the member is exhorting people to write to their relatives in the south-east part of the State saying, "Please do not vote for it."

Mr Coomber: He is a flexible member.

Mrs SHELDON: He certainly is a flexible member. I agree with the member for Currumbin. Indeed, the Premier and the other Labor Party members have made much mirth of this debate. They have really helped to bring it to the level that they consider it to be, that is, not something that really concerns the people of Queensland. As evidence of the Premier's interest, I notice that he has left the Chamber. Daylight-saving is an issue of great importance to many Queenslanders and an issue on which most have firm views—most, that is, except the Premier, who has adopted as many positions on how to deal with this issue as there are time zones across Australia. The Liberal Party has made clear its position. Reflecting the views of the great bulk of our constituents, my colleagues and I support daylight-saving.

Mr McGrady: I hope you put candidates in north Queensland.

Mrs SHELDON: That is very interesting. I understand that, similarly, the member for Mount Isa voted for daylight-saving—another amazing backflip. Those Government members are great exponents of the hypocritical scene. They have had an amazing brain transplant——

Mr Dunworth: It's more of a vacuum.

Mrs SHELDON: The honourable member could be right. It might be more of a vacuum. Liberal Party members recognise that, in many areas of the State, such as those inland and those to the north, daylight-saving does not have strong support. The problems faced by people in those areas were highlighted and acknowledged in the report of the daylight-saving task force. That task force canvassed the options and proposed solutions that could help ameliorate the problem. However, its chairman did nothing about implementing them. The Premier chose to ignore the task force and implemented daylight-saving across the State. Subsequently, people in some parts of the State have made a fuss about daylight-saving, and the Premier has changed his position. That change of mind would not be all that remarkable but for the fact that the opposition to daylight-saving, which has now, it seems, so motivated the Premier to push for a referendum, was already well known and fully expected. No-one, not even those who support a referendum—as we in the Liberal Party are prepared to do—should forget that the Premier has switched and changed on the issue. His switch is to cost Queenslanders millions of dollars—millions of dollars that could have been saved with better timing, and used instead to support the 150 000 Queenslanders who are out of work because of Labor's economic policies.

Prior to his election, the Premier promised the people of Queensland a referendum on daylight-saving. It was to be a referendum to be linked with local authority elections to avoid unnecessary cost. That was just another broken Goss promise—an about-face from a two-faced administration. The Premier chose not to implement that promise but instead to introduce daylight-saving, saying at the time that it was one of the toughest issues that the Government had to face. Pity help the Premier. In October 1990, the Premier's promise about a referendum seemed to go up in smoke. Using the gag, the Government pushed daylight-saving legislation through the House. When those on this side of the House canvassed the possibility of a referendum, the Premier hypocritically described it as "the wimp strategy". We now seem to have the wimp strategy in full flight. The Premier talked of members in such terms as "Prince of Wimps". He accused advocates of a referendum on daylight-saving of adopting a hypocritical, wimpish, fraudulent strategy—which now would appear to be his strategy. Just who is the wimp, the hypocrite and the fraud now? When the Premier introduced the Summer Time Bill that brought daylight-saving to Queensland, the Premier said with great affectation—

> "The Government has introduced summer-time on a permanent basis to settle the issue once and for all . . ."

Note those words "once and for all". What the Premier should have said was "once and for all until I change my mind". His idea of decisiveness seems to be to change his mind only twice.

We in the Liberal Party support a referendum because we know that it will give the people the chance to have their say. That chance is what many have been asking for. The Liberal Party, however, is disappointed at the way in which the referendum proposal came about. It took longer than necessary to get to this stage and the cost of the referendum will be much greater than it needed to be. The Government has become known as a Government of inaction and the soft option. It will delay rather than decide, defer rather than determine. It is a Government of committees, for committees and by committees. It is also a Government that appears willing to avoid controversy at any cost. That desperate desire to take emotion out of politics and to take politics off the front page of newspapers and out of the headlines of the electronic media is one of the cornerstones of why the House is considering this motion. If the Premier believed that he could have got away with daylight-saving by imposition, he would have done so.

Mr Coomber: By stealth.

Mrs SHELDON: The honourable member could be right—by stealth. There would have been no referendum because this referendum proposal is not about finding out the views of Queenslanders on daylight-saving; it is really about passing the buck—and passing the buck has been turned into an art form by the Government. In considering the issue, there are many questions to ask, not just the one for February next year. We have to ask first and foremost: why the about-face? We have a right to know why we should have a referendum in February next year when it could have been held in March this year in conjunction with the local government elections. Alternatively, why not hold off until next year's State election? The referendum and the election could have been run at the same time. Possibly, the Government intends to do that, anyhow. Either way, up to $6m of taxpayers' funds could have been saved.

As I have indicated, the Liberal Party supports the referendum, even though it has been an on-again, off-again occasion. The Premier, acting as a captive of his political ambitions, has chosen to spend millions of dollars that could have been saved or directed towards valuable drought relief, the cutting of land tax or the reduction of payroll tax—all of which uses would have helped save or create jobs in Queensland. The Government is nothing more or less than a captive of its own political ambitions. It was prepared to foist daylight-saving on all Queenslanders until the recent distribution of electoral boundaries in this State and the sudden realisation that the Government's survival rests on a handful of seats, some of which are in regional Queensland where daylight-saving figures as a prominent and emotional issue. The decision to hold a referendum was made by the Government in a manoeuvre designed to minimise the damage that was done to Labor members from regional electorates who voted in support of daylight-saving against the wishes of their constituents—and let their constituents not forget it. Those members, such as the member for Mount Isa and others, copped plenty of flak and, knowing that their political necks were on the chopping block, rallied behind the Deputy Premier to shift the blame and attempt to secure a second political life.

The people of Queensland want to know whether the decision made at the referendum will be the end of the debate. Does the Premier give a cast-iron, watertight guarantee that, whatever the outcome, once the people have made up their minds there will be no further delay and indecision?

Mr Dunworth: "Yes" and "No" to that.

Mrs SHELDON: "Yes" and "No"—that would be a reasonable answer. Daylight-saving is one of those issues that have the capacity to divide the community—and that it certainly has done. It produces some of the most emotional and heated debates that this State has seen in recent years.

I will state at the outset where I stand on the issue of daylight-saving. Personally, I am committed to it because of its attractiveness and benefits to the vast majority of my constituents who are involved in tourism and small business. However, I stress that my party and I recognise that daylight-saving causes significant problems for many residents of rural and regional Queensland, especially those living inland or further north. The problem is that this question could well represent the worst possible compromise. If it is supported by the bulk of Queenslanders, many people living in regions who neither support it nor want it will have it forced upon them. If it is defeated, then people in businesses and areas which are seriously inconvenienced by being out of kilter with other parts of the eastern seaboard will be stuck with their problems. Unlike day and night, this issue is not black or bright. By posing a simple question without alternative or compromise, it is likely that, whatever the outcome, about half the population will be unhappy. The problem is that the community is fairly evenly divided on the issue. The simple, bald question we are asked to approve says to people across Queensland, no matter where they live, "You can have it or you cannot. It is the same for everyone." Why

not ask a question that covers at least the alternative, that is, the option of zones? The task force on daylight-saving recommended that there be a line drawn along 151 degrees longitude to divide the State. All the Premier wants from this referendum is for the problem to go away. Then, regardless of the outcome, he can wring his hands and say, "The people have spoken. There is nothing I can do about it." This represents the cop-out for which this Government and the Premier have become famous. Also, we need to ensure that people on all sides to this argument have the opportunity to express their views. All cases must be put to the people of Queensland so that they can make an informed decision. If we are to have a referendum, it must be a meaningful one and not a cosmetic exercise. It must be a true exercise in obtaining people's views. The Liberal Party will vote as one on this issue.

Mr McGRADY (Mount Isa) (10.03 p.m.): Tonight, this Parliament is debating an issue about which many people in this State have strong and passionate views. It is such an emotional issue that this is one of the few occasions in this Parliament that the Government and the official Opposition will have a free vote. I repeat "the official Opposition", because I do not include the parliamentary Liberal Party in that description, and I will return to those people later on tonight. This Parliament passed legislation to introduce daylight-saving just 12 months ago—on 3 October 1990 to be precise—and the fact that the issue is before this Parliament again tonight proves to me the strength of the Queensland parliamentary system. The fact that the Premier, the Government and the Labor Party have accepted that the people of Queensland should make this decision should indicate again to all of us the strength of our system and, in particular, the strength of our Premier and this Government. I do not believe that many members in this House could have envisaged the widespread opposition to daylight-saving right across the State. That opposition was strong and genuine. The opposition did not come because of fading curtains or cows failing to give milk; it came because daylight-saving had a major effect on the quality of life of so many people in country areas.

I have had to sit in this Chamber and listen to Liberal Party and National Party members criticising and ridiculing the Premier's rural and northern task force. This team of hard-working Government members travelled the length and breadth of this State listening to the views of country Queensland. We went to places where they had not seen their National Party member for some nine years. The task force went out and reported back the feelings of the people in the bush and recommended that this referendum be held. I believe that members of the Premier's task force can hold their heads up high because, in the main, they are responsible for the matter we are debating tonight. The members of the National Party can take little comfort from their stand on this issue. They placed daylight-saving on the political agenda by introducing daylight-saving into Queensland. They are the ones who caved in to the political blackmail of Sallyanne Atkinson and the bully-boys of the Liberal Party machine. They were the ones who sold country Queensland down the drain. On the one hand, the Leader of the National Party ran around the northern and country regions of Queensland advocating no daylight-saving; yet, on the other hand, down in the south-east corner Mr Borbidge and Mr Veivers were witnessed presenting a case for daylight-saving.

In my speech to Parliament on 3 October 1990, I stated—

> "Queensland is a diverse State. Perhaps we could have investigated the introduction of different zones, but I understand the problems associated with such a move. Climatic conditions vary in the different regions. Although 34 degrees in Brisbane is considered to be a heatwave, in Mount Isa and other central and western areas for days and weeks on end we have to be content with temperatures in excess of 40 degrees. Let me assure people that, at the end of a long, hot, summer's day, we are more than happy to see the sun go down in the sky and give us some relief."

The circumstances certainly have not changed in the past 12 months. On 28 January last year at 8 p.m., the temperature at the Mount Isa airport was 42 degrees, and at 9 o'clock it was 40 degrees. The following night at 8 o'clock it was 42 degrees, and at 9 o'clock it was 41 degrees. Can honourable members understand the effect this has on the people I represent? Can they understand the problems of trying to get children to bed at 9 o'clock at night when it is 41 degrees and still daylight? Can they understand why teachers report that children are coming to school tired in the morning and how a mother with a couple of young children feels at the end of a long, hot day? This Parliament is charged with the responsibility of improving the quality of life for all Queenslanders, and we do it on a daily basis with progressive legislation. However, we do not appreciate the real problems associated with daylight-saving and the adverse effect on the quality of life for so many of our cousins throughout Queensland. I refer again to my contribution last year when I stated—

> "If all houses in western and north-western Queensland were air-conditioned—they are not—no doubt the extra hours of sunlight would not cause the great problem which they will cause. But, with temperatures in excess of 40 degrees, it is impossible to stay inside a kitchen and prepare a meal, let alone eat it at any earlier than 9 p.m. During last summer, it was not dark until 9 p.m., which was when most people ventured inside their homes to prepare a meal. Owing to the stifling heat still inside those homes, meals were often eaten outside."

That was often after 9.30 p.m., and the situation has not changed.

Some weeks ago, I listened to one of the supporters of daylight-saving address this House and say how pleasing it was to see his constituents enjoying an extra round of golf and to notice that many of his constituents were going to the public pool with their families and enjoying a swim. In common with that honourable member, I am genuinely happy about such a situation, but I ask all honourable members present in this Chamber to weigh that up against the very real disadvantages and attack on the quality of life that daylight-saving poses to the women and children—and, indeed, the whole family structure—in the country areas of this State. In this debate and discussion on daylight-saving, the people in favour of it argue its merits from an economic perspective. Although economic reasons should not be dismissed lightly, for the life of me I cannot accept that proposition, because during the years when the Liberal and National Parties controlled the Treasury benches of this State, the people of Queensland were bombarded with conservative politicians telling us how far ahead of the other States Queensland was and, in those days, Queensland did not have daylight-saving. Nobody can convince me that that situation has changed. The supporters of daylight-saving use the argument that Queensland should be brought into line with the other eastern States. Queensland has done very well—and, in fact, better than the other States—and that has been accomplished without daylight-saving and also without being the same as New South Wales or Victoria. The question must be asked: when have Queenslanders ever wanted to be the same as the people in New South Wales or Victoria?

Much has been made of the need for daylight-saving to ensure the continuation of the growth in the tourism industry. I also dismiss that argument and refer all honourable members to the widespread opposition to daylight-saving in Cairns and in the Mulgrave Shire as instanced by polls conducted by the local authorities and other organisations. One of the real concerns I have is the actual risk of sun cancer to schoolchildren who have to walk home from school at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, which is the hottest part of the day. Millions of dollars are spent by this community on an education program designed to engender preventative action to reduce the effects of skin cancer on young people. Many members fail to realise that, due to their geographical location, Mount Isa and other western areas of this State are already 54 minutes behind Brisbane time. Really, the last

thing that the people who live in those areas want is an extra hour of sunlight at the end of the day on top of that 54 minutes.

In joining in this referendum campaign, I will be appealing to the people in the south-east corner of this State to consider the issue as one of quality of life. I will be asking my city cousins to judge this issue as a Statewide one and consider the adverse effects of daylight-saving on the people who work and live in mining communities and on cattle and sheep stations, and on those who live in the smaller towns which service and support those industries. The men, women and children of the outback face many difficulties brought about by floods and droughts. They lack the facilities that their city cousins take for granted. They suffer from isolation and natural disasters and miss out on art and culture and the finer things of life, yet it is mining and the primary industries that really create the wealth of this State and pay the bills. I ask the people of Queensland to consider some of the issues that I have raised. I appeal to them not to impose this extra burden on the country areas of Queensland. I welcome the move made by the Government towards a free vote on this issue and I also congratulate the National Party for taking the same stance. However, I note with a great deal of interest the omission from the speakers' list of the names of the member for Surfers Paradise and the member for Southport. I will be watching with great interest their performance and their political posturing during the next three months.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! I do not think those statements are relevant at this time.

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. An arrangement has been made with the Government on the speakers' list for this debate, but if the honourable member wants to prolong the debate, both the member for Southport and I are more than pleased to participate in this debate.

Mr McGRADY: I apologise, and I withdraw whatever I said that was offensive. Actually, I was being very kind to the National Party because I was congratulating it on the position it has taken. However, I must express my concern about the attitude adopted by the Liberal Party. Out of the three political parties represented in this Parliament, the Liberal Party has taken a stand and has made it perfectly clear that its members will not have a free vote but, rather, will be voting as a full team. As I said earlier, I invite the Leader of the Liberal Party and her colleagues to travel out west. I will personally introduce them to the people I represent.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Premier and the Government on their initiative in holding this referendum. I take this opportunity to appeal to the great common sense of the people of Queensland to act on behalf of the State and to take into account the real effects that daylight-saving will have on their country cousins. I believe that when the votes are counted on the night the referendum is held, we will be able to say, "This is our finest hour."

Mrs McCAULEY (Callide) (10.14 p.m.): At the outset, I make the simple observation that a referendum on daylight-saving will not save the oncer from Mount Isa. I join in this debate tonight to forcefully put forward the opposition of at least 95 per cent of the constituents of the Callide electorate who are strongly opposed to daylight-saving. I wish to have their opposition to daylight-saving placed on the record. Many of the people I represent are farmers and they find daylight-saving to be a great burden and a source of continual annoyance right throughout the summer, particularly at present when it is so dry and hot. No doubt it will get worse and worse as time goes on for the small children who travel on schoolbuses—some of whom have to leave home at 6.30 in the morning, which is really half-past five—and travel home in the heat of the early afternoon. Daylight-saving is very burdensome on them, too, and on the elderly.

The many letters and petitions that I received on this issue last summer stick in my mind. They contained thousands and thousands of signatures. I received a letter from one particular elderly woman in Rockhampton who said that she found daylight-saving very difficult because, as soon as it became cooler in the afternoon, she would go outside to water her garden. The comment reminded me of my grandmother who did exactly that, every day of her life. As soon as it becomes cooler, old people go out and water their gardens. This woman said, "I now miss the news". The news is very important to old folk. They like to be informed about what is going on. This woman found it very difficult to water her garden and watch the news at the same time. That is probably a simple thing that not a lot of people would think of, but it is a great inconvenience to elderly people and it is very detrimental to their quality of life. People in nursing homes, who have to eat their dinner at half-past 5 in the afternoon—which is really half-past 4, when it is far too hot to eat anyway—do not like it, either, and suffer accordingly.

From my point of view, I believe that the accumulation of the extra hours results in tiredness. By the end of the summer, I feel bone weary simply because of daylight-saving, and I do not like it for that reason. I have found no way around that problem. In the afternoons, we go for a walk because it is far too hot to eat. We walk from about half past 6 or 7 o'clock for an hour. By the time we are having our dinner, it is well after 9 o'clock. It is almost too late then to be making phone calls to people. It is a darn nuisance. It is inconvenient. I do not like it, and it is just difficult to live with.

I can understand why Brisbane people and the people in the south-east corner like daylight-saving because when I come down here, it is a lot easier to put up with. It is not so noticeable. It is not so hot. I am sure that the farther south one goes, the better it is. I find it sad that the people in the south-east corner cannot understand the predicament of the people in the north and the west. It is unfortunate. It is also unfortunate that businesspeople are not prepared to mould their ways. I asked my husband, who travels interstate a great deal and does business with people in other States, whether it inconvenienced him when there was no daylight-saving in Queensland. He said, "Not at all." That was his point of view, and I believe that it is probably the point of view of a lot of people. Businesses such as the Stock Exchange tailored their hours differently when there was no daylight-saving in Queensland. I do not know why this cannot continue and people can be left in peace. I guess that the other alternative is to have time zones. I really think that is something that should be looked at very seriously in Queensland.

I believe—and I will wager money on it—that this referendum is going to be so close that it really will not solve anything much at all. The vote will probably be 51/49 or something similar to that, and half of the population will still be cranky and disgruntled. I have recently returned from Canada and the United States where there are four time zones. Those countries have managed quite adequately, and have done so for many years. I feel that Queensland could manage that system. The initial resistance to such a system will have to be overcome.

I was rather interested when the Government rural task force came to my area. I made a point of being there for the visit and it was interesting to hear the comments. I am pleased that the task force came. There were not a lot of people terribly interested, but I believe that the members of the task force took a strong message back to the Premier, who then came to see for himself and to decide whether they were right or not. He obviously did not trust the task force's judgment. The strong message obviously came back loud and clear from those rural areas that daylight-saving is not suiting them and it was damaging the Government greatly.

The member for Townsville talked about digital clocks and how difficult they are to turn back. I have this problem at the end of the daylight-saving period: how does one turn back a grandfather clock? One has to let it run down and stop it. This year, I almost did not

wind up the clock because it is such a jolly nuisance to let it run down and then have to restart it.

Mr J. H. Sullivan interjected.

Mrs McCAULEY: No, it does not work that way because it chimes every quarter hour and I would be there forever winding it through the chimes. Finally, I do not like daylight-saving. The people in my constituency do not like it, and I believe it will be defeated at the referendum.

Mr PEARCE (Broadsound) (10.20 p.m.): There is no denying that for many years daylight-saving has been one of the most hotly debated issues in this State. It is a very emotional issue. It is so emotional, in fact, that it brings out passions in people that can override political loyalties and divide families. From the previous Government's announcement of a daylight-saving trial during the 1989-90 summer period to the Government's recent decision to conduct a referendum on the issue, the debate over whether daylight-saving should be permanently introduced in this State has greatly intensified.

I should say from the outset that last year's daylight-saving trial in Queensland did not affect me personally, and neither has its introduction this year. However, as the representative of a mainly rural-based electorate, I know and understand the general feeling of rural people on this issue. I can tell the members of this House that they are not happy about it. As a member of the Premier's rural and northern task force, I made four individual trips to rural Queensland. I can report that daylight-saving was one of the single most overwhelming issues brought to the attention of task force members during those trips made through northern and central Queensland. The strong message was that daylight-saving was forced upon people. That was the feeling out there—that the people never had the opportunity to have any say on the matter and that the Government forced daylight-saving on them. One thing that I am really looking forward to next year when the task force returns to those rural areas are the drinks that a lot of people out there owe me because they thought that the task force was just out there politicking and that it would not be effective. I think the fact that Queensland now will have a referendum on daylight-saving has proved that the task force is worth its weight in gold to the Government.

I can safely say that in all rural areas visited by the task force there was an overwhelming rejection of summer-time. It did not matter where the task force went, the first thing said in most cases was, "We want to talk to you about daylight-saving." Why is it that the very thought of daylight-saving is so unpopular? I am sure everyone has laughed at the many ridiculous claims that have circulated for years as reasons why daylight-saving should not be introduced. These reasons have often made Queenslanders the laughing-stock of the rest of Australia. Yes, everyone has heard the stories of how daylight-saving fades the lounge room curtains more quickly, how the family rooster does not know when to crow, and how the days are actually hotter during the daylight-saving period.

The truth is that, despite claims such as these, there are still many valid reasons as to why thousands of rural and northern Queenslanders are so vigorously opposed to the permanent introduction of daylight-saving in this State. In April this year, following the Queensland Government's trial of daylight-saving, the daylight saving task force, which was set up to monitor and report on this trial, released a detailed analysis of the issue. In its report to the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations, the task force summarised the points which those opposed to daylight-saving had given as reasons not to adopt such a policy. It should be noted that the findings of the task force were based on the many public submissions that it received following the trial. There were 23 399 written submissions from individuals; 17 691 submissions phoned in from individuals; 69 735

signatures on petitions; and 760 submissions from organisations. Some of the reasons given for not introducing daylight-saving were—

(1) It was argued that Queensland is situated too close to the tropics; consequently, the temperatures are too high for daylight-saving.

(2) During the last trial, large numbers of Queenslanders reported that they had experienced difficulties with their children eating meals at the normal time. There were also problems in convincing children to retire while there was still light outside. As a consequence, shorter sleeping-time created difficulties in the morning.

(3) It was reported that many rural children who travel long distances on school buses were faced with waiting for those buses in darkness and semi-darkness. When these children returned in the afternoon, it was found that they were travelling during one of the hottest periods of the day.

I think that that is one of the most important issues raised. It was also claimed that sporting activities were apparently scheduled during the heat of the day. Obviously, little thought was used in the timing of sporting events. Other reasons were—

(4) It was claimed that temperatures were too hot for meals to be prepared and eaten at normal times. Some would suggest that families simply eat their meals at a later time, but this is often not practical when there are small children involved who need to be put to bed early.

(5) During the previous trial, many families, particularly those in country areas, reported that their life-style had been affected. Farmers were working until later at night and were not returning home until later than usual, with the result that meal times were disrupted and children had often retired to bed before father arrived home.

(6) Many rural Queenslanders argued that, because their work program was now extending into evening, they were often missing out on important television news, weather and market reports.

(7) Primary producers listed a number of issues of concern to them regarding daylight-saving, including problems with stock, for example, milking times; working longer hours; harvesting difficulties caused by dew on crops; later burning of cane, at dusk; and problems with obtaining parts for machinery broken down late in the day.

Many people in the city areas might smile and laugh about that but, if they lived in the rural areas of Queensland and lived a great distance from where they obtained machinery parts, they would realise the difficulty. The people living in the cities should take that on board. The task force concluded, from the submissions it had received on the issue, that business appeared to generally favour daylight-saving, while social and community groups as well as primary producers were generally against the proposal. I can safely say that the vast majority of correspondence that I have received from constituents on this issue has called for the rejection of daylight-saving. To prove this point—in March last year, with the assistance of two local newspapers within my electorate, the *Capricorn Coast Mirror* and the *Miners Midweek*, I conducted a survey on the issue of daylight-saving. I had a response from 1 160 people in the electorate. They had to supply their names so that they could be checked against the roll. Of those who responded, 92 per cent rejected daylight-saving.

These findings might suggest that rural and northern Queenslanders have failed to consider any of the advantages associated with daylight-saving. This is not the case. It has never been disputed that daylight-saving can offer advantages to the tourism and

business industries and that there may be leisure and recreation benefits associated with its introduction. However, rural Queenslanders believe that these benefits do not outweigh the disadvantages that they alone appear to suffer. The fact remains that rural Queensland suffers under daylight-saving. It should be remembered that the issue of daylight-saving is not a political one; rather, it is a question of life-style and, as such, ultimately affects all Queenslanders. No one person or political party could or should decide this issue. It is for this reason that the people of Queensland should decide the final outcome, and I therefore congratulate the Government on its decision to put the issue of daylight-saving to the people of Queensland in a State referendum next year. On behalf of my constituents and the people of rural and northern Queensland, I welcome the opportunity to vote “No” to daylight-saving.

Mr COOMBER (Currumbin) (10.27 p.m.): This debate tonight raises many issues that affect the life-style and economic future of Queenslanders, but, most of all, it places on public record the weak, wobbly Premier of this State. The decision to hold a referendum was made with a very public apology to the people of Queensland that he was "too arrogant". I say that he is too weak. Mr Goss has decided that summer-time will shed too much daylight on country areas at the next State election. Forget the arrogance rubbish; this decision is purely political. If this Government runs its full term, Queenslanders will be going to the polls soon after daylight-saving begins in 1992. However, in a public display that nearly went as far as Bob Hawke crying on television, our vacillating Premier admitted to this State that he had been arrogant and had overly influenced Cabinet to introduce daylight-saving. What a moronic display by the Premier to attempt to dispel his overinflated-ego attitude that is prevalent in the community! Everybody in Queensland recognises Wayne Goss as arrogant, intolerant and out of touch with matters outside Brisbane. It is clear that the daylight-saving issue imposed by Goss and company is only one issue which indicates to country Queensland that this Government is out of touch. It is a fact that this Labor Government was not aware of the severe drought conditions affecting rural Queensland until it was too late. It is a fact that the administration of this State was ignoring the country, but Wayne Goss felt that he could put things right by making a public apology and holding a referendum. To quote the Premier—

"In all honesty I think I have to say that I may have been myself a little arrogant".

The fact of the matter is that the Premier was pushed into calling for a referendum because daylight-saving was the biggest single issue Wayne Goss backed as a means of establishing his decisiveness. So, who pushed the Premier, because he is now keen to distance himself from the future of daylight-saving? He now suspects that the vote to be taken next year will be lost, and once again promises made by the Government will be broken. So, who pushed the Premier? The real Government of Queensland, the trade union movement through Tom Burns, dictated to the Premier that he change his mind. This rubbish that the Premier espoused about an incognito tour of country areas which caused him to change his mind is fairytale stuff. Even after this trip—and how incognito is a series of LTDs, chauffeurs and the press—the Premier believed a referendum was not the way to go, so weak, wobbly Wayne capitulated just when Queensland was crying out for leadership.

Now the attitude of the Premier is to let the people decide—not to do what is best for Queensland and to acknowledge that this State cannot afford to be without daylight-saving. The matter is political. This issue will cost votes in the north and the west. Too bad about the drought affecting National Party seats; too bad about the lack of Government services affecting National Party seats. Let this Labor Government concern itself with political acumen in northern coastal seats in jeopardy because of the daylight-saving issue. It is futile to suggest to the Premier that the referendum should be scrapped, but it

is not futile to remind him of his attitude towards daylight-saving before his "born-again" vision of consensus. Only 12 months ago he stated—

> "We have made the decision in the best interests of the State on an overall basis. It is essential for business, tourism and travel that the whole of the east coast be on the same time".

He said also—

> "In these tough economic times, we cannot afford to be out of step with the other States".

What has changed to cause an Olympic-class backflip by Wayne Goss? It is votes—plain and simple! The fact of the matter is that there is no-one available in the Labor Party to sell the concept of daylight-saving. Everybody in the Labor Party was happy to let Sallyanne Atkinson move around the State and sell day-light saving. She knew what was best not only for Brisbane but also for Queensland, but nobody in the Labor Party can or will do this. Certainly Jim Soorley does not have the capacity to promote what is best for Brisbane. He should be shouting the virtues of daylight-saving from the rooftops, but he is not daring to do so.

Daylight-saving is of benefit to the majority of Queenslanders through life-style enhancement and through huge economic benefits to tourism. The Liberal Party unashamedly supports daylight-saving. It did so before the 1989 election, and it again reiterates its support—no backflips, no referendums, no broken promises. At least the people of Queensland know exactly where they stand with the Liberal Party. The investigation and the inquiries have been completed. The task force has completed its task. In one form or another, daylight-saving has been recommended. The chance to hold a referendum on this issue passed with the holding of the local authority elections in March this year. The expenditure of $6m on a referendum on the issue of daylight-saving is most unnecessary. A lot of disadvantaged people could use that sort of money. But let us not forget: this Labor Government promised a referendum, chose not to have a referendum, and now is having a referendum. What is next? Who knows?

Tonight, the National Party will see legislation passed which will end the question of daylight-saving once and for all. The issue of daylight-saving has been one that has divided that party, with the interests of the Gold Coast representatives being in conflict with party policy. Mr Borbidge and Mr Veivers have been staunch advocates of daylight-saving, and well they might, because daylight-saving is immensely popular on the Gold Coast. A survey conducted as recently as seven days ago showed that more than 85 per cent of Gold Coast people want daylight-saving. The poll was conducted by the Gold Coast Visitors and Convention Bureau and also the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. The problem for the Gold Coast and the National Party is that although Mr Borbidge and Mr Veivers agree with and promote daylight-saving, the policy of the National Party will defeat their objectives, and daylight-saving will not be introduced. Mr Cooper, the Leader of the National Party, summed up this position concisely. In *Hansard* of 3 October 1990, at page 3809, he is reported as saying—

> "I understand that business organisations, airlines and media outlets wish to synchronise their operations with those of other States such as Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania. I understand and recognise that but, because daylight-saving will affect people who live in rural areas more than anyone else, it is National Party policy to put their interests first."

It would seem to me that the only political party prepared to put Queensland first is the Liberal Party. Just as John Hewson, with the tax reform package, is prepared to put Australia before the electoral success of the Liberal Party, we take the view that if daylight-saving is going to provide jobs, growth and security for Queensland families, then

we will stand up and be counted. When it is all boiled down, the only party with consistent policies that are pro-business is the Liberal Party. How can the tourist industry in Queensland support any political party which rejects daylight-saving, as does the National Party, or vacillates about daylight-saving, as does the Labor Party? It must be obvious to the Government that the south-east Queensland region, including Brisbane, the Gold Coast and tourist resorts along the State's coastline, cannot afford to be out of kilter with the time in the other States. The abandonment of daylight-saving would be disastrous for a Government which claims to be promoting the economy and jobs. Even though the Premier believes that the referendum will be lost, he is prepared to spend $6m to $10m to find out.

The white feather award in this debate clearly goes to the member for Townsville, Mr Davies. He was strong in his support for the Summer Time Bill. He is recorded in *Hansard* of 3 October 1990, at page 3826, as saying—

> "National Party members spoke about a referendum. That would be an incredible waste of public funds when the outcome is known now. If those members had read the daylight-saving task force report, they would know that a referendum would simply be a waste of public money and would not make the bitter pill any easier to swallow."

Obviously, $10m is not important to the member for Townsville. Would not that money almost build a stadium in Townsville? How about this little gem when Mr Davies was protecting northern members—

> "They have the courage to support the Government on this difficult issue. They have not run away. They have not dingoed. They do not get the yellow feather."

I suggest that they all do.

The introduction of summer-time is in the interests of most Queenslanders. The daylight-saving task force canvassed the question widely. Its recommendations have never been considered, other than to introduce daylight-saving. The two-zone option, although it is not one that I favour, does provide limited solutions to some of the problems suffered with life-style changes. Last year, the option for local authorities to remain with Eastern Standard Time was not used widely, with only 10 out of 134 local authorities opting to retain it. Even Mr McGrady's electorate of Mount Isa did not bother. The key factors in favour of daylight-saving revolve around business, leisure and recreation. The Gold Coast is the tourism capital of Australia and a major tourist destination for international visitors. At present, tourism is Australia's major export industry. It is now a larger export earner than the wool industry. The issue of interstate relativity between Queensland and New South Wales is pertinent. It is good economic sense for the banking industry; it is practical for the stock-broker in the share industry; it is good sense to have practical airline schedules between Queensland and New South Wales; and it is common sense for the television industry. Most of all, it is the only decision which is in the best interests of Queensland. In the minutes remaining, I would like to debunk claims made by the Premier that the new tax package released by John Hewson will disadvantage the tourist industry.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! The goods and services tax does not come within this debate that we are having on daylight-saving.

Mr COOMBER: Mr Deputy Speaker, it is relevant, and I will show you in one or two sentences.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Two sentences at the most.

Mr COOMBER: In the tourism and hospitality industries, this tax package will see savings of almost $1 billion. No longer will the hotel and motel industry be subjected to 20

per cent sales tax on items ranging from soap and toilet paper to bar equipment, laundering machinery, glasses, crockery and bed linen.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will not allow the member for Currumbin to continue in that manner.

Mr COOMBER: I accept and respect your ruling, Mr Deputy Speaker. When the people of Queensland realise the magnitude of debt that Labor Governments in Australia have generated, the vacillation of this Labor Government on daylight-saving will pale into irrelevance. Daylight-saving is only one factor that will benefit Queenslanders and the economy. The Hewson reform package, which includes reform of the labour market, land transport, social security, the banking industry and telecommunications, as well as reform of taxation, will convince Queenslanders that they need a leader who is prepared to put the interests of the State before the interests of himself or his party. Queensland currently is the loser.

Dr CLARK (Barron River) (10.42 p.m.): When the Premier announced that a referendum would be held on the question of daylight-saving, as a member of the northern and rural task force that had made a recommendation that a referendum should be held, I participated in a press conference with the member for Mount Isa. One of the questions that was put to us at that time was that perhaps we considered ourselves to be heroes. The answer of the member for Mount Isa is on the record, but it is a description that I reject totally because, in arguing, as I have, the case for a referendum, I have merely been arguing to the best of my ability the case for my constituents, as other members have been doing on behalf of their constituents. Further, as a member of the northern and rural task force, I have been doing the job assigned to us by the Premier, which was to be his eyes and ears in rural Queensland and to report back the feelings and concerns of and the issues being faced by people in rural and regional Queensland. But, most importantly, my position on this referendum and my opposition to daylight-saving have been established, because I do care about the well-being of people in my electorate. Daylight-saving is not merely an irritation or an inconvenience; it has a serious adverse effect on the life-style of people in the north. In the past two years, there has been no other issue about which I have received so many letters and on which the views of the majority of people in my electorate have been so clear. There is absolutely no doubt that the majority of people in Barron River are steadfastly opposed to daylight-saving.

I must admit that, when the first daylight-saving trial was introduced by the National Party under Mike Ahern, I had no strong feelings one way or the other—partly, I suppose, because I had very positive recollections of daylight-saving in England where I grew up. However, I was in no way prepared for the passionate feelings that the issue of daylight-saving generated in people in the west and north of the State. I should not have been so surprised, because the last time that Queensland had the opportunity to experience daylight-saving in 1971, it was rejected, leaving Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania to go it alone and introduce legislation for the permanent adoption of daylight-saving. The reasons why Queensland rejected daylight-saving in 1971 are the same reasons behind the present opposition that has been well canvassed tonight.

The 1990 report of the daylight-saving task force, which has been mentioned by members this evening, local surveys in north and far-north Queensland, and letters to me from individual constituents all paint the same picture. I would like to make particular reference to the survey that was carried out in August and September of this year for the local authorities in far-north Queensland by W. S. Cummings Economic Research Services. I mention it because it was a very well-conducted random survey and its results are considered to be more reliable than phone-in polls and self-selected surveys which have been carried out, or petitions which have been compiled. I should say, though, that all of those instruments did have a very consistent result in that they conveyed that, in far-

north Queensland, opposition to daylight-saving ranged from 75 per cent to 95 per cent. The Cummings survey was a random sample of 630 people in the far-north Queensland statistical division surveyed by trained interviewers. Of this sample, 69 per cent disliked daylight-saving, while 22 per cent liked it and only 10 per cent did not have a definite view one way or the other. Beyond the City of Cairns and the Shire of Mulgrave, that opposition strengthened, as indeed it has in the Douglas Shire, which I also represent, where the opposition was 77 per cent.

When people were asked in this survey why they liked or disliked daylight-saving, not surprisingly there were 817 dislikes mentioned versus only 244 likes. I want to refer to some of these because they do convey so clearly why far-north Queenslanders feel so strongly on this issue. As I detail these particular dislikes, I would like members to consider what we have just heard from the member for Currumbin, who said that daylight-saving is in the best interests of Queenslanders. As we think about the reaction to daylight-saving of people from far-north Queensland, I just cannot believe how members of the Liberal Party can stand in this place and say such a thing—I really cannot.

Mr McGrady: They have never left the bitumen. They wouldn't know.

Dr CLARK: They clearly do not travel around the State. They do not talk to people from far-north Queensland and they obviously do not concern themselves sufficiently to know how people feel. To return to the survey—the likes of daylight-saving—and I am prepared to talk about the likes because I recognise there are people within my electorate and throughout the rest of Queensland who do like it—are heavily concentrated on having more time in the evenings for leisure activities, recreation and more home-living, which are often activities that are otherwise enjoyed only at the weekends. But the dislikes expressed related as much to the mornings as to the evenings. However, let me say firstly that there was a body of opinion that daylight-saving was just simply not suitable to the climate, that it was too hot in the summer, that there was enough or too much daylight and sun, and that daylight-saving changes a cool hour in the morning for a hot one in the evening. I think that really sums up the way that we in far-north Queensland experience daylight-saving.

Problems do start in the morning. The biggest single dislike of all was that of having to get up in the dark. This rated 136 mentions. On top of this, some 36 mentioned general problems of getting up and getting going in the mornings, and in this regard there were some 55 specific mentions of children. Some 72 mentions were made that, in general, the area is hot in the afternoons and evenings and inappropriate for activities. In the afternoons, the problems start with children coming home from school in the heat and at a time when it is inappropriate for activities. Ten mentioned concern about skin cancer. There were 51 mentions of problems with cooking in the heat and that it was too hot to eat at normal times, including problems of having to serve two meals, typically to the children and then to the workers coming in later, and about meals being served too close to going to bed.

Some 23 reported problems of missing news and problems with TV programs. Some 55 reported problems of getting children to bed in the heat and in the daylight, or of them staying up late, with a further 32 mentions of it being too hot, too light and problems of getting to bed late. Not surprisingly, there were extensive problems mentioned of "day too long"—30 mentions; "tired, not enough sleep, health running down"—35 mentions; problems of general disruption of "routine, confusion, running late"—48 mentions—with children figuring prominently there. This was a household survey. It may be said, "Well, it is just households that are concerned about things. It is not really a business problem at all." But there were some business and work activities that were concerned. On the likes side—and I again acknowledge that there are likes and that it is important to business—there were all of nine mentions about daylight-saving being better for business

with the time zone and tourism, and one respondent fitted in running a farm on top of a normal job. However, there were 17 morning problems mentioned—for farmers; dairying, fruit-picking—both to coordinate with transport pick-ups—paper runs, rural people in general, loss of business in the evenings by cinemas and restaurants, problems of a remote station, and farm-workers coordinating with town opening hours. As the member for Callide pointed out, there are problems with nursing home evening meals being served too early.

I have made quite a considerable mention of those points because I think it is important that people get a clear understanding of the problems. I have to say that there is a need for members of the Labor Party, as well as the Liberals and other city members, to really try to understand what it is we experience. There can be no doubt that the support for or opposition to daylight-saving is based on the extent to which it suits an individual's or family's life-style. As I said, I have given a detailed description of them. I am not sure that people living in the south-east corner of the State really appreciate just what difficulties and hardship daylight-saving causes to families in far-north Queensland. To those who enjoy daylight-saving, such as the families in the electorate of the member for Yeronga, I actually make an unashamed appeal. I say to them: please weigh up that one hour of extra family time that you get for recreational activity, enjoyable as it is, against the discomfort of your fellow Queenslanders in the north and the west of this State. Think about the children waiting for buses in the dark in the mornings. Think about the primary producers who are working in the evenings and having considerably less time with their families. Forgoing one pleasurable family activity or recreational activity that surely can be substituted by another is not asking such a great deal. I am sure that if Brisbane people really understood how much daylight-saving impacts on the lives of us in the north, they would not impose it on us. Surely, the people in the bush caught up in the rural crisis are suffering enough. I am sure that my colleagues opposite would agree that rejecting daylight-saving is a tangible way for Brisbane city people to say to those struggling families that they care.

So, what of the economic arguments that we have heard from the Liberals? These arguments have not swayed the chamber of commerce in Cairns, nor the tourist industry. Following the 1989-90 trial of daylight-saving, the chamber of commerce conducted a poll of its members. The result was that 74 per cent were opposed to daylight-saving. Some 38 per cent said that it was disadvantageous to their businesses, and only 19 per cent said that it was advantageous. Although the tourism industry has not carried out any polls, there is no clear consensus emerging. According to industry-leaders, there are probably equal numbers for and against. From talking to people, that has certainly been my own experience.

The economic argument essentially asks that we put a dollar value on our life-style. It asks the people who live in far-north Queensland to make very considerable sacrifices. And for whom? Obviously not for the people in north Queensland. In my electorate, I just cannot win any argument asking my constituents to suffer while businesses in Brisbane and the south-east prosper. It is as simple as that. And why should I try? The member for Yeronga mentioned the conservation argument. I am afraid that he is wrong. Indeed, we have to put on the lights in the morning and keep our air-conditioners on longer in the evenings. So there is no substance to his argument.

The daylight-saving issue is about people, their life-styles, their health and their psychological well-being. I am concerned about the well-being of people in my electorate. To my mind, the stress that daylight-saving imposes on people in Barron River does not compare with the disappointment that families in the south-east may experience if they have to lose that extra hour of daylight. From what I have said, it is clear that I would prefer it if the Government were to simply abandon daylight-saving. However, I am

prepared to support this referendum, because I recognise that it would be wrong of the Government to impose its will on the people in south-east Queensland and others who like daylight-saving. Everybody deserves to have a say. I seek leave to table a letter from one of my constituents, which I believe sums up this particular issue very well.

Leave granted.

Dr CLARK: I look forward to a successful outcome for north Queenslanders in this referendum.

Mr GILMORE (Tablelands) (10.55 p.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker——

Mr Beattie: Come on, Tom. You make a bit of sense for a change.

Mr GILMORE: I thank the member for Brisbane Central for his accolades. For some years, I have had in my possession a research portfolio that contains more than enough information to convince a reasonable person that daylight-saving is not satisfactory for rural and remote Queensland. It is an interesting portfolio, because it contains day-length charts, parliamentary debates, press clippings and other assorted paraphernalia, including a rather erudite speech that I made some time ago in this Parliament. If anybody would like a copy of that speech, it is available at a price——

Mr Borbidge: $2?

Mr GILMORE: It is certainly available at a price, because it is such good work.

Dr Clark: I got it for nothing. Here it is. We are on the same side, remember?

Mr GILMORE: I take that interjection from the honourable member for Barron River. I point out that the speech of which she has a copy is the one that I gave in the House. The speech that I have here is the one that I would have given if I had the relevant notes with me at the time. I was caught somewhat short that evening.

Mr Beattie: Were they as bad as one another?

Mr GILMORE: The one that I have here is worth the $2 fee. In any case, I wanted to raise this subject because for a long time daylight-saving has been a concern of mine and of my constituents. I had this portfolio of information put together some years ago by professional researchers. I did not throw it away. I look at it from time to time. I recognise its value and the virtue of the work that was put into it. It really is an excellent piece of work. I pay tribute to the person who compiled it.

I must point out to the Parliament that very few people understand the issue of daylight-saving; they only react to it. One of the factors that has disappointed me greatly tonight is that very few members—in fact, not one—addressed the technical reasons why daylight-saving is a difficult matter in Queensland.

Mr Mackenroth: Why don't you do it then, Tom?

Mr GILMORE: I have already done that in this Parliament. I do not believe that it is necessary to do it again, except to point out that many members who have spoken in this place spoke about their reactions to something, not what that something might be. They have not elucidated clearly in the Parliament the geographical reasons—the width of the time zone, the positioning of Queensland within that time zone, and all those very good reasons relating to latitude and longitude. The member for Yeronga mentioned latitude and longitude, but only in passing. He gave no details or reason why we suddenly find these things to be such an impost upon our lives and the quality of our lives. That is a shame. As I said, I have spoken about those technical reasons in the past, and I do not intend to go over them tonight.

I wish to talk about the research that I have done and go into the history of the daylight-saving debate, because it is interesting. Some of the material in this portfolio gives a sense of deja vu. While carrying out my research, I perused the record of debates

from 1884 in the Legislative Council. The Postmaster General was not debating the issue of daylight-saving but the imposition of time zones and their structure. At that time, the Legislative Council was determining that Greenwich should be the centre of the longitude of zero, so that from then on time could be calculated from that particular point. Interestingly enough, debates on that subject had occurred prior to that. From that time on, the matter of time was not raised in this Parliament until the early 1970s. That was when the then Mr Joh Bjelke-Petersen was the Premier of this State. In 1971, he introduced a Bill to allow for daylight-saving as an experimental measure. I went through the record of debates at that time, and I just happen to have them with me. At that time, the Labor Party, which was in Opposition, was vehemently opposed to daylight-saving. One of the tellers on the division list for that Bill was Edmund Casey, who voted against daylight-saving at that time. That shows that he is a man of extreme good sense. It will be interesting to see how he votes tonight in the division on the motion and to see whether he retains that good sense in his old age. I respect the man for his advancing years. We will not hold that against him. It seems that, in his younger years, he had a modicum of sense to vote against daylight-saving. I look forward to seeing him vote with me tonight in respect of the matter. As I said, it gave me a sense of deja vu. These are some of the headlines of press clippings from that period—"Support for daylight saving increases"; "Bill on daylight saving debated"; "Final 'No' to daylight saving here"; "Decision soon on daylight"; and "No daylight saving for Queensland".

Mr Borbidge: It sounds familiar.

Mr GILMORE: It sounds familiar. All of those headlines and the contents of all of those press clippings are just as valid today as they were then. That illustrates the reason why we are debating daylight-saving and the referendum on the matter. Here is a beautiful headline. Mrs G. Horan said, "Late light 'makes a sharp wife' ". That was in 1973. She was responding to the daylight-saving task force that was formed after the period of daylight-saving. She said that daylight-saving had an adverse effect on marital relations in Queensland.

Mr Beattie: You don't want to use that one.

Mr GILMORE: It is true, apparently. She was giving evidence to the State Government committee. She stated at great length how daylight-saving made housewives nasty people to live with. I suppose she may well have been right, although I have not met any who were nasty to live with. We are debating the motion tonight because daylight-saving is a divisive issue. It has divided our State between cities and country and between the south-east corner and the rest of the State, because there are some geographical reasons why daylight-saving works in one area and not in another. That is a matter of some concern. I raised these matters in the Parliament because I thought people would be interested to know that nothing has changed, and nothing will change in a real sense. If the Premier said one thing that had any virtue whatsoever, it was that the issue is unlikely to be resolved. Regardless of the outcome of a referendum on daylight-saving, some people will remain unhappy. I turn to an article in the *Courier-Mail* in 1988, which illustrates the propensity of some of our colleagues in the press corps to trivialise daylight-saving. I refer to that article because it is a particularly bad example. It was written by Juanita Phillips. I suppose she must have worked with the *Courier-Mail*. I have no recollection of the lady.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr Mackenroth: I didn't get what they were laughing at. What did you say?

Mr GILMORE: I said, "I have no recollection of the lady"—none at all. However, if she is still about the place, she will have a recollection of me, because I will tell honourable members what she said in that article. In 1988, the article was headlined "Rise and shine

for a new dawn". It was at the time when members were debating vigorously daylight-saving in Queensland. We were debating whether we should or not introduce daylight-saving. There was a little lady, Sallyanne Atkinson—what a wonderful woman——

A Government member: What happened to her?

Mr GILMORE: The honourable member got it right. What happened to her? She supported daylight-saving. Poor lady! She is gone.

A Government member: Who's she?

Mr GILMORE: "Who's she?", the member asks. That is all right. Back to Juanita Phillips.

Government members interjected.

Mr GILMORE: Please, I ask for a bit of hush. This is ecstatic stuff. Her article stated—

> "The peace of a sunny winter's afternoon was shattered yesterday by the loud flapping of wings above George Street.
>
> Witnesses later described a huge flock of pigs flying over Parliament House, around the same time that Cabinet voted for a trial period of daylight saving.
>
> Others claimed to have heard a mournful lowing, similar to that of an inconvenienced cow or a housewife whose curtains have inexplicably faded."

Mrs McCauley: No wonder you don't remember her.

Mr GILMORE: I am sure that I do not need to remember such a person. Who would indulge in such trenchant rubbish? The article continued—

> "Bizarre phenomena indeed, but a fitting end to an issue which, more than any other, has come to symbolise the eccentricity and sheer contrariness of Queensland's rural-based government.
>
> For all the jokes and ridicule it inspired, daylight saving was one of Queensland's most enduring"—

I repeat "was"—

> "and serious political issues."

I contend that the matter still is one of the serious issues. That lady did something that is totally unforgivable in the press corps. Her article is lazy journalism. It is tired. It trivialises an important issue. Instead of doing some research, the lady talked about flying pigs, fading curtains and all the other garbage that comes out of that kind of journalism. It is an absolute disgrace to the person who wrote it and it is not worthy of the newspaper in which it was written—the *Courier-Mail*. I contend that the article is certainly not worthy of this place. I put it aside. It has no value.

I turn to some of the problems involved in the administration of daylight-saving last year under the Labor Government. Members will recall that, during that 1988 trivial blast at what is a very important social subject, Queensland had an Opposition Leader called Mr Goss, who is now the Premier. We had Alderman Atkinson, Lord Mayor of Brisbane, who is now defunct. At that time, we had a Premier in this State called Mike Ahern. When he attempted to make a decision on daylight-saving, he was accused of dithering, of being unable to make a decision and of being a person who was not worthy of being the Premier because he could not make a decision on such a simple issue.

The honourable member for Manly has surrendered. He is waving the flag and giving up. Nevertheless, Mike Ahern was accused by members who are now on the Government side of the House of being unable to handle the situation. They said it was an easy decision. Then there was a change of Government and suddenly reality hit home. The

question was not that easy. This Premier introduced legislation to pass the matter over to local government, which would have made it easy for him. He would blame them. Committees made up of virtuous people of good intent who would set the matter right were set up around the State. I wish to pay tribute to one of my colleagues in this Parliament, the member for Mulgrave. He and others, such as councillors Stan Marsh and Tom Pyne from the Mulgrave Shire Council, acted with good intent in an attempt to set up a committee comprising myself and others. We met on numerous occasions and tried to make some sense out of that piece of legislation. We had only three weeks from the time we were given the green light to the time of the introduction of daylight-saving last year. It was an impossible task. All it did was get local authorities around the State off side simply because they were then blamed for the imposition of daylight-saving. It was a unique piece of politics, but it still did not get the Premier off the hook. All these easy decisions that he was now called upon to make as Premier were coming home to roost. Earlier this year he stood on the stump and said, "We will have daylight-saving whether you want it or not, Tom." He went to Cairns and said to the good burghers of Cairns and the honest people in the electorate of Tablelands, "I don't care what you feel about daylight-saving."

An honourable member interjected.

Mr GILMORE: No, it is not Friday yet. The Premier said, "You are going to have it because I have made a decision and it is an immutable decision." Some time later, when he had his underpants on inside out, he spoke to the old lady in the telephone box at Muckadilla—or wherever it was—and he came to realise from that single incident that he was wrong. He stood up with a tear in his eye and said, "I have been arrogant. Mea culpa. I am sorry. I will give you a referendum." He got the idea from the National Party. Welcome aboard, Premier Goss! At long last he woke up that this was not an easy decision. I do not believe that this referendum will make the issue go away any more than anyone else in this Chamber, but we will try. A referendum is the reasonable way to go. It is the thing to do because we simply must attempt to resolve these difficult social issues of our time.

During the last local government elections, I ran a mini-referendum in far-north Queensland. I finished up with 22 000 signatures. I cannot remember the break-down, but something like 80 or 90 per cent of people did not like daylight-saving. I thought a mini-referendum was a good thing and I believe that ultimately it was influential in this debate tonight. It is one matter that had to be considered by this Government when it started talking about daylight-saving, the difficulties it imposed on people and the changes it brought to people's lives. That single petition presented to this Parliament containing 22 000 signatures must have been influential because it could not be ignored. With those few words, I offer my support for the referendum because it is a reasonable thing to do, even though we have taken a long and tortuous track to reach this point. I hope the motion that this Parliament is debating tonight is resolved in the negative rather than the affirmative. I will most certainly be voting in the negative later on tonight when the Opposition divides the House on the matter. I know that the people of my electorate do not like daylight-saving. They are rural people and include mothers with children, aged pensioners and others who in a geographical sense happen to live so far west of the meridian that daylight-saving is an imposition upon them that they can no longer tolerate. I trust that this referendum will be resolved in the negative.

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central) (11.14 p.m.): Tonight, I rise in support of the "Yes" case in the referendum and I do so in the strongest possible terms. My electorate of Brisbane Central is on the other end of the scale when compared to electorates such as Mount Isa, which is held by my colleague.

A Government member: Former colleague.

Mr BEATTIE: Indeed, former colleague. It goes to show that there will be a lot of strange bedfellows during the vote on this motion. I will return to that point later. My electorate is the exact opposite of the electorate of Mount Isa and some of the other northern electorates because my electorate supports daylight-saving in the strongest possible terms. As all honourable members would know, Brisbane Central includes the central business district not only of Brisbane but also of Queensland. Indeed, there will be some strange bedfellows in this debate. It also includes Fortitude Valley. I find myself in the interesting position of being on the same side as the Liberal Party when voting on this issue. That causes me some unease. I will also be on the same side as people such as the honourable member for Southport and, no doubt, the honourable member for Surfers Paradise. I have to say that I strongly applaud some of the comments that have been made publicly by the honourable member for Southport. He has put forward some of the most intelligent comments I have heard and I will share a couple of them with the House tonight. On 20 November 1991, in the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, he made the following incredibly perceptive and intelligent remark—

> "Southport MP Mick Veivers yesterday described several of his fellow National Party MPs as 'backward, silly old bastards' over daylight saving."

I have to say that the man has vision that I never expected him to have, and I applaud what he had to say. I want to be identified with those remarks in the strongest possible way. The articles goes on to state—

> "Mr Veivers last week failed in a bid to have the party's parliamentary wing endorse a policy of two time zones, regardless of the result of the February or March referendum."

The member went on to say—

> "You can't pull down the blinds on young people who enjoy the benefits of daylight saving. You can't endanger people in the tourist industry where havoc is caused when there are different times between here, Sydney and Melbourne."

I have to say that I agree totally with those comments. Seventy-three years have passed since Queensland had its first taste of daylight-saving. During World War I, Queenslanders experienced the energy-saving experiment. That does not mean that the community is any less divided now than it was when the proposition was first considered 73 years ago. However, I am concerned that after the referendum is over, there will still be people—regardless of which case wins—who will be unhappy with the result, and they will be a sizeable percentage of Queenslanders. As the honourable member for Townsville mentioned earlier, I grew up in the town of Atherton in north Queensland, and I am aware of the regional diversity of this State and the tyranny of distance that is so often referred to. I was therefore intrigued to read an article published in the *Courier-Mail* on 30 October 1991 by a former engineer and navigation instructor, George Day, which really crystallised a lot of the arguments and problems. I will refer to what he said because it sums up the difficulties that Queensland has experienced in the past and is currently experiencing in the daylight-saving debate. The article states—

> "Our difficulty arises not from Queenslanders wanting to be different or argumentative, but purely from the state's geographic location.
>
> Australian Eastern Standard Time . . . is based on longitude 150 degrees east (10 hours east of the Greenwich meridian).
>
> If one lives close to the line of longitude, AEST will not be very far from natural sun time.
>
> Midday by the clock will be close to the time when the sun reaches its highest point.

However, a glance at an atlas shows that almost all of Queensland lies to the west of the 150 degree line.

The heavily-populated south-east corner is close to it, but on the other hand, Mt Isa is three-quarters of an hour west of the 150 degree line.

Another way of looking at it is that on normal AEST Mt Isa already has 45 minutes of daylight saving because Queensland's time zone extends so far west. No wonder people in western Queensland are reluctant to receive another hour.

However, the difficulty does not stop there. Daylight saving makes most sense in the temperate zones.

In the southern hemisphere these are the parts of the world that lie between the Antarctic Circle and the Tropic of Capricorn.

There is little benefit to be gained from daylight saving in tropical areas where the effect is to transfer the heat of the day into the evening when people are anxious for coolness.

The Tropic of Capricorn runs close to Rockhampton, and so anywhere from there north gains little benefit from daylight saving.

The overall result of Queensland's geographical location is that only the small but heavily-populated south-east corner stands to gain a lifestyle benefit from daylight saving.

The task therefore becomes one of finding a compromise between the desirable objective of keeping Queensland on the same time standard as the rest of eastern Australia, and not unduly disrupting the lives of the citizens.

. . .

Three facts seem indisputable:

(1) Daylight Saving is inappropriate, from purely geographic consideration, for a large part of Queensland.

(2) Lack of time synchronisation with Sydney and Melbourne costs Queenslanders a great deal because of business inefficiencies.

(3) Most Queensland business is situated in the south-east where daylight saving is seen by many as a benefit.

On this basis the answer seems to be to create two time zones in the state—a north-western zone that remains on AEST and a south-eastern zone (which might also include some of the holiday islands) which adopts summer time.

A two-zone solution is not ideal, because there is no ideal solution. But it seems to have fewer disadvantages than the all-or-nothing options envisaged by the referendum.

Queensland's daylight saving difficulties stem from matters of geography and planetary motion, neither of which is under the control of the Queensland Government nor its citizens."

I suggest that the article sums up the situation very astutely, which is one of the reasons why I strongly support—not that it helps in this debate—the recommendation of two time zones. It is the only long-term answer.

Mr Gibbs: Would you age if you crossed the time-zone barrier?

Mr BEATTIE: I think that that matter could be given serious consideration. I turn now to deal with a couple of other issues that I think are important. At the commencement of my contribution, I pointed out the importance of daylight-saving to the business

community. Anyone who dealt with people in Sydney or Melbourne when Queensland was not in a daylight-saving period would know that, in rough terms, four hours of productivity a day are lost. One loses an hour in the morning, two hours over the spread of the lunch period—because people go to lunch at different times—and an hour in the evening. When it is necessary to contact lawyers who have to attend court and be there at 10 o'clock, one can understand the difficulties in communication that arise because of set times.

Mr Gibbs: You know about this?

Mr BEATTIE: Indeed, I do.

Mr Gibbs: And about the physiological effects in the morning?

Mr BEATTIE: Of course, I do. The point in this debate is that Queensland is losing out from an economic point of view. A great deal of discussion has taken place on the subject of the recession. At a time when Australia is experiencing economic difficulties and when the consequential effects of those difficulties are being felt in Queensland, Government can ill afford to do anything that acts detrimentally upon the business community. Government should be stimulating and encouraging the business community, not introducing measures which in some way will detract from the productivity levels that are required. I believe that we should look carefully at the economic considerations associated with this matter.

In addition, there are strong arguments relating to the effects of daylight-saving on tourism. I believe that it is important to give consideration to what the business community is saying. Any consideration at all will reveal that that community strongly supports daylight-saving. The State Chamber of Commerce and Industry published an article in the *Voice of Business* in April/May 1990 which examines this issue. The chamber came up with a study of research that had been conducted, based on a questionnaire that had been sent to members. The overwhelming response was that 94 per cent were in favour of daylight-saving both within the trial period of October 1989 to March 1990 and in future years. Specific responses obtained from the survey were—

> "14.5% of respondents indicated that they had a '%' or '$' loss of business during the years Queensland was on a different time zone from other eastern states. Stated losses ranged from a 5-10% upwards figure to figures such as '$100,000 p.a.', '$300,000 p.a.', '$14,000 per week' to an alarming '$3,000,000'."

They are the losses sustained by the business community when there is no daylight-saving and many others acknowledge significant losses which were "unquantifiable". In addition to these losses were the inconvenience factors such as communication difficulties. Eighty-five per cent of respondents confirmed that they had experienced communication difficulties in contacting interstate business, which was a point that I made before. There was the time cost in travelling for company executives. Fifty-eight per cent of respondents indicated that additional time and expenses had been incurred in travelling interstate on company business. Of course, there were also the benefits of daylight-saving. Ninety per cent of those who responded indicated positive benefits from daylight-saving.

The business community—as illustrated by a range of spokesmen—and the tourist industry are strong supporters of daylight-saving and what it can do for this State's economy. An honourable member referred to where the support for this issue lies. He referred to a Morgan poll in 1989. The latest Morgan poll on 21 January 1991 showed that 56 per cent of Queenslanders supported daylight-saving, which is an increase of 3 per cent on the previous figure. I am under no illusions that this referendum will be a very closely fought one. I urge everyone who is concerned about the economy of this State, particularly in this time of recession, and anybody who is concerned about one of Queensland's major industries, the tourist industry, to consider this issue. I applaud the

public comments that have been made by the Minister for Tourism, who has been campaigning strongly on this issue. He has been making some very sensible and important points on this issue and has been encouraging the industry to take a Statewide view. I am concerned about the dangers of losing the daylight-saving referendum. I think that such a result would be unhelpful to Queensland. I do not believe that it would in any way enhance this State's economic future. I urge all those people out there, those people who are silent on this issue but who ought to be concerned about the State's economic future, to get out and start campaigning for a "Yes" vote, because the loss of daylight-saving will have a significant impact on this State's economy.

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South) (11.26 p.m.): During September, following a telephone poll conducted by the *Chronicle* in Toowoomba, I gave notice of a motion in this House calling for a referendum on daylight-saving. That telephone poll was taken over two and a half days. In that time there were some 6 586 respondents, with 79 per cent against daylight-saving and 21 per cent for it. No doubt, in Toowoomba that telephone poll could have been easily influenced by the number of rural people living around the city, but I think it is a fair indication of the feeling in Toowoomba and surrounding areas against daylight-saving. There has been a lot said during the debate tonight. I do not intend to take up a lot of time going over it all, but I think it is quite clear to everybody that the further north from Brisbane one goes, the more people hate daylight-saving, and the further west from Brisbane one goes, the more people hate it. I use the term "hate" as a member on the Government side of the House used that term earlier in the debate tonight. People absolutely detest daylight-saving. I think that those people who are against daylight-saving detest it, and those people who live in the south-east corner who are perhaps for it, have more of an ambivalence toward it.

An argument has been put forward about tourism. If one goes back to the time before 1989 when the daylight-saving trial was brought in, I do not think that the fact that Queensland did not have daylight-saving made one dollar of difference to tourism, other than the inconvenience. I do not think even now when people make up their minds to cross the border and go to New South Wales, or go to New Zealand, that they consider whether that State or that particular destination has daylight-saving. In 1971, when daylight-saving was introduced in New South Wales, I was living in the western suburbs of Sydney. The introduction of daylight-saving was based solely on the quality-of-life and leisure issues. That was the total argument. At that time there was a lot of division amongst Sydneysiders. Those who lived around Bondi and Manly thought daylight-saving was great. Those who lived in the western suburbs, where the temperature was often about eight or 10 degrees higher than it was in other areas, thought it was terrible. I had a young family at the time. I can remember the inconvenience of children not wanting to have their meals at normal times and so on.

The adoption of daylight-saving throughout New South Wales and Victoria has put Queensland in a difficult position. Not only is there the argument for daylight-saving to enable leisure activities in the afternoon owing to the extra daylight that is available, but there is also the inconvenience that occurs. People involved in business and tourism in the south-east corner seem to be most inconvenienced. One should consider that against the physical difficulties of those people who are against daylight-saving, particularly families, and mothers with children of school age. For those people whose lifestyle has revolved around the sun and working in the open, daylight-saving is something that they absolutely abhor. Not many people have touched on this subject in this debate, but the real problem is that when one reaches the latter part of the day, when people are tired and weary from perhaps eight or nine hours work, when the temperature should be cooling down, one is actually in a very hot part of the day. I can well remember in the last few years working in an non-airconditioned building at the Toowoomba showgrounds, which are situated on the western side of the city. At around four o'clock in the afternoon, when it should have been cooling down and things should be getting a bit better, the heat was absolutely intense. That inconvenience in the middle of the afternoon is the thing that annoys people in the rural and regional areas.

I do not want to go on further about the arguments on this issue of daylight-saving. They have all been touched upon. Those people who are for daylight-saving look at the matter of leisure in the afternoon and the inconvenience to business. The member for Townsville adequately covered the inconvenience to business when, in these days of faxes and telephones, it is really not difficult to make a sensible adjustment to arrangements. In relation to tourism, those people involved in tourism can speak far better on the subject than I can, but from an outsider's point of view, it appears that daylight-saving would not make one dollar of difference to actual tourism receipts. The main inconvenience comes in the evening when staff have to be put on for longer hours during daylight-saving. The publicans in Toowoomba usually employ their catering staff from 6 to 8 p.m. but now employ that staff from 6 to 9 p.m. Many people do not want to eat at six, but the odd one does. Most come in when the day has cooled down sufficiently so that eating is a reasonably comfortable experience.

The point is that the people want a referendum. It is an all-encompassing issue. That has been evident in the debate tonight. The National Party has representatives from all over Queensland and will be allowing a free vote. Obviously, some National Party members have a bias against daylight-saving and some are for it. I felt it was very easy for the honourable member for Currumbin to point out that the members of his party would be voting the same way. Of course, they represent one small area where the opinion is only one way. The rest of us in this House represent areas with great diversity of character, population and climate. The people of Queensland have had enough of this issue. That is why they want a referendum. I have no doubt that, once the referendum is decided, they will want to have no more to do with it. They will accept the decision one way or the other.

I want to put forward my personal opinion. I do not like daylight-saving, mainly for the reasons I have outlined. As indicated by the newspaper referendum, the people in my electorate are against it. The television referendum conducted about the same time in Brisbane resulted in 53 per cent for and 47 per cent against. Obviously there is not a lot of feeling either way in south-east Queensland, but outside that area there is very intense feeling against daylight-saving. The honourable member for Townsville was bold enough to suggest that the outcome of the referendum would be 55 per cent against and 45 per cent for. The word among the members of the press gallery in this place is that 70 per cent of people are against daylight-saving. I feel quite sure that the vote will be against it and, in a State as geographically diverse as Queensland, the main argument put forward initially for daylight-saving, that is, quality of life, just does not apply and, for that reason, the referendum will be defeated.

The thrust of my speech tonight is that it is good to have a referendum. I think the people want to make a decision and I believe that, once the decision is arrived at, the people will not want the State split into zones. They will accept the decision one way or the other.

Mr ARDILL (Salisbury) (11.33 p.m.): Daylight-saving seems to cause problems in Queensland, Australia, that no other country experiences. A glance at international airline timetables shows that daylight-saving or summer-time is a worldwide phenomenon. The sun rises two hours earlier in summer than in winter so it is illogical to commence the day in summer two hours after sunrise or dawn or whatever time it is in winter that people arise. If it is sensible to leave a warm bed at, say, 6 a.m. on a cold winter morning 48 minutes before sunrise, surely it follows that it is sensible to commence the day on a pleasant summer morning at 12 minutes after sunrise rather than an hour later. I am referring to Brisbane time, of course.

Daylight-saving reduces the use of lighting for most people by one hour a day. It allows peak-hour traffic to clear before darkness falls, thus reducing road accidents. It allows residents to arrive home in many cases before darkness falls. That is an advantage to young women particularly. It allows people to enjoy outdoor recreation after sundown in the twilight half hour which most of Queensland enjoys in summer. It also ensures that all night-time activities, such as watching television or going to the theatre, are carried out

one hour earlier than they otherwise would be, and that sleep commences, therefore, one hour earlier as a consequence. This allows even those who do not use an alarm clock but use the sun as a means of waking to obtain sufficient sleep. All of this was explained most eloquently in the most elegant language by the honourable member for Yeronga. I am using more prosaic words so that everyone can understand.

Most of the criticism of daylight-saving represents pure bias or lack of logic in areas except, of course, those in the far west of the State. Mount Isa has the worst of all possible situations. It has a mean summer temperature that is 7 degrees above that in Brisbane or Cairns. It already has almost one hour of daylight-saving when compared with Brisbane. That means at sunrise it is 7 a.m. when daylight-saving begins and 7.35 a.m. when it ends. At that time, it has only the same predawn light before sunrise as Brisbane has, and that is about 20 minutes. Sunset is as late as 8.30 p.m. daylight-saving time when the average temperature is well above 30 degrees and often above 40 degrees. On the other hand, coastal cities from Brisbane to Cairns see sunset at about the same time, although sunrise varies by as much as 46 minutes. I seek leave to incorporate in *Hansard* Government statistics on the standard hours of sunrise and sunset during the daylight-saving period.

Leave granted.

Appendix D Times of Sunrise and Sunset in Eastern Australia Standard Time

Date	Rise/Set	Brisbane	Mackay	Townsville		Cairns	Longreach Mt Isa
Nov 1	Sunrise	4.57 am	5.21 am	5.32 am	5.39 am	5.38 am	6.00 am
	Sunset	6.06 pm	6.13 pm	6.21 pm	6.22 pm	6.36 pm	6.52 pm
Nov 10	Sunrise	4.51 am	5.16 am	5.28 am	5.36 am	5.33 am	5.56 am
	Sunset	6.13 pm	6.18 pm	6.25 pm	6.26 pm	6.41 pm	6.56 pm
Nov 20	Sunrise	4.47 am	5.13 am	5.26 am	5.34 am	5.29 am	5.53 am
	Sunset	6.20 pm	6.24 pm	6.31 pm	6.31 pm	6.48 pm	7.02 pm
Dec 1	Sunrise	4.45 am	5.13 am	5.26 am	5.34 am	5.28 am	5.52 am
	Sunset	6.29 pm	6.32 pm	6.38 pm	6.38 pm	6.56 pm	7.10 pm
Dec 10	Sunrise	4.45 am	5.14 am	5.27 am	5.36 am	5.29 am	5.54 am
	Sunset	6.35 pm	6.37 pm	6.43 pm	6.43 pm	7.02 pm	7.15 pm
Dec 20	Sunrise	4.49 am	5.18 am	5.31 am	5.40 am	5.33 am	5.58 am
	Sunset	6.42 pm	6.43 pm	4.49 pm	6.49 pm	7.08 pm	7.21 pm
Jan 1	Sunrise	4.55 am	5.24 am	5.38 am	5.46 am	5.39 am	6.04 am
	Sunset	6.46 pm	6.48 pm	6.54 pm	6.54 pm	7.13 pm	7.26 pm
Jan 10	Sunrise	5.02 am	5.30 am	5.43 am	5.52 am	5.45 am	6.10 am
	Sunset	6.48 pm	6.51 pm	6.56 pm	6.56 pm	7.15 pm	7.28 pm
Jan 20	Sunrise	5.10 am	5.37 am	5.50 am	5.58 am	5.53 am	6.17 am
	Sunset	6.47 pm	6.51 pm	6.57 pm	6.57 pm	7.15 pm	7.29 pm
Feb 1	Sunrise	5.20 am	5.45 am	5.57 am	6.05 am	6.01 am	6.24 am
	Sunset	6.43 pm	6.48 pm	6.55 pm	6.56 pm	7.11 pm	7.26 pm
Feb 10	Sunrise	5.27 am	5.50 am	6.02 am	6.09 am	6.07 am	6.30 am
	Sunset	6.37 pm	6.44 pm	6.52 pm	6.53 pm	7.07 pm	7.23 pm
Feb 20	Sunrise	5.34 am	5.56 am	6.07 am	6.13 am	6.13 am	6.35 am
	Sunset	6.29 pm	6.38 pm	6.46 pm	6.48 pm	7.00 pm	7.17 pm

Times of Sunrise, Sunset and Civil Twilight in Eastern Australia Standard Time

(Add One Hour for Eastern Australia Summer Time (Daylight Saving Time)

Date	Rise/Set	Brisbane	Mackay	Townsville		Cairns	Longreach	Mt Isa
Nov 1	Sunrise	4.57 am	5.21 am	5.32 am	5.39 am	5.38 am	6.00 am	
	Sunset	6.06 pm	6.13 pm	6.21 pm	6.22 pm	6.36 pm	6.52 pm	
Civil Twilight		4.33 am	4.58 am	5.10 am	5.17 am	5.14 am	5.37 am	
		6.31 pm	6.36 pm	6.43 pm	6.45 pm	6.59 pm	7.15 pm	
Dec 1	Sunrise	4.45 am	5.13 am	5.26 am	5.34 am	5.28 am	5.52 am	
	Sunset	6.29 pm	6.32 pm	6.38 pm	6.38 pm	6.56 pm	7.10 pm	
Civil Twilight		4.19 am	4.48 am	5.02 am	5.11 am	5.03 am	5.28 am	
		6.55 pm	6.56 pm	7.02 pm	7.01 pm	7.21 am	7.34 pm	
Jan 1	Sunrise	4.56 am	5.25 am	5.38 am	5.47 am	5.39 am	6.04 am	
	Sunset	6.47 pm	6.48 pm	6.54 pm	6.54 pm	7.13 pm	7.26 pm	
Civil Twilight		4.29 am	5.00 am	5.14 am	5.23 am	5.14 am	5.40 am	
		7.13 pm	7.13 pm	7.19 pm	7.18 pm	7.38 pm	7.51 pm	
Feb 1	Sunrise	5.20 am	5.45 am	5.58 am	6.05 am	6.01 am	6.24 am	
	Sunset	6.43 pm	6.48 pm	6.55 pm	6.56 pm	7.11 pm	7.26 pm	
Civil Twilight		4.55 am	5.22 am	5.34 am	5.42 am	5.38 am	6.01 am	
		7.08 pm	7.12 pm	7.18 pm	7.19 pm	7.35 pm	7.50 pm	

Civil Twilight may be defined as the time when ordinary outdoor operations are difficult without artificial light, although there may still be ample light to make possible, large scale operations requiring outlines only. The brightest stars will be visible to the eye.

Mr ARDILL: The latest sunrise experienced in any large centre during daylight-saving, apart from Mount Isa, is 7.15 a.m. in Cairns, Longreach and Mareeba. The mean temperature difference in the dry months of summer varies less between Brisbane and Mackay and Cairns than it does between Brisbane and Ipswich, Bundaberg and Rockhampton or Mackay and Townsville. Brisbane's temperature is a mean 24 degrees whereas in Mackay and Cairns it is 27 degrees. The claim that children refuse to go to bed during daylight-saving is hard to understand, based on sunset which occurs at 7.20 p.m. at the beginning of daylight-saving and before 8 p.m. at the peak of summer. As I point out, the children of Brisbane cope with the same sunset and a longer length of twilight than children in the tropics.

An Opposition member: No, they don't.

Mr ARDILL: Yes, they do. In western Ireland and in parts of Europe——

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Gregory should interject only from his correct place and should cease interjecting in any case.

Mr ARDILL: In western Ireland and in parts of Europe the sun is still well up in the sky at 9 p.m. in high summer when the children are already in bed. I did not see any kids running around the streets. I did not see any kids running around the streets at 9 p.m. Most of the opposition on these grounds is a matter of perception and bias, not fact, as indicated by the figures that I have tabled. Mount Isa is different. It is in the same situation as Broken Hill and western Victoria, except that it is even hotter. There is also strong opposition to daylight-saving in those areas.

Mr Johnson: Three-quarters of Queensland is in the same situation as Mount Isa.

Mr ARDILL: I point out to the interjecting member for Gregory that the sun sets at the same time right up the Queensland coast.

Mr Veivers: Does it?

Mr ARDILL: It does. I have already tabled those figures.

Mr Veivers: As long as you are all on the same longitude, you are right.

Mr ARDILL: No, Mr Veivers is incorrect. High noon is at the same time on the same longitude. Midnight is at the same time on the same longitude, but sunset and sunrise do not occur at exactly the same time on the same longitude. In point of fact, because of the tilt of the earth, the closer the sun gets to the equator, the earlier it sets in relation to the longitude. There is no reason why the coastal areas of Queensland should have business and communication chaos every year by being one hour behind the other eastern States. There is no excuse for imposing an hour of silence between Coolangatta and Tweed Heads, Beaudesert and Kyogle, Wallangarra and Jennings, Goondiwindi and Boggabilla, Mungindi in Queensland and New South Wales, and Brisbane and Sydney. I could go on for ever and ever. There is no excuse for requiring Queenslanders to rise one hour early to catch planes, trains and buses to other States. It is no reason for subjecting all Queenslanders to the gibes of other Australians to "put back your watch one hour and 10 years when you are crossing the Queensland border". Steps can be taken to relieve the problems encountered by people in the far west, in Gregory and in Mount Isa, which are in the same position. Longreach is not.

Mr Veivers: What about the people on the coast?

Mr ARDILL: I do not think Mr Veivers realises the implications of any of this. He may like to read it tomorrow morning. Steps can be taken to relieve those problems. Firstly, the Education Department should insist that schools commence and finish one hour later, which is within the existing permissible time-frame that the Education Department already sets. Secondly, television channels should be prevailed upon to provide an extra news bulletin at 8 p.m. Clearly, most people in coastal areas prefer to retain this boon to our modern life-style, and the energy conservation which flows from making full use of morning light. The only way to retain daylight-saving is for everyone to promote its advantages and to vote "Yes" in 1992. Does Mr Veivers disagree with me?

Mr Veivers: I don't disagree. You are the greatest train traveller I have ever come across.

Mr ARDILL: I thank the honourable member. It is my suggestion that those people who want daylight-saving should get out and promote it, and vote "Yes" in the referendum.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.43 p.m.): I had not intended to speak in this debate tonight due to an agreement that was arrived at with the Leader of the House, but I would appreciate the opportunity to take a few moments to offer some comments, and to a certain extent to reply to certain remarks that were made by the member for Mount Isa and the member for Currumbin. At the outset, I would say that the issue of daylight-saving is an extremely complex and difficult problem for any Government. I say to members of the Labor Party that they have learnt nothing from the experiences of the previous Government in Queensland. The debate that we have had tonight, which, by and large, with a couple of notable exceptions, has been a constructive and intelligent one, basically is circumstances revisited. We have been along this path before. I want to say that I will be supporting daylight-saving in Queensland, and that I am proud to be a member of a political party that acknowledges the differences that exist in the State of Queensland, and at the same time is prepared to extend to its members a conscience vote on this issue. I believe that this will be the first conscience vote in this Parliament since the late 1970s. It is certainly the first time that

there has been a conscience vote in this House since 1980, when I first became a member of this Parliament.

Earlier tonight, the member for Currumbin made the curious assertion that the member for Southport and I are incapable of representing the Gold Coast because we are members of the National Party, and that party collectively is opposed to daylight-saving. I want to make the point tonight that it has been a matter of public record for some time from the Leader of the Opposition down that the National Party supports a referendum on the issue of daylight-saving in Queensland. I also believe it should be put on the public record that the party of which I am a member, and the party I will not be tempted away from, is a party for all Queenslanders. It is a party that accepts the diversity and the differences of this State. I warn honourable members of the Liberal Party that, if they want to take the debate a little bit further, the member for Southport and I will be pleased to oblige. If one is a member of a political party that does not have parliamentary representation outside south-east Queensland, this debate is not a problem. Those members do not have a conscience in the north or in the west. They do not need to take a wider view. As to comments made by the member for Currumbin, I point out that the member for Southport was fighting for daylight-saving before anyone had heard of the member for Currumbin or he had ever been moved to make public comment on this particular issue. I remember as a Minister of the previous Government——

Mr COOMBER: I rise to a point of order. As early as 1982, I am on record in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* on this matter of daylight-saving.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The honourable member for Currumbin will resume his seat.

Mr BORBIDGE: I recall that, when I was a Minister in the previous Government, the member for Southport, along with Alderman Sallyanne Atkinson, now departed, were two of the lone voices in encouraging the Government of the day to review its attitude on daylight-saving. However, I make the point that it is a complex and difficult issue for any political party that represents a broad cross-section of the people of Queensland and the constituencies of Queensland. If members of this place cannot accept that simple fact of life, quite frankly they do not deserve to be here and they should not be here. This debate is about members putting their electorates first. As I indicated earlier, it is the first conscience vote that we have seen in this Parliament for many years.

I express some concern—the member for Brisbane Central made the point in a roundabout way—that we have not seen further consideration in this debate of the concept of two time zones. In fairness to the member for Mount Isa, I would say that the people who live in Mount Isa should not be subjected to the time that suits the people of the Gold Coast. And I am sure that the member for Mount Isa would concede that the people who live on the Gold Coast should not be subjected to the time that necessarily suits the people of Mount Isa. In the latter days of the previous Government, a very exhaustive investigation into daylight-saving was undertaken—the most exhaustive investigation that was ever carried out in recent history. I am sorry that the Government has not taken more detailed analysis and investigation of that matter. It is my personal view that it is a shame that two time zones for Queensland are not an option in this debate. Although I will be supporting daylight-saving because I am confident that that is the overwhelming view of my electorate, I acknowledge the different views that have been expressed tonight on both sides of the House. We would be fools not to acknowledge the diversity of opinion that has been expressed.

The other point on which I will comment briefly is the about-face of the Premier—his refusal in the first instance to have a referendum and his change of face. I wish to bring to the attention of honourable members opposite certain comments made by Mr Goss when

he was Leader of the Opposition which were reported in the *Courier-Mail* of 31 August 1989 when a previous National Party Premier displayed a change of policy in respect of a decision to hold a referendum. Page 2 of the *Courier-Mail* on that day states—

> "The referendum about-face showed the Premier, Mr Ahern, to be a 'bumbling, inept leader', the Opposition Leader, Mr Goss, said yesterday."

In closing, I want to say that, when a National Party Premier has an about-face in respect of a referendum, he is deemed to be bumbling and inept; but when Mr Goss, as Premier, changes his view, he has been humbled and he is losing his arrogance. I make the further point that this Government could have done better by looking very closely at the experience of the previous National Party Government in regard to the daylight-saving debate. It has not learned the lessons that we were subjected to in Government and that is why, tonight, it has found itself in the dilemma that it is now in. I say clearly to the House that my position on daylight-saving, and that of the member for Southport, is consistent. We will be supporting daylight-saving tonight and in the ballot-box. I am proud to be a member of a political party that allows its members the flexibility to undertake such a course of action in this House.

Mr SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton North) (11.52 p.m.): In addressing this issue, I want to correct a couple of claims that were made by the honourable member for Surfers Paradise. One of those issues that arose was the position of the previous Government in terms of daylight-saving. What he did not say about referendums was that the issue that the Honourable the Premier at that time spoke about was not an issue about quality of life; it was about extending the life of the Parliament. At that time, nobody in Queensland wanted to buy that, and I do not think that anybody in this House would want to support the views of the Premier of that day. However, in addressing that issue, it is unfair to say of this Government that it is not prepared to look at issues that relate to the quality of life in a more reasonable way than the previous Government did. If we are talking about politicisation of the issue of daylight-saving—it was the former Premier of Queensland, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, who politicised the issue. It was something of an international and interstate joke that people had to turn their clocks back when they came to Queensland. That is what divided the Queensland people over the issue of daylight-saving and drew the red herrings across the path. That is why this Government is left with the problems of daylight-saving. It was politicised by the previous Government. There was no rational debate about it. In fact, we are left with the scenario that exists now.

Tonight, I want to make it very clear that I have never supported daylight-saving, and I never will. I am on public record in Rockhampton as saying so. Anybody who lives in the area in which I do finds it very, very difficult. I will not use the argument that Johnny Plumber, a mate of mine, does down at the pub that it costs him extra money every day because he never goes home from the pub in daylight. I will not use that argument. I will not use the argument put forward by others about curtains fading. However, I will use the argument of people who are trying to get their young children to bed. On a number of occasions, my wife uses that argument very forcefully against me. I might add that it is a very sensible argument. It is very hard to get younger children to go to bed in daylight hours. In relation to the areas of the State that are in daylight, one has only to look at where the lines are drawn to understand what the honourable member for Mount Isa said before. Many people lose sight of the fact that it is daylight in Rockhampton when it is dark in Brisbane, and it is daylight in Mount Isa when it is dark in Rockhampton. One does not have to be an Oxford scholar to work that out.

I want to put paid to the argument that daylight-saving is good for business. I give full marks to the chamber of commerce in Rockhampton with Peter Sisley at its helm. The Rockhampton business community conducted a survey which revealed that 63 per cent of those surveyed did not believe that daylight-saving would be of any benefit. I must say

that I agree. That certainly encourages me in my own view. The fact is that the difference between this Government and the previous Government is that we have been entitled to put the issue of daylight-saving before the people of Queensland. Nothing fairer than that can be done. This lot opposite would have us believe that it is all fair and aboveboard. They have been screaming for a referendum since they have been sitting opposite. They were not game to stand up to Joh and say to him, "Let's have a referendum" because they knew that that was not the way in which that Government did business. This Government has a Premier who is decent enough and who has enough intestinal fortitude to say, "I have looked at this matter all over this State and I have talked to people. It is about people's own personal lives. It is about how it impacts on them. I think we ought to put the question back to them." That should be contrasted with what the lot opposite did.

Mr Veivers interjected.

Mr SCHWARTEN: And don't you put your hand up. You skulked over to the back corner. You didn't even want to have a vote. Don't you talk to me about it. You skulked up there when the debate was on, so don't you put your hand up and wave it around in the air.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Can I suggest that the honourable member direct his comments through the Chair?

Mr SCHWARTEN: Yes. The honourable member should not skulk around. He will not do it tonight. The fact is that members opposite would have us believe that they are the righteous people who own some benefit out of the decision that is being taken tonight. It took a very courageous Government to say to the people of Queensland, "It is about your rights as individuals. We want to see how it impacts on you personally." We are not interested in the politics of the issue. As one could note in this Chamber tonight, this debate is not about politics, it is about people and the areas in which they live. In this House tonight, every member has an entitlement to represent the people in his electorate. I welcome those members opposite doing that very thing. What a shame it is that they did not do it when they were in power, because it would have taken politics out of the issue.

At the end of the day, the people of Queensland have a choice on this matter. The people in my electorate have been saying to me, "All we want to do is have a say on this matter." When there was talk about two zones and so on, I attended various seminars throughout the State. But time and time again, the people came back to me and said, "We want a say. All we want to do is record our vote for or against and we will accept the decision at the end of the day." I accept that that is the fact. With those few words, I want to place on record yet again that I will be voting against daylight-saving because I do not believe it is to the benefit of my local constituency. I do not believe from any survey that has been conducted, within my electorate or without it—in my area, for that matter—that it would serve any of the areas of central Queensland well. Accordingly, I will be voting against it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Southport.

Mr VEIVERS (Southport) (11.59 p.m.): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Ardill: Are you going to support it?

Mr VEIVERS: Mr Ardill, one day I am going to have a train ride with you around this State. I reckon it will be most restful, because I need it. Christmas is coming and all the rest of it. Do you take the gold pass? I do not know.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Southport to get on the daylight-saving train.

Mr VEIVERS: I am sorry. We don't want to stay up all night. I notice that the Deputy Premier——

Mr Burns: Tell us about how your mum and dad vote on daylight-saving.

Mr VEIVERS: It is a bit hard for dad, because he is dead.

Mr Burns: What about your mum?

Mr VEIVERS: She is a lovely lady. She has had two hip replacements.

Mr Burns: How does she vote on daylight-saving?

Mr VEIVERS: The Deputy Premier has got me going. She has had two hip replacements. She is running around like a demented half-back. I reckon she will outlive me. She has changed the will twice and left me out twice. Is the Deputy Premier happy with that?

Mr Burns: How does she vote on daylight-saving?

Mr VEIVERS: She does not really like it.

Mr Burns: She will be ashamed of you for your performance on this issue.

Mr VEIVERS: No. She was very happy to put me through school. I did classical music and I did art and speech. As the Deputy Premier can see from my rendering of this speech——

Mr Katter: She should have asked for a refund.

Mr VEIVERS: I hope Hansard did not hear that. I believe that my speech is most forthright. I have a bit of Oral Roberts about me, so the Deputy Premier should listen to this.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Can I give the member some advice? If he does not want Hansard to hear something, he should not respond to interjections.

Mr VEIVERS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. You are a good lad. You went to TSS. We all come from the same group. That is a bit of a worry, is it not?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member will come back to the debate.

Mr VEIVERS: I really did not intend to take part in this debate.

Mr Burns: Who typed those notes out for you?

Mr VEIVERS: I typed them out after I had heard a few things. My views on daylight-saving have been well known for a long time. The people on the Gold Coast know very well that I have fought very hard for that great boon for the tourist industry on the Gold Coast. With Sallyanne Atkinson, I have been prepared to stand up for daylight-saving against my party. I can understand why people out west do not like daylight-saving, but I must support the people on the Gold Coast. Against the wishes of my own party, I have stood on my dig down there. I was nearly disendorsed over the whole issue. I must be honest about that.

Mr Burns: Ha, ha!

Mr VEIVERS: The Deputy Premier laughs. I do not have to stand on my bona fides. I stood up and was counted. I have plenty of ticker. That is where I come from. I must now get a bit personal. I do not have to prove my bona fides to the member for Currumbin. When the issue of daylight-saving was previously discussed, I was almost a lone voice on the subject on this side of the House. That was long before the member for Currumbin abandoned his position on the Gold Coast City Council and, I might add, long before he took up his short appointment in this House. I reckon that I will still be advocating daylight-saving when he has left this House after the next election. Tonight, the member for Currumbin wasted the time of the House by picking on poor me and my

cohort the member for Surfers Paradise, looking for cheap points in his futile battle to unseat the very strong member for Surfers Paradise—the long-term member for Surfers Paradise—who will still be here after the next election. The member for Currumbin had a bit of a shot at me. Unfortunately, the Leader of the Liberal Party is not in the Chamber. I wish to tell her that the member for Currumbin has fired the first shots in the battle for Surfers Paradise in the next election.

Mr Szczerbanik: He had to move from Broadwater.

Mr VEIVERS: The member for Albert should remember that he is on my side.

Mr Szczerbanik: I know that. I said he had to move from Broadwater.

Mr VEIVERS: It is all right. The poor, ill-informed member for Currumbin had the audacity and temerity to come into this House and endeavour to paint me and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition as purveyors of some ill-begotten message. That is not on. I have never had a crack at the member for Currumbin. He opened up and put a stiffy on me, and I am running at 100 miles an hour. Is the Deputy Premier listening to this?

Mr Burns: I am sorry. I apologise.

Mr VEIVERS: I have a message for the Deputy Premier. I personally began the fight for daylight-saving with Sallyanne Atkinson, and I have already carried the day. I am pleased to see you so attentive, Mr Speaker. Some Opposition members are so bored that they have started to snore, because they do not like daylight-saving. I am easy. I have never said anything against anybody in this House unless that member has given me a touch-up. No-one is going to give me a touch-up and get away with it. I do not care who it is. I do not need a half-smart move from the "Cat from Currumbin" who has made more moves than a Swiss watch. He had a shot at me, and then he says that he is going to take it easy. He gave me a belt. First of all, he ran for the National Party, and missed out.

Mr Coomber interjected.

Mr VEIVERS: Shut up! You have had your go! The member ran as an Independent, and he missed out.

Mr Coomber: All I stated was party policy.

Mr VEIVERS: The member's party policy is RS. He is gone for all money.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member will withdraw that comment about the party policy.

Mr VEIVERS: I beg your pardon, Mr Speaker. I will withdraw that. My elocution failed me for a minute. The member's last hope was when he ran for the Liberals. Since then, he has proved his ability to move almost to Currumbin and then out again. He has jumped here, there and everywhere.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member will get back to the issue of daylight-saving.

Mr VEIVERS: It is very late in the evening. The member for Currumbin has moved twice in his political life for ascendancy—notice that the diction is beautiful. I will give the member a bit of free advice.

Mr Burns: Stick to daylight-saving.

Mr VEIVERS: Is that right? I say to the member for Currumbin: for the people from whom he plans to walk away at the next election and for everyone else on the Gold Coast, he should concentrate on the fight to have daylight-saving accepted at the referendum. Is the honourable member with me on that?

Mr Coomber: I am in favour.

Mr VEIVERS: Good. After the honourable member's speech, I did not know what he was in favour of. The Gold Coast needs daylight-saving for one very simple reason: the tourism industry and the infrastructure that supports people on the coast, with our very close proximity to the border of New South Wales. Businesses on the Gold Coast, such as electricity and plumbing businesses, are affected. One plumber had to have two trucks. He could afford only one, but to cope with daylight-saving over the border——

Mr Burns: Ha, ha!

Mr VEIVERS: The Deputy Premier may laugh, but it is a cost.

Mr Burns: Did he carry a clock on the other truck?

Mr VEIVERS: No. He had to have two trucks. It is a fact of life. The Deputy Premier may disagree. We do not have much hope when the Deputy Premier will not even listen to me. I am telling him a fact of life. Tourism is what the Gold Coast is all about. We all know it. I feel for the people who live in northern and western Queensland. It is good to see the Premier arrive in time to hear a very good final speech. I am supporting the Premier, if he does not already know. It is the first time that I have supported him. I do not know why I am doing that. It is a bit of a worry.

Dr Flynn: Does that include the last Premier?

Mr VEIVERS: Touche!

Mr W. K. Goss: The first time is always the hardest.

Mr VEIVERS: The Premier is not wrong. I played in the Skins golf tournament at Port Douglas. I paid my own way to get there, I might add. I was playing badly, which the Minister for Sport was very happy about. My colleague the member for Surfers Paradise rang me at 7 o'clock in the morning and said, "How are you, farmer?" I said, "I am very good but just wait a minute. I cannot see what is going on." I ask the Premier to listen to this?

Mr W. K. Goss: This is what I have been waiting for all night.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, the final speech. Good. The Premier does not need a hearing aid.

Mr Burns: You paid for elocution lessons.

Mr VEIVERS: The honourable member should have done that. When I awoke, it was very dark. I said, "Just a moment. I will open the sliding doors." This was at 7 o'clock in the morning.

Mr Borbidge: You fell out of bed, actually.

Mr VEIVERS: No, I did not fall out of bed. I stumbled out and opened the sliding doors. However, that did not do anything to improve the light, because at a quarter past seven in north Queensland in the heart of summer it was as black as the ace of spades. I then understood that daylight-saving for those people who live in north Queensland and western Queensland is not on, but for the people who live in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast, it definitely is on. I have gone to two time zones, but we will not go into that. The tourism industry will benefit from daylight-saving. As the member for Southport, I say that the Gold Coast must have daylight-saving.

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (12.13 a.m.), in reply: I thank all honourable members, in particular, the member for Southport, for their contributions.

Question—That the motion be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

DIVISION

Resolved in the affirmative.

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (12.24 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1896 and for related purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (12.25 a.m.): I move—

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

Honourable members may recall that the Parliamentary Members' Salaries Act No. 32 1988 was passed by this House on 19 April 1988 and assented to on 21 April 1988. This Act repealed certain sections of the Constitution Act Amendment Act 1896, and in particular section 3 (1). Section 3 (1) provided for additional salary to be paid to certain office-holders of the Legislative Assembly.

The repeal of section 3 (1) of the Constitution Act Amendment Act is of significance, because section 6 (1) of that Act specifically refers to section 3 (1) in relation to the continuation of payment of additional salaries to those office-holders on the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly. As a consequence of the repeal of section 3 (1), the office-holders were effectively disenfranchised from receiving the additional salaries they were entitled to following dissolution of the Forty-fifth Parliament on 2 November 1989. The

office-holders to whom I refer are the Speaker, Chairman of Committees, Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the leader of any other recognised political party, the Government Whip, Opposition Whip and the Government Deputy Whip.

This Bill is of a technical nature only. Firstly, it validates those additional salary payments that have already been made following dissolution of the previous Parliament, the Forty-fifth Parliament. Secondly, it reinstates the entitlement to additional salary to those office-holders I have mentioned following dissolution of the Forty-sixth Parliament and future Parliaments. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Cooper, adjourned.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT BILL

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (12.26 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to provide for equal employment opportunity in the public sector."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (12.27 a.m.): I move—

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

This Bill is another component in the Government's program of comprehensive public sector reform. It reinforces the fundamental principle already embodied in other human resource management reforms that merit forms the sole basis for selection for employment in the public sector.

Mr Katter interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: However, it goes further. Why does not the honourable member wait for the debate? It requires agencies to take the active step of ensuring that all employees have an equal opportunity to get into the merit competition in order to compete for jobs in the first place—of getting to the starting line. This Bill introduces the requirement for Government departments, agencies and statutory authorities to develop and implement equal employment opportunity management plans. The EEO management plans will target four employment disadvantaged groups: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; people with disabilities; people of non-English speaking background; and women. The objective of the Bill is to promote equity of employment opportunity in the public sector. Specifically, the objectives are to—

(i) enable members of the target groups to compete for selection and pursue careers as effectively as people who are not members of the target groups; and

(ii) eliminate unlawful discrimination against members of the target groups in relation to employment matters.

My Government's initiatives in the area of equal opportunity, generally, and this piece of legislation, specifically, enjoy not only the support of the Government as the employer but also the support of the union movement, which represents more than 100 000 public sector employees. Equal employment opportunity is about creating conditions so that everyone has a fair go. It requires the fair application of the merit principle, thus reinforcing selection on merit. Under the requirements of this Bill, workers are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their individual talents and capabilities, without bias against any individual or prejudice against any group—in short, without discrimination.

This Bill is linked to and complements the anti-discrimination legislation proposed by this Government. The anti-discrimination legislation makes discrimination on a range of grounds unlawful in certain circumstances. It provides redress to victims of discrimination and ensures the protection of individual rights in the workplace and in society. By requiring public sector managers to develop and implement EEO management plans, this Bill provides the imperative for organisations to identify and eliminate unlawful discrimination—in other words, prevent its occurrence. It thus shifts the primary responsibility for ensuring that unlawful discrimination does not occur from the individual to management. This Bill is a clear signal to managers that it is not good enough to wait until a problem confronts them through a grievance action under the anti-discrimination legislation. They must get out and make sure the workplace is fair, equitable and free of discriminatory practice.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to another notable aspect of this Bill. It puts in place a reform that was identified as necessary in this place by my party 25 years ago. In 1966, Vi Jordan, the first woman member of this Parliament, identified what she described as "grave injustice" against women, and urged the House to introduce legislation to provide for equal pay for equal work and abolish discrimination against women in the public service. A fundamental tenet of my party has always been to ensure that everyone is afforded a fair go—an equal opportunity. In the 25 years since the issue of discrimination in the public service was raised by Vi Jordan, my party has continued to work to identify appropriate strategies to ameliorate the problem. The Equal Opportunity in Public Employment Bill is a result of those deliberations.

The Bill requires agencies to develop and implement EEO management plans pursuant to clause 6 in accordance with a prescribed set of steps set out in clause 7. Clause 9 requires agencies to give a copy of their EEO management plan to the Commissioner for Public Sector Equity. The Commissioner for Public Sector Equity is required to assess and advise agencies regarding the acceptability of their plans. The obligations of the Commissioner for Public Sector Equity in relation to EEO are contained in Part 5 of the Bill that amends the Public Sector Management Commission Act 1990. The Commissioner for Public Sector Equity is required to assist agencies in relation to EEO management plans and evaluate their effectiveness. The clause that deals with this—clause 30—also requires the commissioner to report to me, as the Minister responsible, and through me to other Ministers and to the Parliament. The commissioner is also required to provide advice and recommendations to me concerning the operation and effectiveness of EEO management plans. The Bill sets out a course of action the Commissioner for Public Sector Equity may take if dissatisfied with an agency's EEO management plan.

The change this Bill brings is long overdue in the Queensland public sector. For too long the selection of staff has occurred from within a narrow range of people. I want to stress that this Bill reinforces selection on merit as the foundation of personnel practice in the Queensland public sector. The initiatives outlined in the EEO management plans will occur before and after selection—before by encouraging applications from within target

groups and valuing the experience gained in alternative career paths, and afterwards by making sure that new recruits are properly trained and supported to succeed in the position. At the point of selection, the relative merit judged against valid selection criteria remains the only legitimate basis for choosing one person over another.

There is significant goodwill toward, and energy directed at, the achievement of employment equity in the Queensland public sector. With new human resource management systems operating, and a program of public sector reform now largely in place, this Government has an historic opportunity to make a difference for a neglected group of Queenslanders. This Bill sets the framework to do just that. I commend this Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Harper, adjourned.

RACING AND BETTING AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Hon. R. J. GIBBS (Wolston—Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing) (12.30 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the Racing and Betting Act 1980, and for other purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. R. J. GIBBS (Wolston—Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing) (12.31 a.m.): I move—

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

It gives me pleasure to introduce this historic legislation to amend the Racing and Betting Act. I choose the word "historic" carefully as I believe this legislation will provide a blueprint for a widely-based, democratic administration from which the industry can only benefit. Thoroughbred racing Australiawide and in major world centres such as the United States and the United Kingdom is slowly coming to grips with the competition it faces for the leisure dollar. Quite clearly, the days of racegoers thronging tracks for the thrill that is thoroughbred racing have passed. The days when newspapers published Saturday afternoon race results editions are long gone. Racing has myriad more competitors than the traditional major sports, such as football and cricket. Australians still have a love for racing, probably best evidenced by the quasi-religious fervour the Melbourne Cup generates each year. The technological revolution that has lured people from the tracks has been a blow for this State's remaining 184 thoroughbred, harness and greyhound-racing clubs. The effects are as evident in the US and the UK as they are in this country. Dwindling attendances, and consequently prize money, have prompted respected figures such as the doyen of US trainers, D. Wayne Lukas, to call for a national commissioner to provide coordination for operations and marketing. He recently told the November issue of the *Australian Bloodhorse Review*—

"The trouble with this industry is that it is so competitive that nobody wants to get down and hold hands."

He goes on further and states—

> "I am not sure if racing understands its problems, or has any idea how to stop itself from galloping out of control toward a destination too dreary to contemplate."

This year in the United Kingdom, an all-party committee of the House of Commons Racing Inquiry recommended the abolition of the Jockey Club in favour of a British horse-racing authority. It is worth pointing out that this inquiry was commissioned under a Conservative Government. In New South Wales, the Australian Jockey and Sydney Turf Clubs are currently anxiously studying a $10,000 report that they commissioned to give them ideas on how to get people back to the tracks. Prize money cuts in Western Australia were followed last week by similar moves in Victoria.

I am not setting out to deliberately present a gloomy future for Queensland's racing industry. Quite the contrary; I believe that our emerging links with many countries of the Pacific Rim offer unheard-of opportunities. I am not seeking to denigrate the administration of an industry which recorded another record turnover through the TAB in the past financial year. Racing is a huge industry, commonly estimated to be the nation's third largest. In Queensland, it is calculated to be fourth behind the primary sector, resource industries and tourism, and contributes two and a half times the percentage of gross domestic product of the other States.

Racing has a noble tradition of voluntary administration of its clubs, and that will be preserved in the legislation that I am presenting this evening. In spite of what honourable members may have read, let me reiterate that it has never been the Government's intention to have anyone other than racing people administering the racing industry. The Opposition's claims that public servants would replace volunteer committees was one of the school of red herrings the Opposition let go to deflect attention from the real issues. However, it is at the Statewide administration level of this multibillion-dollar industry that this Government will enhance the principles of democracy, accountability and cohesion. The commitment to deliver equitable and sensible reform is the cornerstone of the overwhelming mandate with which the people of Queensland have entrusted the Goss Government. It must also be remembered that Queensland taxpayers received more than $60m and that race clubs received $37.6m in the past financial year. Take into account the extra $17m on top of the TAB distribution in prize money disbursed by the clubs and the $18m in racing development funds, and the enormity of the sport is patently clear.

This legislation is the culmination of the most extensive consultation that any Queensland Government has undertaken with the three codes of the racing industry. I am appreciative of the written and face-to-face contact that I have had with all levels of the industry and I am sure that they will see their suggestions and concerns reflected in this legislation. From the first day of taking office, I was besieged by individuals and industry groups demanding modernisation of what they considered to be an antiquated, in many ways feudal, system of racing administration. I have always maintained that any change will be a result of consultation and negotiation.

In preparation for the release of a Green Paper last year, the Government surveyed all clubs in Queensland to seek their contribution to the reform process. My staff, departmental officers and I have since been engaged in 12 months of consultation and liaison with racing associations, Government departments and a host of bodies in the framing of this legislation. Many people have told me that this debate has prompted them and their associations to make their first critical self-analysis on where they stand. It has prompted them to think for the first time as an industry. Some clubs are moving to include licensees in the decision-making process. The Brisbane Amateur Turf Club, the State's second-largest club, had its first committee election for 48 years. Indeed, even honourable members opposite now embrace the concept of abolition of the five principal clubs system in favour of one broadly based club. This would bring Queensland into line with the other mainland States. In fact, the National Party policy which was hastily

cobbled together is pretty much a lift of our policy. In many ways, it is pleasing to see the National Party come around. The Liberal Party policy, as it is in most cases, seems to be not to have a policy.

Once people have looked past the smokescreen of fantasies and fallacies peddled by the proponents of reform, they have realised this Government's genuine desire to bring about rational and reasonable change. Perhaps the most illogical example is the myth that racing reform is some sort of reds under the bed social power grab. Anyone even on nodding terms with the Racing and Betting Act would know that it contains the overriding condition that all clauses are exercised and all appointments made subject to the pleasure of the Minister of the day. The Act is tainted by and in many ways is a notable example of the excesses of the previous National Party administration. I am proud to say this evening that that draconian control will be lifted by this Government.

Let me outline other major examples of how this legislation hands control back to the racing industry. The Racing Minister—

no longer will determine race dates or approve phantom meetings;

no longer will license racing venues or register race clubs;

will not appoint club administrators;

no longer will approve amendments to the greyhound and harness rules of racing; and

no longer will direct the distribution of assets upon dissolution of a club in all three codes.

Under existing legislation, there are five principal clubs, namely: the Queensland Turf Club; the Downs and South-West Racing Association; the Rockhampton Jockey Club; the Central Queensland Racing Association; and the North Queensland Racing Association. They will be replaced by the Queensland Principal Club, which will consist of 16 committee members: six nominees from the South-East Queensland Racing Association; one each from the downs and south-west Queensland, Capricornia, central western and north Queensland racing associations. The clubs which constitute each area do so—and I stress—as a result of direct consultation between me and people in each area. Lists of the clubs which comprise each regional association will be incorporated in the regulations, and I seek leave to table a copy of the chart depicting this structure.

Leave granted.

Mr GIBBS: I am delighted to confirm that licensed jockeys, trainers and book-makers, will each be able to elect representatives onto the Queensland Principal Club. I stress that current licensees are not eligible for these positions. In doing so, I am cognisant of the anxiety expressed by the Australian Conference of Principal Clubs, and the veiled threat not to recognise this body if licensees were eligible for election. This threat to isolate Queensland from the rest of Australian racing was released to the media before anyone from the conference had the courtesy to contact my office for discussions. The motive behind this action was questionable, and hardly in the best interests of the industry or the sport. For some years, the conference has approved of a licensees' representative being elected to the South Australian Jockey Club. These secret ballots will be conducted in a manner approved by the State Electoral Commissioner. For the first time, the clubs in the downs and south-west region will have a voice at the conference of principal clubs. This Government has addressed the quirk of history which has left a large and progressive operation such as the Toowoomba Turf Club without a say at that level. For the first time in this State, people whose livelihoods depend on thoroughbred racing will be able to participate in the decision-making process. They can elect people with specialist knowledge they consider best suited to protect their interests. A nominee of the

Queensland Bloodhorse Breeders Association also will give that important part of the industry a voice.

In recognition of the Government's major role in the industry through the TAB, the Governor in Council will appoint two members, one of whom must come from outside the South East Queensland Racing Association area. To maintain the tradition of Queensland racing, all members of the principal club will act in an honorary capacity. The racing associations which elect the principal club will be based in the same five centres as at present, and all staff will be eligible for automatic transfer without loss of entitlements. In short, let me make it perfectly clear that no jobs will be lost. There was never any intention to shed jobs. The cowards who spread this nonsense among race club employees, quite frankly, appal me. The racing associations also will act as branch offices for the principal club. The physical location of the club's head office is a matter it will be best placed to determine. The principal club will have the autonomy to determine staff numbers and the funding it requires from individual race clubs, as is presently the case. It will prepare an annual report to Parliament that will highlight—

advancements achieved in integrity and accountability;

strategic management and marketing activities;

the financial position of the club; and

any other relevant information.

Let me dispel more of the misinformation that has gained false credibility through this debate. All assets held by the present five principal clubs will remain with the new club. The Government is not taking over the assets of the industry, and never intended to do so.

One of the most inequitable aspects of the present administration is the system of appeals against the decisions of stewards. At present, the stewards are employed by the same people who hear appeals against them. This is a clear conflict of interest which this legislation will remove. These reforms will eliminate any suggestion of Caesar judging Caesar. Racing associations will nominate appropriate people to hear first-level appeals in a move which will expedite hearings and minimise costs. This Government will establish a single body to hear appeals from the three codes. The incorporation of the Racing Appeals Tribunal and the Galloping Appeals Authority is strongly supported by the racing industry. The new Racing Appeals Authority will comprise three part-time members appointed by the Governor in Council. It will also hear appeals against licensing decisions of each of the control bodies in the three codes. Thoroughbred stewards will have the right to appeal decisions of their local racing associations, obviating any claims of bias.

Central to the reform process, and the major plank of the divestment of the Racing Minister's powers, is the establishment of the Racing Industry Advisory Committee. This is a committee by which the racing industry can plot its own course. It is a committee which puts in place the mechanisms to ensure the shameful saga of the Racing Development Fund pork-barrelling cannot happen again. It is a reform typical of many this Government has made in the post-Fitzgerald era to guarantee a corrupt political regime can never again lavish public money on party political purposes. It is here that I must again refute another deliberate untruth, another used by some people in relation to Racing Development Fund moneys. There is nothing more I would love to be able to do than hand full responsibility for all Racing Development Fund moneys to the industry. However, as long as the Government has the responsibility of paying the outstanding debt, it must maintain overall control of the fund. In two years, this Government already has reduced that debt from $72m to $54m. But I can assure the industry that the Racing Industry Advisory Committee recommendations will be adhered to. The Racing Industry Advisory Committee will be responsible for determining funding priorities on the basis of need and

benefit to the industry. It also will allocate race dates after taking into account submissions from representatives of the three codes and the TAB.

The TAB is a vital player in this exercise. The percentage of its profits which is distributed to race clubs is the life-blood of the industry. Its contribution to prize money pays the bills of the trainers and their employees. The more money the TAB has to distribute, the more money the industry has to share around both in prize money and racing development funds. I am aware that this is not a situation which pleases thoroughbred racing purists, but it has been reality since the board's inception 29 years ago and it must be dealt with. The industry can only benefit through maximising the TAB's profits, and the allocation of race dates is an integral part of the board's fiscal future. While prize money in other States declines, Queensland can look forward to increases. The renegotiation of the outstanding Racing Development Fund loans will give this Government an extra $2m a year to distribute in prize money. All of that money will go to increasing prize money for bread-and-butter racing. It is money that will find its way back to the grassroots of the industry. I make the statement that it will not be carted off by southern and overseas interests during major carnivals. The prize money support is part of a Government strategy to revitalise the industry and reinject confidence in people to race a horse as a worthy investment in a major recreational activity. The method of distribution also will ensure that this money cannot be spent on drinks and lunches in committee rooms. The TAB board I appointed has presided over record profit, record turn-over and record distribution. Its decision to purchase radio station 4IP can only bolster this outstanding performance. Many times in Opposition, I made mention of the need for the TAB to operate its own radio station. I take great personal satisfaction that that has been achieved under this Government. This will enhance the service to rural punters who were denied that opportunity for years under a National Party Government. Many sections of the industry have argued for a change to the distribution formula to reward the clubs which are producing the income. Others argue that the smaller operations act as feeders to the main clubs. One way or another, changes to the formula—if indeed there are any—will be a responsibility of this representative panel. It will comprise the chair of the principal club and one other member from outside south-east Queensland and the chairs of the Greyhound Racing Control and Queensland Harness Racing Boards. They will be joined by two TAB representatives, one from outside south-east Queensland. The interests of people who live outside the major population centres of south-east Queensland have been protected and promoted by this legislation. It is legislation that will ensure, no matter where they live or what role they play, people in the industry can contribute to its future.

Finally, I would like to turn to the integrity of the industry. For racing to continue to thrive, it is imperative that the public retains its confidence that all is aboveboard. This view is overwhelmingly supported by the industry. The fragmentation of the controlling bodies—the five principal clubs and the two control boards—has meant no uniformity between licence requirements in the different areas of the State. The checks ranged from casual arrangements with local police to a more sophisticated system in the case of the Queensland Turf Club area. From now on, people wishing to gain licences will have to pass stringent criminal history checks through the police system. Racing is a cash industry and, as such, lures people who see the opportunity to make a dishonest dollar. That is another unfortunate fact and one from which this Government will not shirk.

In closing, I accept that any change within the racing industry will never please all the players, particularly the small group who believe that the business practices of 150 years ago are relevant today. These changes will be embraced by the majority in the industry who have desired genuine reform and democratisation for years. I am proud that a Labor Government has been able to meet their aspirations and deliver sensible reform.

At this point, I wish to stress that I have never been a critic of the concept of the Racing Development Fund. I believe the initial injection, financed by borrowings, was essential to get Queensland racing on the map. In this regard, I want to place on record my acknowledgment of the foresight of one of my predecessors, the late Russell James Hinze, who had a deep love and understanding of the racing industry. My criticism always has been aimed at the misuse of the fund by the National Party for blatant pork-barrelling. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Lingard, adjourned.

FAMILY SECURITY FRIENDLY SOCIETY (DISTRIBUTION OF MONEYS) BILL

Hon. G. R. MILLINER (Everton—Minister for Justice and Corrective Services) (1.01 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to provide for the continuance of the powers of the Registrar as administrator and trustee of the Family Security Friendly Society and to provide for the distribution of funds held by or that may come into the hands of the Registrar as administrator and trustee of the Society."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. G. R. MILLINER (Everton—Minister for Justice and Corrective Services) (1.02 a.m.): I move—

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

This Bill is intended to provide a means by which moneys invested with the Family Security Friendly Society, now under administration, can be distributed to investors. Legal advice has recommended that a legislative scheme is required because of uncertainty as to the status of the moneys invested with the society and because it is apparent that there will be a shortfall in investors' funds available for distribution. Following a report by the auditors of the Family Security Friendly Society late last year, the Registrar of Commercial Acts commenced a joint investigation with the Australian Securities Commission.

The Friendly Societies (Duties and Functions of Registrar) Regulations 1991 were urgently made to enable the registrar to take appropriate action to safeguard investors' moneys. The registrar was appointed as an administrator to conduct the affairs of the society and all incoming and outcoming moneys were frozen. During the course of the administration and continuing investigation, it has been determined that moneys subscribed to the society were not invested in accordance with investors' directions and that in fact large amounts were held by independent companies controlled by the trustees of the society. Legal advice has raised doubts about the status of these moneys and, indeed, whether or not investors at law became members of the society. It is those legal doubts which prompt the necessity for this legislation. The administrator has determined that there will be a shortfall of investors' funds available for distribution. The extent of this shortfall will not be known until the administrator has attempted to realise society assets and seek repayment of outstanding loans to the society. It is considered that the fairest

method to make a return of available funds to investors would be through a pari passu distribution. This means that each investor will have an equal percentage of his moneys returned to him.

Honourable members should note that the Bill is similar in concept to a previous piece of legislation titled the Alfred Grant Pty Ltd and Other Companies (Distribution of Trust Moneys) Act 1979. Whilst there are some structural differences between the two pieces of legislation, the general concept is the same. Under the Family Security Friendly Society (Distribution of Moneys) Bill, all moneys contributed by investors to the society are taken to have been deposited into a common fund of the society and are available for distribution to creditors and investors under the Bill. The duties of the registrar as administrator of the society are clear. He is to get in and collect the property of the society and to convert it into money to enable distributions to be made in accordance with the Bill. In support of those general duties, the registrar is given certain powers to ensure the maximisation of return to investors. For example, the administrator may bring legal proceedings on behalf of the society. The administrator is required to seek out potential claimants of the available moneys of the society. In particular, he must place an advertisement in a newspaper calling for claims from investors and other persons who consider that the society owes them money. In addition, the administrator may send letters to persons whom he knows to be potential claimants. The administrator has been running the affairs of the society for 11 months now and has had access to the society's records. It is hoped that a combination of the advertising requirement and contact by letter should combine to ensure that all potential claimants are contacted.

Claimants will be required to send to the administrator documentation in support of their claim. They will be required to make their claim within two months after the publication of the advertisement or the receipt by them of the letter. This time-limit is not only to ensure that a reasonable opportunity is given to investors to make their claim but also to ensure that a prompt distribution can be made. As an administrative saving, any confirmations received from claimants during the course of the administration can be accepted by the administrator as claims under the Bill. The administrator will contact these persons and advise them of the amount taken as a claim. The administrator must consider all claims and decide which of them are proven. The administrator will then calculate the percentage that the amount of each investor's proven claim represents of the total amount of all investors' proven claims. The administrator will give written notice to all claimants advising them of the acceptance of their claim as proven or not, and, if the claim is in relation to an investor, the total amount of all investors' proven claims and the percentage that their claim bears to the total amount. When the administrator has paid out or made adequate provision for the payment of the expenses of the administration and proven claims by creditors, he may begin to distribute investors' moneys to investors who have made proven claims. In order that some returns can be made as soon as possible, the administrator is given the power to make an initial distribution and as many interim distributions as he considers appropriate. At each distribution, an investor will receive his calculated percentage of the total investors' claims as calculated by the administrator.

Importantly, there is a provision in the Bill specifying that the administrator's decision in relation to claims is final and is not subject to review. This provision is inserted to ensure that a prompt distribution of realised moneys to investors is not delayed or dissipated by long and expensive legal challenges to the administrator's determination. This legislation, whilst not able to compensate investors for the losses they have suffered and the inconveniences they have endured, is drafted to ensure the best and quickest possible return to them. The capacity for the administrator to make interim distributions is a particularly worthwhile provision of the Bill in this regard. In short, what it means is that investors do not have to wait for the final realisation of the property of the society or the

payment of creditors and administration expenses before they are able to receive some return. Whilst the administrator will not be able to make an interim distribution before Christmas, it is hoped that, with the passage of this legislation, he will be able to advertise for claims and to write to known claimants before the end of the year, thereby ensuring that an interim distribution can occur early in the new year.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Gilmore, adjourned.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION BILL

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—Attorney-General) (1.09 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to promote equality of opportunity for everyone by protecting them from unfair discrimination in certain areas of activity and from sexual harassment and certain associated objectionable conduct."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—Attorney-General) (1.10 a.m.): I move—

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

It is with great pleasure that I introduce anti-discrimination legislation for Queensland. Anti-discrimination legislation in Australia dates back to the mid-1960s. South Australia was the first State to pass legislation prohibiting discrimination. Apart from Tasmania, Queensland is the last State to do so. Although Commonwealth legislation exists, without specific State legislation Queenslanders do not have adequate protection from discrimination. This legislation will give them that protection.

The Preamble to this Bill contains a statement that Parliament considers that—

everyone should be equal before and under the law and have the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination;

the protection of fragile freedoms is best effected by the legislation which reflects the aspirations and needs of contemporary society; and

the quality of democratic life is improved by an educated community appreciative and respectful of the dignity and worth of everyone.

The principles of dignity and equality for everyone are the foundations of this Bill. These principles are also reflected in a number of international human rights instruments that are mentioned in the Preamble to the Bill. A statement of Parliament's support of the Commonwealth ratification of these international human rights instruments is also mentioned in the Preamble. For Queensland, this is very significant. For too long, Queensland has been in the Dark Ages with respect to human rights. This Bill not only brings Queensland up to the present but also goes further than any of the other States in that it implements the spirit of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights beyond what even the Commonwealth has done.

The principle objective of the legislation is to promote equality of opportunity for everyone by protecting them from unfair discrimination, sexual harassment and certain other objectionable conduct. A two-tiered dispute-resolution system is established: conciliation by an anti-discrimination commission followed, where conciliation is unsuccessful, by a hearing before an anti-discrimination tribunal. Certain highly objectionable conduct also attracts penal sanctions. A person is made civilly liable for certain vicarious acts of the person's workers or agents. This Bill prohibits discrimination on the following grounds—

sex;

marital status;

pregnancy;

parental status;

breastfeeding;

age;

race;

impairment;

religion;

political belief or activity;

trade union activity;

lawful sexual activity; and

association with or relation to a person identified on the basis of any of the above attributes.

For behaviour to be discriminatory, it must be on one of these grounds of discrimination, and it must be in one of the following areas of activity—

work and work related;

education;

goods and services;

superannuation;

insurance;

disposition of land;

accommodation;

club membership and affairs;

administration of State laws and programs; and

local government.

All of the grounds of discrimination apply to each of these areas of activity with the exception of breastfeeding. Discrimination on the ground of breastfeeding is prohibited in the provision of goods and services only. Queensland is the first State to include breastfeeding as a ground of discrimination. No longer will Queensland women be forced to leave restaurants or the lobbies of movie theatres to breastfeed their children. There are over 44 000 babies born in Queensland each year. While not all mothers breastfeed, there is a sizeable number of Queensland mothers who, in choosing to breastfeed, are forced to endure discriminatory practices, and so are their babies.

This legislation covers all forms of discrimination in superannuation, including age and impairment. At this time, the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General is considering

a national uniform approach with respect to age discrimination in superannuation. It is anticipated that a national approach will be developed for discrimination on the ground of impairment in superannuation as well. I want to make the point that although we are legislating in these two areas, we favour the development of a national uniform approach. I am hopeful that this legislation will be used as the model for consistent legislation throughout Australia, and we will continue to work with the Commonwealth and other States in respect of this matter.

This Bill covers both direct and indirect discrimination. Direct discrimination happens if a person treats, or proposes to treat, a person with an attribute less favourably than another person without the attribute in circumstances that are the same or not materially different. Indirect discrimination is generally considered to be an act which, while not in itself discriminatory, results in discrimination. An example of indirect discrimination is an employer who decides to employ people who are over 190 centimetres tall, although height is not pertinent to effective performance of the work. This disadvantages women and people of Asian origin, as there are more men of non-Asian origin who can comply. The discrimination is unlawful because the height requirement is unreasonable, there being no genuine occupational reason to justify it. The meaning of "discrimination" is extended to include discrimination because of characteristics or imputed characteristics that are associated with particular grounds of discrimination. It also extends the meaning to cover discrimination based on a presumption by the discriminator that a person has, or at any time had, an attribute associated with the ground of discrimination even if the person does not in fact have the attribute. Finally, it covers discrimination based on attributes that a person may have had in the past, even if the person did not have those attributes at the time the discrimination took place. Actions arising from a belief, whether accurate or mistaken, can constitute discrimination.

In order to balance the complex needs of society and to ensure that certain behaviour can continue, certain types of activity are exempt under each area of the legislation and, in addition, there are a number of general exemptions to the entire Act. For example, a person may do an act to promote equal opportunity as long as the purpose is not inconsistent with the anti-discrimination legislation. A person may also do an act that is reasonably necessary to protect the health and safety of people at the workplace or to protect public health. Finally, the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal is empowered to grant exemptions in specific circumstances.

One of the key areas covered by this Bill is sexual harassment. The sexual harassment provisions are broader than anywhere else in Australia. The prohibition against sexual harassment extends to all people in all areas and is not limited to particular relationships, for example, employer to employee or teacher to student. It is also not limited to areas such as employment or education. Sexual harassment in and of itself is outlawed.

I want to speak for a moment on the reasons why Queensland legislation is needed. Firstly, under the Commonwealth legislation, the enforcement provisions apply only to discrimination based on sex or race. If one was disabled, for example, or refused a job because one was a Catholic, there is no power of enforcement under the Federal legislation. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission could attempt to work out a solution with the discriminator but, in the event that conciliation failed, there is nothing further that could be done. This will not happen under State legislation. The enforcement provisions for all grounds of discrimination will be the same. For the first time, disabled persons will be able to bring complaints of discrimination and, if conciliation fails, there will be a right of a hearing in front of the tribunal. This is a great day for the disabled in Queensland.

The decisions of the Queensland Anti-discrimination Tribunal will be enforced through the ordinary courts of law. This enforcement mechanism is very important to Queenslanders. Under the Commonwealth legislation if, for example, an employer is found to have discriminated and refuses to pay the damages, it is necessary to have a new trial in the Federal Court. This means starting the entire case over again, calling witnesses and evidence and results in considerable delay and expense. The Queensland Anti-discrimination Tribunal will be able to make binding decisions. Rather than having a new trial, one can simply take the decision over to the court and have it registered. It will then be enforced as though it is a judgment of the court.

Finally, this legislation will also ensure that anti-discrimination laws apply consistently to all Queenslanders. This is not the case currently under the Commonwealth laws. For example, the Queensland Government itself is not bound by the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act relating to employment, and the sexual harassment provisions do not apply to Queensland Government workers. These problems will be addressed in this legislation. The Crown is bound in its entirety, and Queensland Government employees have all the rights and protections of all other employees. The Bill also establishes the Queensland Anti-discrimination Commission to administer the legislation. In addition to its complaint handling function, the commission is given other broad functions, including research and education, to promote an understanding and acceptance of human rights in Queensland.

In order to avoid the duplication of service and to maximise the use of resources, Queensland has negotiated an administrative arrangement with the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission will administer the Queensland Anti-discrimination Commission with input from the State Government. The Queensland Anti-discrimination Tribunal will be Queensland appointments by the Governor in Council. It is intended that there will be three offices—in Brisbane, Cairns and Rockhampton. The approved funding will permit the existing Brisbane office of the Commonwealth commission to be expanded. In addition, the offices, facilities and staff of the Community Justice Program will be used by the State to be a point of first contact for clients of the Queensland Anti-discrimination Commission. The Community Justice Program has offices in Brisbane, Logan City, Townsville and Mount Isa.

The Bill has resulted from extensive consultation. Such was the priority afforded to this Bill that I asked the director-general of my department to chair a committee in an attempt to ensure that interdepartmental difficulties were overcome. There was more potential for these sorts of difficulties to arise in this particular legislation, as it impacts on the portfolios of many Ministers and almost every aspect of our society. Two rounds of consultations were held with peak industry, community, religious and other interest groups, initially based on an information paper and then, most recently, on the basis of a draft Bill. As a result of many valuable contributions, a large number of changes were made to legislation.

When the Premier claimed victory in December 1989, he was claiming victory for many people who had suffered under the archaic traditions of National Party and coalition rule. Many people had been treated unfairly, denied opportunities or refused access to what was, by rights, theirs. It is these people whom effective anti-discrimination legislation will protect. The Government does not believe that the passage of anti-discrimination legislation will by itself create a society in which human rights are universally respected. Discrimination is far too deeply entrenched. What this legislation does, however, is to provide legal protection against the most obvious sources of discrimination and, beyond that, establish a standard. It is the legislative announcement by this Government that gratuitous discrimination is inappropriate. It is a signal which

establishes a new, normative standard of civilised behaviour in this State. That, as much as the specific rights established under the Bill, is the purpose of this legislation. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Lingard, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (1.21 a.m.): I move—

"That the House do now adjourn."

Education

Mr LINGARD (Fassifern) (1.22 a.m.): Regardless of the amount of money that has been spent on education in the past 18 months, both in capital improvements and award restructuring, surely the past 18 months must be regarded as one of the most disgraceful periods in education that we have ever experienced in this State. Surely, it must also be regarded as one of the most embarrassing periods in education not only for the Government and the Minister for Education but also for Government members who should be saying how great it is that that amount of money has been spent on education and on capital improvements and award restructuring in education. However, now we have one of the most belittling actions that any Minister for Education has ever had to face.

Last Thursday, more than 230 members of the POA—members of the Education Department who had entered the public service—held a very special meeting and passed a motion of no confidence in the Minister for Education, a motion of no confidence in the executive of education in this State and a motion that they march on Parliament House. Those people are senior members of the Education Department. That action follows a special ICPA conference of 250 people at which four motions were moved by the ICPA in front of the Minister for Education, an executive director in the Education Department and the Director-General of the Education Department, all of whom spoke against them. In front of the Minister for Education, those motions were passed unanimously by the 250 people at that conference. They passed a motion against the Minister's idea of needs-based funding for non-Government schools. They passed a motion against the Minister's idea of abandoning the inspectorial system in the Education Department. They passed a motion against the Minister's attitude towards distance education and a motion against the idea held by this Minister and the ALP Government about the new multifaceted education.

All of this has happened against a background of pay rises for teachers, the accelerated Capital Works Program and award-restructuring in the Education Department. Eighteen months ago, the Opposition warned that the Education Department would soon be devastated by cronyism and politicisation. It warned that the present restructuring program would split the teachers and upset them. The Opposition warned that the abolition of the inspectorial system and the award of merit would not work in the Education Department. It warned the people of Queensland that the change in the TE score system would not create extra places in the tertiary education system, and that the SES and CES concepts were not appropriate for the Education Department.

This Government is now racked by embarrassment about what has happened to AST teachers. After the expenditure of all the extra money, award-restructuring and capital improvements, teachers are completely split on the Government's opinions about AST. Only 20 out of over 2 000 graduate teachers have been employed. After three years of physical education teacher training, the students who obtained TE scores of 990 cannot

get a job as a teacher. Twenty-five very special teachers went to university and were paid by this Government to complete post-graduate studies under a scholarship. They were under a contract to serve the Education Department for one and a half years, and today only one of those 25 students has a job. This Minister is looking for a legal way to break that contract with these 25 teachers who have been paid at taxpayers' expense to undertake one year of university studies and come out with post-graduate qualifications.

Time expired.

Fire at Calamvale State School; Passenger Trains

Mr ARDILL (Salisbury) (1.28 a.m.): On Sunday, 24 November, in the very early hours between midnight and 2 a.m., some miscreants broke into the Calamvale State School and destroyed the year's work of some 80 young students. They vandalised and destroyed expensive and valuable equipment which was provided by parents through the hard work which is the lot of p. and c. associations. After spreading glue and food around the main school block, they moved on to the library block and broke in. A fire was lit, which destroyed the entire building. Schoolteachers lost years of work which they had contributed to the school—resources which had been used to extend the horizons, aspirations and imaginations of our future citizens.

Why do people do these things? I cannot understand vandalism and never could, but when it is imposed on students in schools I find it disgusting. If these miscreants could experience the anger of parents and teachers, they would be forced to examine even their irresponsible attitudes. The best penalty to be imposed on vandals when they are caught would be to force them to clean up a similar mess. The other side of the coin is that a disaster such as the destruction of a local school brings out all that is best in the community and those people charged with supplying emergency services. The response of the fire brigade was magnificent. Faced with a building blazing from end to end, members of the brigade broke into the library in the lower storey and placed tarpaulins over thousands of dollars worth of irreplaceable books, papers and electronic resources, while the other members of the brigade began to pour thousands of litres of water on to the flames.

I was informed of the fire some five hours later at 7.15 a.m., and I drove to the school to find Administrative Services officers, including Dan McErlain, and Education Department officers already completing an assessment of the situation and others commencing work to secure the damage to building. Many parents and teachers had already arrived and were prepared to begin work. The principal, David McKay, was a tower of strength, making decisions regarding the relocation of class and storage space, directing moving operations for the books and resources and using his physical strength on the heavy lifting. In the three hours that I spent on the site, scores of parents, some students and most of the teachers worked with a will to move the school resources, shelving, books and papers to temporary accommodation and worked on a soaking floor with ash and burnt timber ever present. Some came prepared in work clothes, but many, like myself, were inappropriately dressed for the heavy, dirty labour in which we were involved. However, they all worked enthusiastically to ensure that the Calamvale State School opened on Monday morning to continue the wonderful work it does for the community. The departmental officers should be commended to their respective Ministers, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and the Minister for Administrative Services. The people of the Calamvale State School community certainly appreciate their worth.

In the two minutes remaining, I wish to mention another matter. Tonight, this House has heard of the problems in Mount Isa concerning daylight-saving and the problems of

the Westlander train which suffers very large losses on every passenger it carries. I believe that something can be done about that, such as the construction of new cars to encourage tourists to use those trains. I believe also that a thrice-weekly service should be operating to give confidence to the travelling public, which would encourage more people to use the trains. Both trains need to be provided with better dining facilities and single berth sleeping cars.

The tourist services already provided by Queensland Railways show what can be done. The Queenslander certainly needs more of the same types of cars as those I have described and, certainly, an upgraded deluxe type of sleeping car. I believe that it is up to Treasury to provide the funds for these improvements, and not the present GOE that is operating the railways. There is no way that that organisation can find the funds necessary for these improvements. The country services of Queensland's passenger rail service cost $1m a week only, which is a very small amount compared with expenditure in other departments. I believe that a great deal can be done to improve the services to which I have referred, much to the financial and personal benefit to the people of Queensland.

Brisbane North Region Youth Unit

Mr SANTORO (Merthyr) (1.32 a..m.): Tonight, I wish to talk about the fate of the Brisbane North Region Youth Unit. The Brisbane North Region Youth Unit commenced operation in May 1989 and prior to November 1989 operated from premises in Alfred Street, Fortitude Valley. It provided assistance to marginalised youth and youth at risk, including homeless youths, through counselling and financial and physical support. These supports were provided on an individual and group level. Group programs took two forms: firstly, day program activities, which included sports, living skills, education in fields such as cooking, laundry, home-keeping, budgeting and other activities; secondly, a longer-term, time contracted cyclic program, designed to be an intensive program which endeavoured to teach young people relational and constructive, lawful team-building skills. These two programs had a common theme of trying to empower young people to participate in our society as law abiding and confident citizens, as opposed to their current situation of not lawfully being part of society.

After receiving advice from the regional management team of the Brisbane North Region of the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, the then Minister, Mr Craig Sherrin, opened a facility to provide the services I have outlined to the marginalised and at-risk youth in the Fortitude Valley and inner-city areas. This was to be part of the State's Burdekin initiatives. Young people could be referred to the programs in a number of ways, including referral by other departmental offices, the Children's Court and, of course, self-referral. A review of this facility, which was requested by the current Minister via the director-general, was commenced in April/May 1990 with the decisions arising from this review being announced in November 1990. The decision was to wind down its operations and service provision, and replace it with a Statewide transition from care program. Some of the staff were seconded to this new program. Others were seconded to other departmental offices, and two left to close and transfer the youth unit client files. All of the former youth unit positions were abolished by mid-September 1991. It was found that although the new program was well resourced with cash and equipment, the program was not able to deal with the numbers of young people needing the long-term care that the department was supposed to cater for. As well, it did not cater for any referral process for young people who may need help, but who have not been in care. It must be noted that, during the process of closing down the youth unit, the young people were not told by the department of the full reasons why the departmental facility they had an element of trust in was taken away from them.

That this situation should be of concern to the Minister is now evident, given increased juvenile offending and increased youth homelessness. These youth issues need to be addressed, which is not to say—and I am happy to acknowledge this—that the youth unit would have solved these problems, but it was a departmental facility which was endeavouring to help marginalised young people in need and which provided programs to enable them to become a constructive part of society. There is no departmental office in the Brisbane or near Brisbane area which could claim to adequately meet or address the needs of these young people. This is a situation which has led to the department not being able to service that part of its statutory obligations to young people on care and control or adolescent care and protection orders. As a result, this further marginalises the young people concerned and increasingly makes a mockery of the so-called juvenile justice system.

As we know, the Minister is currently involved in drafting new legislation for this area. Unfortunately, this action is a retrograde step. I suggest that several reasonable questions arise from the facts I have outlined. I put these to the Minister—

1. What input did the Minister have into the decisions resulting from the review of the Brisbane North Region Youth Unit?

2. What has happened, or is to happen, to the physical resources which were part of the Brisbane North Region Youth Unit? Will they be used in addressing the needs of marginalised youth and youth at risk?

3. What initiatives, if any, is the Minister putting in place or has she put in place to address the spiralling problems of youth offending and youth homelessness?

4. What does the Minister intend to do to allow the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs area offices to more adequately meet the needs of juveniles on care and control orders and adolescents on care and protection orders?

Recently, late at night, I took the opportunity, in company with professional officers from inside and outside the department, to take a tour through the Fortitude Valley and inner city areas. The types of questions I have posed are ones that were put to me not with a great deal of sophistication but with a great degree of feeling and understanding by young people. They are certainly looking forward to receiving answers from the Minister and from this Government. I hope that, in a constructive spirit, those answers will be forthcoming in the near future.

Somerset Hills State Primary School; Head Lice; Payment of Subcontractors; Housing Resource Service

Mr WELFORD (Stafford) (1.37 a.m.): During my speech, I will refer to a number of matters briefly. I note the comments made by the member for Salisbury in relation to vandalism occurring in schools in his electorate and in other areas throughout Queensland. I pay tribute to the staff of the Department of Administrative Services and the Minister, the Honourable Ron McLean, for the work that was done in preparing the damage caused to the Somerset Hills State Primary School when it was damaged by fire earlier this year. All people in school communities are greatly distressed by the damage that acts of vandalism cause to schools. It was a source of great comfort to me and to those involved at the school to know that Queensland has a Government that cares enough to get in, do the job, and get the school repaired. Somerset Hills State School is now working to full capacity. I know that I speak on behalf of the principal, the staff, the parents and the children of that school when I say that we are all most grateful for the efforts of the department and the Minister in repairing the damage.

Recently, another factor has arisen that causes some concern to children who attend schools on the north side of Brisbane. I refer to the problem of head lice. I understand from the staff paediatrician of the Department of Health that there is a plague of nits in primary schools on the north side of Brisbane which is a real problem. Apparently, teachers do not have the authority to search through children's hair to discover whether in fact they have nits or not. As all honourable members would know, nits are highly contagious. Something should be done to either give teachers the necessary authority or to allow p. and c. associations to arrange for special days when all the children gather together to check whether or not they have nits. I understand also——

Mr Pearce interjected.

Mr WELFORD: A nit day. Indeed, a stirling idea from the honourable member. It is a problem that is of some concern to parents and schools on the north side. Apparently, the advice that teachers currently have and, indeed, as have health service workers who attend at the schools is that on legal grounds they are not authorised to check children for nits. It is something that parents need to be involved in. I urge the Minister for Education to look at this matter to see whether p. and c. associations can be given that authority.

A matter of great concern to this Government, which is a legacy left by the previous Government, is the matter of Government contracts and Government construction work. This matter relates to the shonky construction companies that tender for Government business and then leave some subcontractor in the lurch. Recently, the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations, Mr Neville Warburton, issued a report by his department putting forward proposals to redress the problem of subcontractors being left out in the cold when construction companies either do not complete jobs or go bust in the middle of jobs. This is a particular problem for the Government, of course, because when subcontractors tender for Government work, one would reasonably expect that that work would be secure and payment would be secure. Such is not the case because it appears that the history of management by the old Department of Works under the National Party was that it was sufficient for the head contractor to provide a statutory declaration to the effect that the subcontractors had been paid. On some occasions, these declarations were not even sought. The Government would pay out public funds to the head contractor. The head contractor would leave without paying subcontractors. Many of the subcontractors would be left without any payment at all. It is no good for any Government to be in the position of allowing subcontractors to go unpaid. Certainly, I am pleased to see that this Government is moving to address that problem.

I now turn to the issue of housing in my area and in the area to which I hope to be moving after the next election, which is the new electorate of Everton, currently served most effectively by the member for Pine Rivers, Margaret Woodgate, and my colleague the Minister for Justice and Corrective Services, Mr Milliner. Margaret Woodgate and I are working together with the Minister for Housing and Local Government, Mr Tom Burns, to establish a housing resource service in this area. The growing suburbs of Albany Creek, Everton Park, and Everton Hills, and the area north to Eaton's Hill require the assistance of experts in tenancy law, housing referral, and other areas of housing resource advice which the Department of Housing and Local Government offers. Next year, up to $50,000 will be made available for a resource service to be established in those areas. The member for Pine Rivers, Mrs Woodgate and I will be working hard to ensure that the people in our areas will receive the very best service.

Time expired.

Government Grant to Children by Choice

Mrs McCAULEY (Callide) (1.42 a.m.): I rise to register the strongest possible protest at the funding of $200,000 to Children by Choice as announced by the Minister for Health last week. In fact, there was an article in the *Courier-Mail* on 15 November which stated that for the first time in its 20-year history, Children by Choice would receive State Government funding. It went on to say that Children by Choice had never before had State or Federal funding.

I believe that it is a very sad day when Children by Choice does receive such funding. I also believe that the funding has been given as a sop to the pro-abortion sentiments of the feminists in the Labor Party. It is interesting to know that Children by Choice was originally called the Abortion Law Reform Association. Its first objective was to reform laws which make abortion a criminal offence. That is how Children by Choice originated. Mr McElligott must be well aware of that. However, the Minister was quoted in the *Courier-Mail* of 18 November as saying—

> "It is wrong to say the group (Children by Choice) is pro-abortion."

What a load of rubbish! The Minister knows as well as anybody that of course it is pro-abortion. He knows it, but he would not admit it. It is interesting to read this dialogue that came out of the Fryer Memorial Library at the University of Queensland on Children by Choice which states—

> "Abortion Law Reform Association (Q'ld) (1971-1972), became Children by Choice Association. Objectives—to reform laws which make abortion a criminal offence; to establish family planning clinics; to liberalise provisions regarding contraceptives . . . Notes: The Association was formed as a result of public meetings held by the Humanist Society of Queensland (at the instigation of the New South Wales Abortion Law Reform Association). An initial meeting in November 1970 led to the inauguration of the Association in April 1971 . . . Source Entry in 'Publications of Political Organizations in Queensland' . . ."

The article then mentions the authors. The following comment is made at the bottom of the article—

> "Eleven years later, in a dry bibliographical publication, the original connections are revealed."

I found that article very interesting and I think it would pay not to forget the origins of Children by Choice, which the Minister has funded to the tune of $200,000. A letter written to me states that this organisation was funded by Family Planning International Assistance. This letter states—

> "For a number of years"—

Children by Choice—

> "was supported and funded by Family Planning International Assistance. This organisation is the major pro-abortion organisation on earth and has been badly compromised in many third world countries where it has been involved in such things as mass sterilisation, the use of drugs that have been banned in the West and other literally illegal activities."

I thought that was a rather interesting comment. I find it quite astounding, at a time when the Health Department is so strapped for funds that it is almost closing down for the Christmas holidays, that it should find $200,000 for Children by Choice. Home Hill Hospital in north Queensland is closing for two weeks. Its long-term patients are being moved across to the Ayr Hospital. I have a sneaking suspicion that this hospital will not reopen unless the locals make a hell of a fuss about it. At a time when wards and operating theatres on the Gold Coast are closing for periods of a fortnight and up to six weeks; when

the Royal Brisbane Hospital and the Princess Alexandra Hospital will be handling only accident and emergency cases and all routine surgery has been put off; and when the flying obstetrician and gynaecologist service has been completely scrapped for the month of December because it cannot be funded, I find it absolutely astounding that the Minister can produce $200,000 for an organisation that was formerly the Abortion Law Reform Association and is now Children by Choice.

Time expired.

Scarborough Caravan Park

Mr HOLLIS (Redcliffe) (1.46 a.m.): I will be closing the debate on a more sombre note and talking about the 77 people who are about to be evicted from their homes in Redcliffe. Some of them are pensioners. One is an 88-year-old man who has spent some 14 years of his life in the Scarborough Caravan Park. Four or five other pensioners had been guaranteed that they could stay there for the rest of their lives, and there are single-parent families and young people—all average people in our society who need accommodation and have taken the Scarborough Caravan Park as their home. In 1988, the council decided to close this caravan park. It said, "It does not really matter about these people; we have made a decision and that is the end of the matter." Following the recent election in March this year, the council reaffirmed the proposal to close the caravan park. However, it still cannot give a valid reason to the residents of the park. The only reason given so far is that the residents in that area want to be able to pass through the park to get to the beach. That is not a very good reason, because 1 000 residents in that area have signed a petition, which will be presented to this Parliament within the next couple of days, that they are very happy to have that caravan park there.

We should be looking at the underlying reason why the Redcliffe City Council would wish to have this caravan park closed. Probably we have to look back in history to the previous council, because on that council were certain people who could be called pro-development. The caravan park people tell me that certain people in the area from which they are being evicted were taking photographs, and there were substantial rumours about certain aldermen who had a pecuniary interest in having that area made available for other purposes. In the last council election, a group of people had $150,000 or $200,000 in campaign funds, to be used to win seats on the council. When that sort of money is involved, there must be a pay-back. I would like the Redcliffe City Council to tell me whether the pay-back is to get rid of these poor people who are living in the Scarborough Caravan Park and give the land to the developers. That could be the answer to the whole scenario concerning the closure of the Scarborough Caravan Park.

These people refuse to give up. We have had meetings. Every alderman on the Redcliffe City Council was invited to come along to a meeting last Sunday, 17 November, and talk to these people. How many aldermen turned up? Not one! This is what is happening in Redcliffe at the moment. Not one member of the council, which is going to close this caravan park and evict all of these people, irrespective of whether they are disadvantaged, aged, sick or anything else, is willing to face the people and give the reason why the park is being closed. In its efforts to close this park, the Redcliffe City Council is not worried about the retail sector which has already suffered a 30 per cent downturn following the closure of the southern end of the park. The council is not worried about the effect on this retail sector when the rest of these people go. I am talking about $10,000 or $12,000 a week which would go into these retail businesses. The council is not worried about the tourists who will have one caravan park fewer at which to stay. This is a council which claims to be tourist oriented, yet it is getting rid of the caravan park and the camping ground, and still claims that it wants progress for Redcliffe. I become very

perturbed when I see this sort of thing. It might be that there is to be high-rise development.

Time expired.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 1.52 a.m. (Wednesday).