

TUESDAY, 13 JULY 1993

Under the provisions of the motion for special adjournment agreed to by the House on 21 May 1993, the House met at 10 a.m.

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

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Censorship of Notice of Motion

Mr VEIVERS (Southport) (10 a.m.): I rise on a matter of privilege. I refer to Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day circulated to honourable members this morning and, in particular, to a notice of motion tabled by me on 21 May, part of which is included in today's General Business section. The notice of motion which appears today is substantially different from that tabled by me on 21 May. In particular, that part of the motion which referred to the Leader of the House has been censored and the entire intent of the motion undermined. Mr Speaker, I ask that you give an explanation as to why such unprecedented action was taken.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I remind the member for Southport that it is normal procedure in any Parliament for questions on notice and notices of motion to be looked at by the Clerk, who can make a decision as to whether a question on notice or notice of motion complies with the Standing Orders. For example, Standing Order 119 states that a member shall not use unbecoming or offensive words in reference to another member of the House. The notice of motion of the member for Southport has been edited. Similar action has been taken previously. I inform the member for Southport that there is nothing abnormal about that. The Clerk of the Parliament had a look at the notice of motion and edited it to comply with the Standing Orders.

Mr MACKENROTH: I rise on a matter of privilege—

Mr VEIVERS: Mr Speaker, as you have censored that notice of motion, I move that your ruling—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am on my feet!

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Censorship of Notice of Motion

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (10.01 a.m.): I rise on a point of privilege. Contrary to the statements made by the member for Southport during the recess that, in some way, I had been involved in censoring his motion, I was unaware that—

Mr VEIVERS: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, I am not referring to any action by the Leader of the House. I am referring to the notice of motion which appears in the General Business section of the notice paper. Mr Speaker, I ask for your ruling.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am on my feet! I inform the member for Southport that I am still in the Chair today. I ask him to resume his seat while I am on my feet. It is in order for the Leader of the House to speak to that matter of privilege.

Mr MACKENROTH: Until he made that statement to the media, I was unaware that the motion of the member for Southport had been changed in any way. Personally, I could not care less what motion the member for Southport has on the books about me. He can say what he likes. I had nothing whatsoever to do with it.

Mr Veivers interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Southport under Standing Order 124. I read to the House Standing Order 47, which states—

“If a Notice contains unbecoming expressions, the Speaker may order that it shall not be printed, or it may be expunged from the Notice Paper by order of the House.”

Mr VEIVERS: Mr Speaker, in view of your censoring a notice of motion, I move that your ruling be dissented from.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I find the phrase that I censored the notice of motion offensive, and I ask the member for Southport to withdraw it. I have given an explanation. I ask the member for Southport to withdraw that word.

Mr VEIVERS: What word?

Mr SPEAKER: That I “censored” the notice paper.

Mr VEIVERS: That is what happened. It was censored.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Southport under Standing Order 124 to withdraw that word. If he does not, I will ask him to leave the House.

Mr VEIVERS: Mr Speaker, I am not going to withdraw the word "censored", because that is what has happened.

NAMING OF MEMBER

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I name the member for Southport under Standing Order 124.

Mr VEIVERS: Mr Speaker, you cannot do that!

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, you threatened to ask the member to leave the House. You are now naming him. I suggest that——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warned the member under Standing Order 124 previously. Under Standing Order 124, I now warn the member for the final time to withdraw that reflection on the Chair.

Mr VEIVERS: Mr Speaker, I am not withdrawing the word "censored" because that is exactly what happened. I move that your ruling——

NAMING OF MEMBER

Mr SPEAKER: Order! That is a direct reflection on the Chair. I now name the member for Southport.

Dear Mr Speaker,

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that, in the period in which Parliament has stood adjourned, the following Bills, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were assented to in the name of Her Majesty on the dates indicated:

| | Date of Assent |
|--|----------------|
| "A Bill for an Act to amend the <i>Liquor Act 1992</i> " | 20th May, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act providing for the approval, development and management of schemes of mixed use development, and for other purposes" | 28th May, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend the <i>Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road Act 1984</i> " | 28th May, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend the <i>Law Courts and State Buildings Protective Security Act 1983</i> " | 28th May, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend the <i>Suncorp Insurance and Finance Act 1985</i> " | 28th May, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend the <i>Racing and Betting Act 1980</i> " | 28th May, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend and repeal certain Acts in relation to the appointment of Supreme Court Judges, and for other purposes" | 28th May, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend the <i>Classification of Films Act 1991</i> " | 28th May, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to facilitate the integration of Bank of Queensland Savings Bank Limited with Bank of Queensland Limited" | 28th May, 1993 |

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

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

"That the honourable member for Southport be suspended from the service of the House for 24 hours."

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 52—Ardill, Barton, Beattie, Bennett, Bird, Braddy, Bredhauer, Briskey, Budd, Burns, Campbell, Casey, Clark, Comben, D'Arcy, Davies, De Lacy, Dollin, Edmond, Elder, Fenlon, Foley, Gibbs, Goss W. K., Hamill, Hayward, Hollis, Mackenroth, McElligott, McGrady, Milliner, Nunn, Nuttall, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Purcell, Pyke, Robertson, Robson, Rose, Smith, Spence, Sullivan J. H., Sullivan T. B., Szczerbanik, Vaughan, Warner, Welford, Wells, Woodgate, *Tellers:* Pitt, Livingstone

NOES, 31—Beanland, Borbidge, Connor, Cooper, Davidson, Elliott, FitzGerald, Gamin, Goss J. N., Grice, Healy, Hobbs, Horan, Johnson, Lester, Lingard, Littleproud, McCauley, Mitchell, Quinn, Rowell, Santoro, Sheldon, Simpson, Slack, Stoneman, Turner, Veivers, Watson, *Tellers:* Springborg, Laming

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

Whereupon the honourable member for Southport withdrew from the Chamber.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I inform honourable members that I have received from Her Excellency the Governor a letter in respect of assent to certain Bills, the contents of which will be incorporated in the record of Parliament.

15 June, 1993.

| | |
|--|----------------|
| "A Bill for an Act to repeal the <i>Carriage of Goods by Land (Carriers' Liabilities) Act 1967</i> " | 28th May, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to make provision in relation to the establishment of universities and for the accreditation of courses that lead to higher education awards proposed to be offered by other bodies and institutions, and for related purposes" | 28th May, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend certain Acts relating to superannuation" | 28th May, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to provide for the corporatisation of nominated government entities and for related purposes" | 2nd June, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to the development and management of the Brisbane Cricket Ground, and for related purposes" | 2nd June, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend the <i>Electricity Act 1976</i> , and for other purposes" | 2nd June, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend the <i>City of Brisbane Act 1924</i> , the <i>Local Government Act 1936</i> and the <i>Local Government (Planning and Environment) Act 1990</i> " | 2nd June 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend the <i>Agricultural Standards Act 1952</i> " | 2nd June, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend the <i>New South Wales—Queensland Border Rivers Act 1946</i> , and for other purposes" | 2nd June, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to discontinue certain business licences under the <i>Dairy Industry Act 1989</i> and the <i>Fishing Industry Organisation and Marketing Act 1982</i> " | 2nd June, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to establish a Building Societies Fund, to make provision for other the winding-up of the Combined Bowkett and Building Society Limited, to pay amounts to continuing building societies, and for other purposes" | 2nd June, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to amend the Financial Institutions Code and the AFIC Code" | 2nd June, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to provide for the restructuring of the dairy industry and for purposes" | 2nd June, 1993 |
| "A Bill for an Act to make various amendments of the statute law of Queensland, to repeal certain Acts and to declare certain matters" | 3rd June, 1993 |

I hereby transmit the Bills to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Leneen Forde

Governor

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, I have to inform the House that following the retirement of Mr Douglas Randle, the duties of the position of Sergeant-at-Arms will presently be carried out by Mr Barry Sanderson.

PAPERS PRINTED OR CIRCULATED DURING RECESS

Mr SPEAKER: I advise the House that papers were tabled during the recess in accordance with the list circulated to members in the Chamber.

(a) Mr Speaker—

4 June 1993—

Criminal Justice Commission—Report on a review of Police Powers in Queensland: Volume I—An Overview. Volume II—Entry Search and Seizure.

Report ordered to be printed.

(b) The Clerk of the Parliament—

1 June 1993—

Annual Reports for the year ended 31 December 1992—

Board of Trustees of the Rockhampton Grammar School;

Board of Trustees of the Toowoomba Grammar School;

Board of Trustees of the Townsville Grammar School.

4 June 1993—

Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 1992—

James Cook University of North Queensland.

23 June 1993—

Annual Reports for the year ended 31 December 1992—

Board of Teacher Registration;

Board of Trustees of the Brisbane Girls' Grammar School;

Board of Trustees of the
Rockhampton Girls' Grammar
School;
Griffith University;
Queensland University of
Technology.

28 June 1993—

Annual Reports for the year ended 30
June 1992—

Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council;
Island Co-ordinating Council;
Explanation for the extension of time
for the tabling of annual reports for
the year ended
30 June 1992—Aboriginal Co-
ordinating Council and Island
Co-ordinating Council;
Registrar of Commercial Acts on the
Building Societies Act 1985;
Registrar of Commercial Acts on the
Friendly Societies Act 1991;
Registrar of Co-operative Housing
Societies on the Co-operative
Housing Societies Act 1958;
Registrar of Co-operative and Other
Societies on the Co-operative and
Other Societies Act 1967.

1 July 1993—

Annual Reports for the year ended 31
December 1992—

Board of Trustees of the Ipswich
Girls' Grammar School;
University of Queensland and
Appendices.

9 July 1993—

Annual Report for the year ended 28
February 1993—

Trust Company of Australia Limited.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the
following petitions—

Police Staffing, Burleigh Electorate

From **Mrs Gamin** (376 signatories)
praying for action to be taken to boost police
numbers in the Burleigh electorate.

Doomben-Pinkenba Railway Line

From **Mr Santoro** (136 signatories)
praying that the Minister for Transport will not
authorise cutbacks to rail services along the
Doomben-Pinkenba line.

Abortion Law

From **Mr Wells** (203 signatories) praying
that sections of the Queensland Criminal
Code which make abortion unlawful be
repealed and that abortion services be
established in the public hospital system and
community based women's health centres
with no charge attached to this service.

Ms G. Crothers

From **Mr Bredhauer** (41 signatories)
praying that Ms Gail Crothers be not
transferred and that she be allowed to
continue as a teacher at the Thursday Island
State High School.

Chalumbin-Woree Power Line

From **Mr McGrady** (214 signatories)
praying that the Queensland Electricity
Commission be directed to find an alternative
route for the 275 000 volt power transmission
line from Chalumbin to Woree.

A similar petition was received from **Mr
Pitt** (666 signatories).

Bargara Road, Kalkie

From **Mr Slack** (57 signatories) praying
that the Parliament of Queensland will take
action to ensure that the Department of
Transport in a southern by-pass proposal of
the City of Bundaberg considers the re-routing
of heavy transport away from Bargara Road at
Kalkie.

Traffic Signs, Nambour

From **Mr Turner** (93 signatories) praying
for consideration to be given to the installation
of "No-U-Turn" signs at a number of
intersections in the Nambour township, in
particular the intersection of the old highway
leading into Nambour and the entry into
Panorama Drive.

Police Staffing, Currumbin Electorate

From **Mrs Rose** (2 387 signatories)
praying for action to be taken to boost police
numbers in the Currumbin electorate.

Deception Bay North State School

From **Mr Wells** (1 618 signatories)
praying that the Parliament of Queensland will
take action to expedite the investigation into a
suitably located primary school that will provide
relief for Deception Bay North State School.

Chalumbin-Woree Power Line

From **Mr Gilmore** (2 553 signatories) praying for the Parliament of Queensland to ensure that the new 275 000 volt power transmission line in the Tablelands area follows the route of the existing line—Chalumbin-Turkinje-Woree.

Petitions received.

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

In accordance with the schedule circulated by the Clerk to members in the Chamber, the following documents were tabled—

Auctioneers and Agents Act—

Auctioneers and Agents Committee (Appointment of Members) Order 1993

Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road Act—

Department of Transport (Variation of Fees) Regulation 1993, No. 166

Casino Control Act—

Casino Control Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1993, No. 164

City of Brisbane Act—

Brisbane City Council (Approval of Ordinances) Notice (No. 5) 1993

City of Brisbane Market Act—

City of Brisbane Market (Accommodation) Regulation 1993, No. 171

Coal Mining Act—

Coal Mining (General Rules for Open-Cut Coal Mines) Amendment Rule (No. 1) 1993, No. 156

Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Act—

Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Regulation 1993, No. 152

Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Amendment Act—

Proclamation—remaining provisions of the Act not in force commence 28 May 1993, No. 151

Explosives Act—

Explosives Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1993, No. 154

Fair Trading Act—

Fair Trading (Dynamite Alarm Clock) Order 1993, No. 159

Fair Trading (Fuelkey) Order 1993, No. 160

Fair Trading (Swimming Pool Alarm) Order 1993, No. 161

Fair Trading (Weed Wizard) Order 1993, No. 162

Grammar Schools Act—

Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements (Rockhampton Grammar School) Order (No. 1) 1993

Harbours Act—

Department of Transport (Variation of Fees) Regulation 1993, No. 166

Harbours (Ports Corporation) Order 1993, No. 165

Industrial Relations Act—

Amendment to the Rules of Court promulgated on 12 October 1990, amendments to take effect 1 July 1993

Local Government Act—

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Amendment Order (No. 5) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Amendment Order (No. 6) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 12) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 13) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 14) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 15) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 16) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 17) 1993

References dated 25 and 26 May 1993 of reviewable local government matters to the Local Government Commissioner. The References relate to proposal for change in accordance with the provisions of section 7a of the Local Government Act and have been submitted by the following local authorities—

City Council: Hervey Bay, Maryborough

Shire Council: Johnstone, Pioneer, Rosenthal, Widgee

Mineral Resources Act—

Mineral Resources Amendment Regulation (No. 5) 1993, No. 155

Motor Vehicle Driving Instruction School Act—

Department of Transport (Variation of Fees) Regulation 1993, No. 166

Motor Vehicles Control Act—

Department of Transport (Variation of Fees) Regulation 1993, No. 166

Motor Vehicles Safety Act—

Department of Transport (Variation of Fees) Regulation 1993, No. 166

Pollution of Waters By Oil Act—

Department of Transport (Variation of Fees) Regulation 1993, No. 166

Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act—

Primary Producers' (Levy on Cane Growers) Notice 1993, No. 168

Public Service Management and Employment Act—

Public Service Management and Employment Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 1993, No. 157

Queensland Cement & Lime Company Limited Agreement Act—

Queensland Cement & Lime Company Limited Agreement Order 1993, No. 153

Queensland Marine Act—

Department of Transport (Variation of Fees) Regulation 1993, No. 166

Retail Shop Leases Act—

Retail Shop Leases (Tribunals) Order 1993, No. 158

State Transport Act—

Department of Transport (Variation of Fees) Regulation 1993, No. 166

Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (No. 2)—

Proclamation—certain amendments to the Casino Control Act 1982 commence 1 June 1993, No. 163

Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act—

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Amendment Order (No. 5) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Amendment Order (No. 6) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 12) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 13) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 14) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 15) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 16) 1993

Local Authority (Loan Borrowing) Order (No. 17) 1993

Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements (Investment) Amendment Order (No. 1) 1993, No. 147

Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements (Rockhampton Grammar School) Order (No. 1) 1993

Superannuation (State Public Sector) Act—

Superannuation (State Public Sector-Membership) Amendment Order (No. 3) 1993, No. 149

Superannuation (State Public Sector) Variation of Deed Regulation (No. 2) 1993, No. 148

Supreme Court Act—

Supreme Court Rules Amendment Order (No. 4) 1993, No. 150

The Supreme Court Act—

Supreme Court Arrangements Order (No. 1) 1993

Supreme Court Arrangements (Amendment) Order (No. 1) 1993

Tow-truck Act—

Department of Transport (Variation of Fees) Regulation 1993, No. 166

Traffic Act—

Department of Transport (Variation of Fees) Regulation 1993, No. 166

Traffic Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 1993, No. 167

Transport Infrastructure (Roads) Act—

Department of Transport (Variation of Fees) Regulation 1993, No. 166

Notification access to the declared road be limited, Bruce Highway (Ayr-Townsville) Townsville City and Bruce Highway (Innisfail-Cairns) Mulgrave Shire

Water Resources Act—

Water Resources (North Burdekin Sugar Cane Assessment) Regulation 1993, No. 170

Water Resources (South Burdekin Sugar Cane Assessment) Regulation 1993, No. 169

Workers Compensation Act—

General Medical Assessment Tribunal (Appointment of Members and Alternate Member) Order 1993

Orthopaedic Assessment Tribunal (Appointment of Members and Alternate Members) Order 1993.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table—

(a) Minister for Primary Industries (Mr Casey)—

Cane Protection and Productivity Boards—Report for 1992

(b) Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning (Mr Mackenroth)—

Response to recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee of Public Works Inquiry into public housing in Toowoomba

(c) Minister for Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs (Ms Warner)—

Draft issues paper on Child Protection Legislation.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1)

All Stages

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

“That so much of Standing Orders be suspended to enable an Appropriation Bill to be introduced as a public Bill and pass through all its stages at this day’s sitting.”

Motion agreed to.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Death of Mr J. E. Duggan, AO

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier and Minister for Economic and Trade Development) (10.14 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late John Edmund Duggan, AO, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland and Minister of the Crown.

2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained.”

John Edmund Duggan, better known as Jack Duggan, was born in 1910 in Port Augusta, South Australia. He came to Queensland at the age of 14 and found work as a shop assistant. He joined the Shop Assistants Union and the Australian Labor Party, beginning what was to become a lifetime association. By the age of 25, he had so impressed his colleagues and fellow citizens that he was elected to represent Toowoomba in this House. Jack was ever the tough campaigner. I am told that he delayed his wedding until 12 days after the election.

During World War II, Jack Duggan enlisted in the AIF with the Toowoomba-based 25th Battalion and served as a captain in the New Guinea campaign, finishing the war as a staff captain with 7th Brigade. Returning from the war, he became Minister for Transport in 1947, presiding over the reconstruction of a rail network devastated by wartime overwork and inadequate maintenance. He was in charge of railways during the bitter strike of 1948 when the entire railway work force was sacked and then reinstated. Despite this, Jack always maintained cordial relations with the

industrial wing of the Labor movement. He also enjoyed the respect of his parliamentary colleagues, and was elected deputy leader on Ned Hanlon’s death in 1951.

Jack Duggan tried hard to head off the disastrous confrontation between the Labor Party organisation and the Gair Government in the mid-1950s. As a member of the party’s Queensland Central Executive, and as deputy parliamentary leader, he attempted to cool hot heads, to extract compromise and to foster a climate of rational negotiation. In Cabinet, he argued for more accommodation for party policy demands, and in the party room he defended the Government. In the last act of the split drama, Jack Duggan was still attempting to bring the warring parties together. Gair demanded that his Cabinet colleagues sign a letter supporting the Premier and threatening to leave the party if any punitive action was taken against him. Jack Duggan signed the section supporting his leader but, alone among the Ministry, disassociated himself from the resignation threat.

When the Queensland Central Executive moved to expel Gair on 28 April 1957, Duggan opposed the move. Jack Duggan then found himself elected leader of a rump ALP of 24 members, none of whom had ministerial experience, other than himself. Explaining his stand to the electors over the radio, Jack Duggan said—

“There is only one decision to reach on the matter. Whether you like it or not, whether it is wise or unwise, the course to take is to endorse the official Labor decision.”

That is were Duggan stood, and where every true genuine Labor man stands and will continue to stand.

In the ensuing election, Jack Duggan suffered the indignity—under the then first-past-the-post electoral system—of losing his seat. He was re-elected the following year in a by-election for Toowoomba North and was immediately restored as parliamentary Labor Party leader—now in Opposition. He remained as leader until October 1966, although he changed his seat to Toowoomba West at the 1960 election.

Jack Duggan retired from State politics at the 1969 election after 32 years in this House, but he did not retire from public life. He went on to be Deputy Mayor and then, at the age of 70, Mayor of Toowoomba. He was also patron of the Toowoomba Rugby Football League, the Tennis Association and the Blue Nursing Service, honorary treasurer of the

Queensland Local Government Association and secretary of the Toowoomba Trades and Labor Council. He was made an officer of the Order of Australia in 1982.

Jack Duggan was a great Australian, a great Queenslander, a great parliamentarian and a great Labor man. His life stands as an inspiration to new generations of young Queenslanders, an outstanding example of achievement, service to the community, integrity and loyalty to his principles. I only knew Jack Duggan over the last several years, meeting him shortly after I entered this place in late 1983. He struck me as a person who, despite his age, remained interested and interesting in terms of politics and public life. He was ever alert, even after his stroke. I believe that he continued to impress younger members of Parliament such as me with his dedication to the Labor movement and to the community generally. On behalf of the Government and the members of this House, I extend condolences to Jack's family and many friends.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Leader of the Opposition) (10.22 a.m.): It is a pleasure to second the Premier's motion of condolence for the late Jack Duggan, who contributed 46 years to public life in this State. On behalf of the Opposition, I extend our condolences to his daughter, Mary, son, John and other family members. Jack devoted almost all his life to his party and to the public life of Queensland. He was a prominent figure in the political history of this State—far removed from his humble beginnings in South Australia.

Jack was born in Port Augusta in 1910, orphaned at the age of 11 and, soon after, left school to take care of his younger brother and sisters. He eventually arrived in Toowoomba at the age of 14 to start work as a grocer's assistant for the princely wage of 14 shillings a week. His humble origins and the necessity to battle his way through difficult years early in his life stamped him with a quiet determination and vigour which were the hallmark of many Old Guard Labor politicians. Although he had little formal education, it was a credit to Jack Duggan that he set about educating himself by reading widely and taking part in local debating circles. He was able to develop his gift of speech and focus his attention where the ability to debate is most useful—in politics.

I note that Jack Duggan managed to steer himself into the position of President of the Toowoomba branch of the ALP at the age of 21, and a few years later, at the age of 24,

won the seat of Toowoomba in a by-election. So began a most successful career as a State politician, interrupted briefly for a period of service in World War II, and followed in a rare fashion by a stint in local government. I say "rare" because, although many in this House have served in local government before making the step to Parliament, the number of members who went into local government after years of parliamentary work is comparatively few.

As was the practice at the time he entered Parliament in 1935, Jack Duggan served his apprenticeship on the back bench for some time. He was one of the fastest speakers in the Parliament, a point to which I expect the Deputy Premier will probably relate at some stage. Queensland's political history noted that Jack talked at an average of 200 words a minute and had the most rapid delivery of any parliamentary speaker since Randolph Bedford. No doubt many a Hansard reporter endured writer's cramp keeping up with his speeches, but there was no doubting his impact.

World War II intervened in his political career and, as a former lieutenant in the Citizens Reserve, Jack took leave from parliamentary duties. He served as a captain in the 2/25 Battalion, one of the most decorated of the war, particularly for its efforts in the New Guinea campaign at Milne Bay. Jack went on to serve as a staff captain with the 7th Division Headquarters. Undoubtedly, the leadership experience gained in such postings was to equip him well for his future parliamentary roles.

It was only a couple of years after the war ended that Jack Duggan was elevated to the Hanlon Cabinet as the Minister for Transport, a post which he held for 10 years. Described as "a young man of ambition, self-reliance and grit" by political historians, he took over a run-down rail system which had been stretched by the demands of depression and the war years. Jack Duggan has been widely credited with his efforts to make the railways more efficient and more modern across the State.

In 1952, Jack became Deputy Premier in Vince Gair's Ministry and was undoubtedly on target to become the next Premier until the Labor split which cost Labor power and Jack Duggan his seat. One can only imagine the tortuous and torrid times endured by members of the Gair Ministry at that time, but as the only Minister not to forsake the Labor Party in that split, Jack Duggan's loyalty to his party was steadfast.

I am sure that at that time he could not have envisaged the future roles that were to open up to him in politics. There was speculation about what he would do next, ranging from some role in the ALP executive to management in an oil company, but barely a year later he was back in Parliament. Jack Duggan won the seat of North Toowoomba in a by-election in May 1958 and, later that year, was elected Opposition Leader, a position which he held for eight years. He held the seat of North Toowoomba until 1960, when he contested and won the seat of Toowoomba West, which he held until 1969.

After 33 years in State politics, one would imagine that Jack Duggan would have been content to enjoy retirement. I am sure that most of us here would be only too glad to call it quits from public life after 33 years, but the community which Jack had served so well was to demand more of him. He was enticed into local government, winning the aldermanic elections in 1970, later becoming Deputy Mayor, and Mayor of Toowoomba from 1981 to 1982.

Jack Duggan was very involved with his constituency in Toowoomba as a patron of the Toowoomba Rugby Football League and Tennis Association, as vice-president of the Toowoomba Senior Citizens Association and a supporter of the Blue Nursing Service. That participation at a local community level is really what this game is all about.

We on this side of the House pay our respects to Jack Duggan for his great contribution to this State and wish to pass on our sincere condolences to his family.

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development) (10.28 a.m.): I rise in support of the condolence motion. Although other speakers have mentioned Jack Duggan's early life and his distinguished military career in World War II, I wish to remark in terms of his 10 years as Minister for Transport in this State and the contribution he made to the community in Queensland after his period of parliamentary service.

As was mentioned, Jack Duggan was first elected to the Parliament in 1935, and in 1947 he became Minister for Transport in the Hanlon Government. He had an awesome task before him, particularly with respect to the transport network. As has already been mentioned, the railways in the State had suffered badly as a result of the stresses placed upon the network during the war. Maintenance was poor and morale was low. In

fact, Jack Duggan reflected upon that when he once remarked regarding the railways, "We flogged everything, men and machinery, to the limit. The railways were very run-down. Morale was undoubtedly low and the amenities were poor."

When Jack Duggan became Minister for Transport in 1947, one of the first challenges he had to face arose directly out of that situation within his portfolio. In November of that year, some overtime bans were imposed in the Ipswich Railway Workshops regarding margins and also the poor state of amenities in those workshops. In February 1948, a major industrial dispute broke out over margins. It was a bitter dispute which long scarred industrial relations in the rail industry. The dispute was not concluded until April of that year.

It was significant, though, that Jack Duggan did not bear the scars of that dispute. The contribution that he made to the rebuilding of the State's railways will long be remembered. Indeed, Jack Duggan was a visionary. The work that he did in seeing millions of pounds directed to the rebuilding of the railway network is a lasting testament to his commitment in that portfolio.

The so-called silver carriages that we still see being used around the suburban network were also a part of Jack Duggan's vision because he saw the need for electrification of the railways, particularly the suburban railway network. It was one of his endeavours that he unfortunately saw discontinued when he was no longer Transport Minister in the then Labor Government in the 1950s. That electrification project was abandoned, and the carriages that he had wanted to acquire then became diesel-hauled carriages on the suburban railway network. It was not until the late 1970s that we actually saw electrification introduced—something which Duggan had been pushing for 20 years. In the area of railway redevelopment in this State, Duggan will be remembered also for the transition from steam to diesel. He put Queensland Rail and transport into a modern mode. It was one of those threshold occasions on which the ways of the past were being discarded to embark upon the then up-to-date technology.

As has been mentioned, Jack Duggan faced another tumultuous period during the Labor split in 1957. Not only did he lose his seat in Toowoomba then as Opposition Leader; he again contested unsuccessfully a by-election in the seat of Gregory. It was not until 1958 that he returned to the Parliament following the untimely death of his erstwhile

colleague, Les Wood, who had been Opposition Leader following Duggan's defeat. A gentleman whom I had the honour of knowing, Jim Donald—who was the member for Bremer at the time and later served as member for Ipswich East—took up the challenge after Les Wood's death and stood aside when Jack Duggan was re-elected to the Parliament in Les Wood's seat in Toowoomba. That speaks volumes not only for the character of Jim Donald but also for the esteem in which Jack Duggan was held by his colleagues.

He continued to serve with distinction in the Parliament as Leader of the Opposition. It is certainly the consensus of everyone with whom I have spoken that Jack Duggan was regarded as one of the great orators in the Queensland Parliament. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned the pace at which Jack could deliver his words; but the words themselves were regarded as the words of a capable and competent person—a person who knew his subject and a person who deserved the respect of the community.

When Jack Duggan retired from State Parliament he entered local government and made a very worthwhile contribution to the City of Toowoomba—a city that he served in public life for many decades. I, too, had the privilege of knowing Jack Duggan from the time I was first elected to this place. Jack was a strong supporter of the former members. He would often travel here for reunions with the former members. He was a man who had a constant and abiding interest in public affairs. I remember a number of conversations I had with him in which we compared notes on some of the issues.

As is often stated, history has a tendency of coming around again, and one tends to revisit the same issues many years apart. It was sad to see that Jack, whose intellect was always there—he was as sharp as a tack and he was interested in everything that was going on—was aware that his body was starting to fail him. A stroke had left him physically debilitated; however, as I said, intellectually he was always on the mark. Jack Duggan will be remembered as one of the great Queenslanders and one of the great Queensland parliamentarians. I believe that his family will be able to cherish very many memories of the wonderful contribution he made to the community and to the State.

Mrs SHELDON (Caloundra—Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.35 a.m.): I rise in support of the words used by the Leader of the Opposition in his speech on the condolence

motion for Jack Duggan. Certainly, the Queensland political landscape is littered with many great characters whose exploits have been well-documented since Federation. However, on the Labor side of politics, few are remembered more warmly than Jack Duggan, whose loyalty to Queensland raised him above mere politics during his time in this place. While I may not be in agreement with a lot of the philosophy of many of those opposite and would not have agreed with many of Jack Duggan's ideals when he was in Parliament, I think we can all appreciate that man's dedication to the cause he believed in during what were very difficult times for the Labor members of Parliament.

Jack Duggan was often quoted as the man who one day would have been Premier had not the Labor split of 1957 heralded the demise of the party for more than 30 years. Duggan was the only member of the Vince Gair Cabinet to stick with the party during that turbulent split, and this earned him brick bats and bouquets from Labor supporters. However, despite the personal abuse to which he was often subjected during that bitter campaign of 1957, Jack Duggan remained a decent man unencumbered by hatred or bitterness. This attitude gained him great respect and admiration from his parliamentary peers.

In fact, those on the Government benches in this House should feel a lot of gratitude that Jack Duggan stayed with the ALP and the State Labor Government in 1956 because he is credited with being one of the major players in saving Labor from total destruction in the split of the following year. Had he not been around to pick up the pieces and fight on as Opposition Leader for eight years, this current State Labor Government may never have existed. Still, Jack Duggan was there and helped save the Australian Labor Party in Queensland. He lived to see Labor regain power in this State and, although the party has changed dramatically in policy and ideology, he had every reason to be proud of his involvement in ensuring his party's future.

Jack Duggan served as a member of State Parliament for a total of 33 years in Toowoomba-based seats and on the Toowoomba City Council for 12 years, rising to Mayor before retiring in 1982. As a member of Parliament, Jack Duggan was elected at the age of 25—the baby of the House; he was elevated to State Cabinet at the age of 37; and he became Deputy Premier at the age of 40. However, it was during his 10 years as Transport Minister that he modernised

Queensland Railways, and this was certainly one of his greatest achievements. His beginning in public life can probably be traced to his early years when he was orphaned at the age of 11 and worked to provide for his four younger brothers and sisters. That sense of responsibility led to early involvement in politics and, eventually, to his long and distinguished career in Parliament and in the Toowoomba City Council.

Jack Duggan was definitely an old-style Labor politician based in this State's working class, but he was never underestimated by his peers. He was self-educated and extremely well read. His rapid and articulate style of speech made Jack Duggan the bane of shorthand-writers for the whole of his long political career. There is no doubt that Jack Duggan is one of the enduring characters of the Queensland Parliament. I offer my condolences to his family and friends upon his passing.

Hon. E. D. CASEY (Mackay—Minister for Primary Industries) (10.38 a.m.): I would like to join this debate for a few moments to pay tribute to the late Jack Duggan, who left this House at the election whence I came. I never actually had the privilege of serving with him in the House, but I did have the great privilege of serving with him in the Labor movement for a great number of years, and knew him even longer in terms of close family connections. I first met Jack Duggan when I was only in my very early teens when he was first appointed as Minister for Transport and was performing his duty by visiting different localities in north Queensland. In fact, I even knew him before that—when he was a backbencher—because in the Labor Party he was very much a contemporary of my own late father, and both families had a very close connection from those earlier days. I will not go right into that connection today, as many people would recognise that at the time when the Labor Party split, many families suffered greatly because of their two great loves—their love of their politics and that of their religion. Jack Duggan's family was in a position similar to that of my own.

When I was in my mid-twenties and became leader of the Labor Party in the Mackay region, I had many connections with the then leader, Mr Jack Duggan, as he visited the north very frequently. I accompanied him on visits around the district. It was at that time that he became one of my mentors within the party and assisted me greatly from prior to my entry to Parliament, through the rocky passage of my entry, and inside the Parliament afterwards. After he

retired, I had many great evenings with him in the dining room. He would be down in Brisbane on business and staying overnight so he would come down to Parliament House. Because one of his other great loves was reading, the first place he would be found was in the library, and later he would join us for dinner and would talk to the newer country members, none of whom had served with him in the Parliament. Of course, after that, we would often share our other great love of a good cigar while we yarned and talked about matters of politics, matters of government, and matters of the State and nation.

Unquestionably, because of his capacity to get across a message and because of his knowledge of so many subjects, Jack Duggan was by far the best speaker I have ever known. These days, because of the system that operates in the House, all members share the load, but, as Opposition Leader, Jack Duggan spoke on every Bill because that was the format that was followed in those days. Bills were introduced differently then. The introductory speech was debated and nobody in the House knew what the Bill was all about until it hit the deck. By the time the Minister introducing the Bill had finished speaking, Jack Duggan was able to reply straightaway to it and displayed a tremendous grasp of the subject matter. He was that sort of bloke.

He was a great yarn-teller and, as a public speaker, was much sought after by sporting bodies and community groups because he could intertwine some wonderful stories in his speeches. As I said earlier, he was an avid reader and more often than not, when he came to Brisbane after he retired, he could be found in the library. Other speakers have mentioned how, after his departure from Parliament, he continued his great career in the local government arena.

As far as I am concerned, Jack Duggan was a tremendous man. There can be no doubt that, despite the controversies that occurred during the years during which he served, he was regarded as a great parliamentarian. At one stage, because of a tremendous controversy in which he was embroiled, he stepped down as Opposition leader. It was only because he devoted so much time to his work in public life that his personal affairs suffered when certain incidents occurred. I will always live with fond memories of Jack Duggan. Those who had an association with him throughout his life will do likewise.

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (10.43 a.m.): I wish to join in this message of condolence to

the family of the late Jack Duggan. The motion before the House refers to recognition of "services rendered to the State", and I would like to add "and also to the people of Toowoomba". Over many years, Jack was a family friend of the FitzGeralds. The mother of his late wife, Beatrice, was a Gatton girl and when you are a local, you will always be a local no matter where you move to. It was always with great respect that the people who live in the area I represent, and those in the area I represented before the last redistribution, treated Jack Duggan. I think it is fitting that approximately 500 people turned up to the funeral, including a number of members of this Parliament. The opinion of the people there was always that no matter whether one agreed with him politically or not, one always recognised the humility and ability of the man and his love for life and his love for people.

Some of the strange things that happen in life are some of the friendships that one develops. I can remember a couple of times going round to 42 Bridge Street, which is where Jack and his late wife lived with their daughter Mary, who, I think, still lives there. We would discuss the politics of the day, and when the previous National/Liberal coalition Government was in office, he would often ask me how certain Ministers were going. After the Labor Party gained Government, he would often ask me how one or other Minister was going and would express his views on them. I know that he was using me as a sounding-board, but he had an interest in what was happening in politics.

He loved his wife, Beatrice, and he was also a devoted father. He set an example to the community by the way in which he cared for her through her many years of illness. He always wanted to get home early so that he could make a cup of tea for Beatrice. That was reflected in the love that his own daughter, Mary, gave to him. She lived with and cared for Jack for many years. Mary went to school with my wife. That was another connection that I had with him. Often, we would chat on friendly terms. Quite often, at a function such as a Carnival of Flowers, Jack would seek me out and say, "Are you going home soon?" I would say, "Yes." I would take him home and we would have a chat on the way home or when we got home.

His friendship extended to other members of Parliament. He could analyse what was happening. One of the strange friendships that developed was between a former Premier of Queensland, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, and Jack Duggan. At one stage,

they shared a room. From where I come in politics, it was rather unusual that those two characters should have such an affinity for each other. Both were self-educated men. Both men knew where they were going. Often, Jack would comment on what the Premier of the day, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, was doing. Quite often, particularly after Jack had a rather severe stroke, Joh would ask, "How is Jack getting on? How is his health?" Whenever they would attend a function on a former members' day, they would seek each other out and have a yarn. In both of those gentlemen I noticed a great respect for each other. I admired that in both of them.

Jack was also very well respected in the local community in Toowoomba. He was better known as deputy mayor. He was deputy mayor from 1973 to 1981. During that long period, Nell Robinson was the mayor, and for much of the time she was not in good health. Jack was a great stalwart. He was her adviser. He could steer her through. The citizens of Toowoomba recognise the great contribution that Jack made to the administration of Toowoomba, particularly during that period. When Nell Robinson resigned as mayor, Jack was elected mayor by the council. He was never elected mayor by popular vote. A mark of the respect that people in Toowoomba had for him can be seen from the fact that, while he was deputy mayor, he always topped the poll. In local government elections, he was able to command votes from right across the spectrum. He always topped the vote. He was well respected by all people. He served Toowoomba well as mayor.

In his retirement, and particularly after he suffered his stroke, he never lost the ability to put words together, although they came out a lot slower. The Hansard reporters could have kept up with him then. His great ability to put a speech together, to bring it to a climax and to end with that lovely finish that he always gave to his speeches stayed with him. His health gradually improved, and he did get his speech back. I remember attending annual meetings of the Blue Nurses and meetings of the choral society. Jack would come along to those meetings and he would always be asked to say a few words.

He was well loved by the people of Toowoomba. It was a pleasure for me to be his local member for a period, until a redistribution in 1986 moved the boundary between Mary Street and Mackenzie Street. On behalf of the people whom I serve, the people of Toowoomba and the members of this House, I offer condolences to his son, John, and particularly to his daughter, Mary.

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South) (10.49 a.m.): On behalf of the people of Toowoomba, it is an honour to pay tribute during the discussion of this condolence motion to the late Jack Duggan, AO. Jack served the people of Toowoomba and Queensland in this Parliament for almost 33 years, a length of service that has been surpassed by only 11 of the 900 members who have represented in this House. It was the quality of Jack Duggan's contribution to State Parliament, to his country during World War II, to his own political party, to the Toowoomba City Council and to the people and organisations of Toowoomba that will place him in history as a great Queensland.

Jack Duggan was born in South Australia in 1910, where he lived for his first 10 years at Marree. He was orphaned at age 11 and commenced work as a messenger boy. He moved to Toowoomba at age 12 to live with his brother and sisters in the care of relations and worked as a shop assistant at the Downs Co-op. From that difficult and humble start to life, Jack was to grow into a self-educated and talented leader.

In 1931, at the height of the Great Depression and at only 21 years of age, he became secretary of the Toowoomba Trades and Labor Council and, in the following year, President of the Toowoomba branch of the Australian Labor Party. In 1935, Jack Duggan was elected to State Parliament as the member for Toowoomba. That was the beginning of 33 years of representation of the people of Toowoomba through that seat and the seats of North Toowoomba and Toowoomba West. At the time of his election, he was only 25 and the baby of the House. He went on to become Transport Minister, Deputy Premier and Leader of the Opposition.

As Transport Minister, Jack Duggan took over a railway system worn out and ill-equipped after World War II. He introduced the large Garrett class steam locomotives, larger rolling stock and the diesel and diesel-electric locomotives. In Toowoomba, the Willowburn railway workshops and goods yards were upgraded, and he was responsible for the Ipswich bypass, which was the beginning of the highway system which now has Toowoomba only one and a half hours from the capital city. Yet politics had its disappointments for Jack Duggan. Approaching the peak of his career as Minister for Transport and Deputy Premier, the Labor split of 1957 effectively changed his political life dramatically and forever. But for Jack Duggan in particular, that was an exceptionally difficult time because of the bitter mix of

politics and his own religion that occurred during that process.

In the midst of that busy political life, Jack obtained leave from Parliament to serve his country throughout World War II in the 25th Battalion, a battalion proudly raised on the Darling Downs. He saw active duty in New Guinea and rose to the rank of acting staff captain at the Seventh Division Headquarters. Many of his 25th Battalion comrades paid their last respects at his funeral and formed a guard of honour for him.

When Jack Duggan retired from politics in 1968 after 33 hard and turbulent years, he turned his talent and personal service to the Toowoomba City Council. He was elected as alderman in 1970, topping the aldermanic poll and becoming deputy mayor. A recent former Mayor of Toowoomba, Alderman Clive Berghofer, who himself was noted for his popularity and almost unbeatable position during the 1980s, has told me of the great popularity of Jack Duggan, who always topped the polls. Clive told me that his service under Jack for 12 years was a great preparation for his own mayoralty, and he had the utmost admiration for Jack's ability to cut costs and to maintain low rates. In 1981, Jack succeeded Nell Robinson as Mayor of Toowoomba—a richly deserved honour in the twilight of a very long career.

During his aldermanic career, Jack was noted for his financial management as chairman of the finance committee of the council and for his rigorous defence of low rates. No doubt his childhood days had taught him how hard it was for people on low and fixed incomes to meet this annual charge. He is also well remembered in Toowoomba for his efforts, along with those of Mr Bill O'Brien, to rekindle the spirit and celebration of Australia Day. His services to local government and the State were recognised when he was awarded the Order of Australia.

Jack Duggan was patron of many Toowoomba organisations, including the Toowoomba Rugby League. There was nothing Jack loved more than to visit the historic athletic oval in Toowoomba to watch a game of Rugby League. He was also patron of the Toowoomba Tennis Association, the Toowoomba Orchid Society and the Toowoomba Blue Nursing Service. He was patron of the Toowoomba Poultry, Pigeon and Caged Birds Club. I remember attending meetings with him when we were endeavouring to forestall council regulations which would have stopped families from enjoying the hobby of raising poultry and birds

in their backyards. When Jack became too frail to continue, it was an honour for me that the club asked me to take over as patron. He was a member of the Salvation Army financial advisory board, the Heart Foundation, the Toowoomba Senior Citizens Association, and many other organisations.

Jack Duggan was considered by many to be the old grassroots style of politician. His power base did not lie in factions but in his enormous popularity in his own electorate, in his intellect and in his ability. If ever he is remembered for one thing, it will be his public speaking. I think we can take the Dalys and the Killens, but for me and most other people of Toowoomba, I do not think there will ever be a speaker like Jack Duggan. He could speak from the back of a truck. He could speak to a sophisticated gathering. He could attack the council over rates. He could turn on a rich turn of phrase with incredible speed and incredible continuity of flow. He was really an outstanding speaker and it was certainly an experience to hear him speak.

On a personal note—I was a good friend of his son, John, in the sixties. So in 1978 when I went to Toowoomba to manage the Toowoomba Showgrounds, it was interesting for me to meet Jack, and I had a great deal to do with him, particularly in activities of the showgrounds, which were near his house in Bridge Street. Together and with the show committee, we encountered many problems concerning the speedway at the Toowoomba Showgrounds. If anybody knows what it is like to run a speedway in the middle of a dense suburban area and the problems that arise therefrom, it is only somebody like Jack who could help moderate the problems that occurred there from the noise. He was also of great assistance to the show society in the early years of selling the old showground and moving to a new site. On a number of occasions, I had the pleasure to sit in the sunroom of his house in Bridge Street and discuss matters concerning the show society and the Toowoomba area generally. It was a sunroom that was surrounded by books and Jack's music. He certainly was the sort of person whose company could be thoroughly enjoyed.

On one particular occasion we ran a major event at the Toowoomba Showgrounds called the Queensland prime cattle championships and we had engaged a very high profile speaker to speak at a dinner during those championships. With less than a couple of days' notice, that speaker had to pull out and I remember asking Jack whether he would take his place, which he did with no

problem at all. It was a gem of a speech. It was a great speech, rich in his vocabulary, his wit, his ironic humour and his recollection of many aspects of his parliamentary and civic life. I think that was a great example of the way in which Jack would do anything for anyone at such short notice.

On election to Parliament in 1991, I rang Jack and sought his permission to recognise him in my maiden speech. I have always appreciated the generous and genuine best wishes and advice that he gave me on that occasion. Jack Duggan was a people's man who lived for his family, his political beliefs and the people of Toowoomba. He gave generously of his talents, his friendship, his loyalty and his advice to all. Despite his lack of education and losing his parents at such a young age, his achievements were truly outstanding and an inspiration to others. Toowoomba and Queensland have lost a great man—a true gentleman and a scholar; a real statesman. On behalf of the people of Toowoomba, I say, "Thank you, Jack", and offer our sincere condolences to the Drew family, and to Jack's daughter, Mary; his son, John; and his grandchildren, Jeremy and Paula.

Mr HEALY (Toowoomba North) (10.58 a.m.): I rise today with pleasure to join in this debate and to salute the late John Edmund Duggan, former State member for Toowoomba, Toowoomba West and North Toowoomba, deputy mayor of the city, Mayor of Toowoomba and Minister of the Crown. While South Australia may have claimed his birthright, Queensland—and in particular, Toowoomba—has claimed Jack Duggan's contribution to society.

The front-page headline of the Toowoomba *Chronicle* on Monday, 21 June this year, read "Duggan dies—Toowoomba loses a statesman". That headline certainly, I think, summed up the way people of all political persuasions in Toowoomba felt about Jack Duggan. Whilst many, like myself, were too young to remember the political controversy that surrounded his life, particularly in 1957, we of the younger generation saw a man whose political background did not particularly matter so much because we saw a man who devoted the latter part of his life to local government and the betterment of the community. This, of course, was justly rewarded in 1982 with the Order of Australia.

I am told that even weeks before his death, although frail and ill, Jack Duggan was still allowing school students to visit him and

conduct interviews with him for school projects and assignments. I think it is fair to say that it was Jack Duggan's body that eventually let him down and not his mind. I can vividly recall attending a Toowoomba Rugby League grand final not too many years ago and seeing Jack, stooped and shuffling along quite slowly as a result of a stroke. As I stopped to say "G'day", as I often did with Jack, I could not help noticing that many other people were doing exactly the same and beginning to engage in conversation with him. And while Jack probably would have just loved to have sat down and relaxed, his great pleasure was in dialogue with people. His fluency in speech, even in his later years, was amazing and, of course, he always had a story to tell.

For many years, Jack Duggan, because of his love for sport in general and his command of the English language, was often asked to chair sporting banquets and trophy evenings and, more often than not, would thrill audiences with his wit and his charm. I was given the ominous task of replacing Jack as chairman at the All Whites Rugby League Club banquet nights after he no longer could fulfil that duty, and I realised just how hard an act it was to follow. His confidence and ability to communicate are a tribute to his commitment in his younger days, as a member in this place, to self-education. Jack was the fourth youngest person ever elected to the Queensland Parliament. He was orphaned at 12 and forced to work as a shop assistant in Toowoomba at the age of 14. The apple-cheeked schoolboy, as he was often referred to, was obviously determined that self-motivation was going to be the key to success.

As a young member of this House, I could not help but be impressed by parts of his maiden speech delivered in this House on 25 August 1936. On that occasion, he spoke these very thought-provoking words—

"In taking my place in this Assembly I am not unmindful of the fact that it is possible for the humblest citizen, as well as the richest and most distinguished, to find a place here, provided he can win the suffrage of the community to which he belongs. I am also well aware that as a parliamentary representative I am called upon to say something in a place where so many wise men have spoken before me."

He concluded that speech by saying—

"I am young perhaps, but I realise that well within my time many reforms are possible, and I hope that my association

in this Chamber will be such that when I come to vacate my place here I shall have helped . . . in carrying into effect some of the principles for which I stand."

These words are indeed an inspiration for any young member of Parliament from both sides of the House.

Jack Duggan's funeral in Toowoomba on 22 June was a fitting tribute to a man who held enormous respect within his party, as was evidenced by the presence of Mr Speaker, the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Primary Industries and the Minister for Transport. Of course, he held the Transport portfolio from 1947 until 1957. Many of Toowoomba's civic and business leaders were also in attendance, and it was a privilege for me and the members for Toowoomba South and Lockyer to be given the opportunity to pay our last respects to a great man.

Many people have told me of the tremendous upheaval that took place following the decision made by Jack Duggan in April 1957—some remembering it quite vividly—and how political opinions at the time were so divided. Some, perhaps, are still a little bitter. If a man cannot be respected for a conscious and moral judgment made during his life, then it indeed becomes a sad world if he cannot be saluted for it in death.

In the words of St Patrick's Cathedral Administrator, Father John Maher, who presided over the service—

"It was his strength and constancy that will be remembered in all decisions that he made in his life."

People on both sides of the political fence will remember him for that.

To his son John, daughter Mary, grandchildren Jeremy and Paula, and members of the Duggan and Drew families—on behalf of the constituents of the electorate of Toowoomba North, the electorate in which Jack Duggan resided until his death, I offer my sincere condolences. Toowoomba may have lost a statesman, but it has indeed gained a legend.

Hon. T. J. BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Premier, Minister for Administrative Services and Minister for Rural Communities) (11.03 a.m.): I thought three or four times about whether I would talk today. This bloke was a pretty good mate to me, and I might not make it, to be truthful.

I joined the Labor Party in 1949 after listening to Jack Duggan make a speech in the old Trades Hall dance hall. It was one of the most fluent speeches I have heard, and it

was the most wonderful, warm occasion. He talked about the Labor movement, and he made me realise that what my mum and dad had told me over the years was great. In 1949, in Barooka, I joined the Labor Party. In 1959, I decided that I would run for the ALP organiser's job. I went to Jack and I said to him, "Listen, Jack, I am going to run for the organiser's job but I do not think I am going to get the numbers. The AWU is not on my side; neither is the TLC. Jack Egerton has a candidate, as does the AWU. How will I go?" He said, "Go for it, digger; go for your life." He did not say "digger", I might add; that was not his sort of phrase. He said to me, "Come back when you have added up the numbers."

There were 52 votes. I had 26 sure after I had done my canvassing. Frank Waters, who was the secretary of the Postal Workers Union, said to me, "I will not vote for you on the first ballot; but on the exhaustive ballot, if you do not get up on the first one, I will vote for you on the second." I went back to Jack and I said, "I cannot win it. I can get only 26 votes and I have to get 27, but Waters said he will vote for me on the second ballot." Jack said, "Don't worry. It will go to a second ballot and Waters will not let you down." I became the State organiser of the Labor Party, so Jack's attitude on numbers was not bad.

I will always remember Jack. We went through the years after the split together. In those split days, Labor did not have much money and politicians did not get much money to travel with, either. The travel arrangements that are in place today did not exist in those days. Opposition members complain about their conditions today, but I could tell them a few stories about those days. The Labor Party took three months to decide whether to buy us a car, and then it spent a further three months arguing about whether we could have a radio or not. It was thought that we would not be working if we were listening to the radio.

Jack and I went on the road together. In those days, the Opposition Leader went on the road with you. I learned all about hard-nosed politics from Jack. He was orphaned at 11 or 12—there are differences of opinion there; some say 11 and others say 12. He worked as a grocery boy and was paid \$1.40 a week. At his funeral they told a story about how, on the way home, he always bought something for his sister out of his wages. There would not have been much left over, but he never forgot. By the age of 21, he was the State President of the Shop Assistants Union. He was a unionist right from taws, and he believed in it all his life, but he was not a

rough person. In the Labor movement in those days, Joe Bukowski, Jack Egerton and others would stand up and fight an issue through and call a spade more than a spade. But Jack would never kick the slipper in. If he did, he would just about apologise to the person in the next breath. If he said something nasty about someone, it was not his form to continue on that way.

In paying a tribute to Jack, I want to talk about the split and about Egerton, Duggan, Bukowski, Gair and Kane. It was the most violent period of politics in this State. As an organiser, I travelled to a hotel in the central west, booked myself into the pub and carted my bag up to the room. I was to pick up Duggan from the railway station that night. When I came downstairs, the publican said to me, "Are you the Labor Party bloke?" I said, "Yes." He said, "I cannot keep you here tonight, or I will not have any customers next week. I am not going to fight your fight here." I went back up to get my bag. When I came down, they had let down the four tyres on my car outside. They wrote "Commo" over my car.

I ran a campaign meeting for Duggan in Gympie at which I blocked off the first four rows of the theatre. That was the first time in Queensland that every radio station had been connected up for a broadcast. Duggan was such a fluent speaker that I convinced the QCE of the day that it should spend the money on that broadcast. When I arrived at Gympie, the first four rows of the theatre were full of DLP members—our opponents. I approached the sergeant of the local police station and I said to him, "Sarge, I am the bloke in charge of this meeting. I want you to kick those blokes out of there."

He said, "I am a member of the DLP. You give me any trouble, and I'll run you in." I looked at him and I thought, "Jesus, this is going to be tough tonight." When Jack came along, he said, "Is the meeting organised?" I said, "To a degree. All the back rows are ours, but the front rows aren't." When we put him on the air, people could not hear a word he said. If people were listening to the radio in Charleville or Mount Isa, all they could hear were those blokes abusing him. They did it for half an hour at our expense. I must say that when I went back to Brisbane, it was with some sense of a lack of job security.

Later, I pulled into the Beerwah pub. I went into the bar to campaign. I was standing in the bar, and the next minute I was king hit—I was down on the floor. As I got up, the big bloke who had just knocked me down, knocked me down again. I was struggling to

my feet when a fellow by the name of Frankie Freemantle, a railway bloke, came to my assistance. He said, "Don't do anything, because the policeman sent him around." After I got myself back on my feet and was able to walk—I might add that I had a few beers—I drove up to the Landsborough Police Station to complain. When I arrived there, the person in charge was the copper who had sent that bloke around to king hit me. He made me less than welcome.

I arrived in Brisbane and went to see Duggan. Because it was pretty rough driving around the bush and getting a thumping and a hiding—and I copped a lot of hidings—I said, "What am I going to do?" I used to say to Jack Duggan that if he gave me a bottle of Tattinger's champagne—and I could tell another story about that, but I will not—for every time I got a black eye for him I would be drunk for the rest of my life, because in those days I got a lot of black eyes. Jack rang Bischof, and to Bischof's great credit, he got a fellow by the name of Rockett, who was a police inspector at the time, to investigate the matter. They transferred the sergeant from Landsborough to the Valley. Consequently, for the next four years until he retired, whenever I went across Brisbane I would have to avoid travelling through the Valley.

Old Jack was a colourful and really lovable character. In those days when I went on the road, we would go away for six weeks and come back for a couple of weekends, then go away again. Right at the height of the split, families broke up and husbands and wives split up over the issue. Jack's own church was so violently against him that his family suffered and he received all the slings and arrows that one can get in politics. He felt it very badly. It was bitter. Jack was sued by his political opponents, he was lambasted, but we did not help him at all. Our campaign was terrible! We hated each other so much. One of the great lessons to be learned in politics is that one can live on one's hate and one can die on one's hate. If one lives on hatred, one dies achieving nothing. Old Jack used to say that to us. He was a calming influence. He stuck with us. There would have been no Labor Party at that time if all the members had gone with Gair. I think that the battle would have been lost. We needed him, and without him we would not have survived. But he carried it all personally, and suffered personal vilification such as people had never seen before.

At street corner meetings, he was pulled off the truck. As I was saying to the Premier a moment ago, Jack was so fluent that even

when the truck was being rocked, he would keep telling his story. The truck was rocking and he was rocking. We could not believe the way that man could perform, the feeling that he had for Labor and the friendships and the hatred that he generated. He was the most popular man in the Labor Party and the man most hated by the DLP. Some of those hatreds still exist today. Because that split was so great, some people have still not forgotten. The personal vilification was so bad that at a Friday night meeting before the election on the corner of Russell and Ruthven Streets outside the National Bank in Toowoomba, the traffic stopped. People filled that town to hear him, and then the next day at the election they not only voted him out but they also threw out his deputy, Felix Dittmer, who was the member for Mount Gravatt.

Jack Duggan was defeated at that election, but during the election campaign, the candidate for Gregory—I think his name was Watson—who was an AWU organiser and Labor's candidate against Wally Rae, died. It was a situation similar to that which occurred recently in the electorate of Dickson. Straight after his defeat in Toowoomba, we sent poor old Jack out to run in Gregory. Members could imagine going to a place not knowing anybody and having just been defeated somewhere else. Away he went, and he was defeated out there in another bruising, battering campaign. He came back to Toowoomba. We were all worried about what was going to happen to Jack because he had been so solid right through and we could not afford to let him down. Poor old Les Wood took over the leadership when Jack was defeated, and he died shortly afterwards. His two sons, Peter and Billy, served in this place. We took Jack back to Toowoomba and ran him again. He won quite clearly and became Leader of the Opposition.

That happened in the days when the Opposition Leader spoke on every Bill. Opposition Leaders do not do that any more. I did it for a short while. Jack Duggan spoke fluently on the issues, and he knew the issues. He was one of those self-educated men. I have been trying to remember the names of some of the people who were in the Labor movement during his time, people such as Frank Nolan, Frank Waters, Jim Kane and Jack Egerton. They had all been poorly educated. However, they all had a great library and as people came into the movement, they would pass their books on. When Jack Duggan loaned me books, he used to write "Stolen from Jack Duggan" all over them and little stickers such as, "Read this" or, "Do this." I

have never had an appreciation of art, but Jack would try to lead me in that direction—to appreciate some of the things to which working class people could aspire to only by educating themselves. The system has changed, and it has changed because of people such as Duggan and other leaders of the era who put their time, their effort and their heart into trying to make things better for the people whom they represented.

It is a sad day for me to lose a mate. Jim Kane, who was old Neal Kane's father, and Jack Duggan were probably the two people who stuck by me the most. We did not always agree. I remember the Federal conference of the party at which the North West Cape base was discussed. That was the conference following which Menzies coined the term "the 36 faceless men"—and won an election on it—and at which Jack changed his vote and voted against the Queensland branch. The vote was 19 to 17 in favour of the North West Cape base. As it turned out, the North West Cape base was not the issue, but the fact that we locked out Whitlam and Calwell and made them stand outside in the dark while we made the decision created the image of "the 36 faceless men". Duggan had the courage of his convictions. Having been through all the rough times, he was prepared to say to the people, "I think you are wrong on this issue." He said that about a number of issues. He also had great mates.

Jack Stanaway, my press officer who has been with me for many years, was an old friend of Jack Duggan's, too. He tells a story about a magistrate. I will not mention his name, but anyone from Toowoomba would know the magistrate to whom I am referring. He was very hard on drinking drivers and everybody else. I will just read Jack Stanaway's notes about this, because it is worth while telling the story. The local magistrate gaoled drink drivers. Of course, Jack mentioned other people such as Jack McCafferty and Johnny Higgins, the editor of the new afternoon daily newspaper at that time, the *Downs Star*. Jack Duggan was the local king, the Deputy Premier who felt that he should be Premier—and he would have been Premier if certain events had not occurred. Gair was trying to get rid of him at the time. The word was around that Gair was going to shaft him and make him Governor after Laverack retired. A bloke named Ted Walsh from Bundaberg wanted to be Deputy Premier. They were all out to stop Duggan in some ways from getting there.

Jack Stanaway said—

"I remember (the magistrate) saying a defendant on a minor failure to yield right of way charge had written him a three-page letter and he still couldn't determine if he was pleading guilty or not guilty. He said from the bench, 'If he is not here within an hour I'll issue a bench warrant for his arrest.' The police raced out, found the unfortunate wretch (a bus driver) nearby, hauled him off with the passengers still on board and brought him before (the magistrate). Here he was verbally assailed, heavily fined and stripped of his licence."

Jack Stanaway found out later that he had been the QLP candidate against Duggan at the election. So he got square.

Jack Duggan was a man of the highest principles. Today, no-one has mentioned his retirement from this place, and I shall mention it in this way. In those days, people were reported by the Taxation Commissioner if it was found that they had not correctly filled out their tax forms. Jack's return involved a small amount of money. All sorts of people, including farmers and graziers, were on the Taxation Commissioner's list. There used to be pages of them. Some of us probably would have been reported if that practice had continued. When Jack's name was printed in the list in the press, he said, "I cannot stay in this place. I have to leave." He told us in the party, "I have to retire." We said to him, "Look, Jack, it is a national pastime—trying to beat the tax man." He had not tried to beat the tax man. It was an omission on his part. Even the tax man admitted that. But Jack said, "No, I am going to leave." And he did.

That was a sad blow to us. Although Jack had lost three elections in a row, we had been battling and fighting amongst ourselves. We had been spending more time arguing amongst ourselves than doing anything else. Jack Duggan was a man of high principles and a decent bloke. I will miss him for a number of reasons. We all miss our mates when they go, but if I had to name one person—other than my mum and dad, and old Jim Kane—who gave me a good start in politics and taught me to try to do the best I can for the ordinary bloke, it would be Jack Duggan. Never once in his career did he ever get away from that. At any of our central executive or inner executive meetings or at Federal conferences, State conferences or Labor in Politics conventions, he always said, "Remember where you come from, lad. Remember who you represent here. And if you can't represent them well, don't stay

here." Jack would have left if he could not do that job. I am sorry he is gone.

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly) (11.19 a.m.): I endorse the tributes paid by the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and other members to the late Jack Duggan for the outstanding service that he gave to Queensland and to this Parliament for more than 30 years. I want to speak briefly about another aspect of Mr Duggan's service to the community, that is, his contribution to local government.

Over the years, it has been reasonably common for aldermen and councillors to move on to serve in this Parliament or the Federal Parliament. It is a rare occurrence, however, for someone who has served as Deputy Premier, a Minister and the Leader of the Opposition to enter local government after retiring from this place. That Jack Duggan did so is a measure of his tremendous commitment to serving the community. I was fortunate to meet him during my time as an alderman of the Brisbane City Council. What stood out was how much he was enjoying his work in local government, firstly, as deputy mayor of Toowoomba and, just prior to his retirement, as mayor of that city. He has also served as treasurer and a member of the executive of the Local Government Association. He was a strong advocate for local government well beyond the boundaries of his own city.

A further measure of the commitment of Jack Duggan to serving the people of Toowoomba is demonstrated by the fact that he never allowed party politics to get in the way of good civic government. In fact, when he was deputy mayor, the Mayor of Toowoomba was Miss Nell Robinson, who was a member of the National Party.

I join in this motion of condolence to a great Queenslander and a fine leader of local government. The example that he set in long and dedicated service to the community is an enduring tribute to the late John Edmund Duggan.

Motion agreed to, honourable members standing in silence.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Mabo

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Leader of the Opposition) (11.21 a.m.): As this document, which I now table, undisputedly shows, the mining industry in this State has been sold out and doublecrossed by the Goss Government. This document, signed on 5 July

by the Acting Deputy Director-General of the Office of Cabinet, Jacki Byrne, shows that the view of this Government is that mining leases do not extinguish native title and that mining companies will be liable for compensation. What a stark contrast this document represents to the effort by the Government to run away and hide from this very question last week!

When the Opposition revealed the Commonwealth's secret plan for Mabo legislation—a secret plan in which the Goss Government was hand in glove, a secret plan which doublecrossed the mining industry—the Premier, as usual, was missing. He was silent. As usual, when something was hitting the fan, the Premier was missing in inaction. All we got from the Government were denials. The media were told that the document was old, that it had no status, that it was outdated, and that there was no commitment from the Queensland Government to the document.

The Opposition knows that the Premier's people were discussing that draft legislation as recently as 29 June at a meeting hosted by the Premier's own Government in the Premier's own office block—barely a week before his Government was claiming that it had no status. I wonder whether the Premier will do another runner now in the face of a document signed by Jacki Byrne, the acting deputy director-general of the office of his own Cabinet, on 5 July 1993—Monday of last week. Will that one be outdated, too? Will that document have no status? That document shows indisputably that the Goss Government agrees with the Prime Minister's people that mining leases have not—and therefore have not ever—by definition had the capacity to extinguish native title. And it shows that mining companies operating existing mines will be liable for claims and for compensation. What a two-faced doublecross by the Premier!

When the Premier trooped the gallery out to Century a couple of years ago to announce that project, he said that nothing—I repeat "nothing"—would be allowed to stop it. I do not know whether the Premier even realises quite what he has done. He seems to hold to the quaint view that the Racial Discrimination Act of 1975 is somehow an immutable—unchallengeable—turning point; that there is somehow no question about the safety of pre-1975 mines. The simple fact is that, if mining leases do not have the capacity to extinguish native title, then they have never possessed that capacity. Mining agreements made in the 1960s, such as Comalco's threatened operations at Weipa, are not free of potential challenge merely because they were

established before the Racial Discrimination Act.

Because of the view taken by the Commonwealth and the Queensland Premier, those projects are now at risk. The passage of the Racial Discrimination Act will merely affect the way in which Governments deal with issues of land tenure between 1975 and mid-1993, and in the future. But I repeat: now that the Commonwealth Government and the Goss Government have clearly indicated their view that mining leases simply do not have the capacity to have extinguished native title, they have thrown the mining industry in this State and around the country to the wolves. Lawyers will leap all over their interpretation of the High Court's ruling. Lawyers will make fortunes out of this endorsement of retrospective land rights over mines in this State. This doublecross by the Premier has the potential to be massively damaging to the economic future of this State and this nation.

Honourable members will have read the comments of the President of the Queensland Mining Council, Michael Pinnock, in the *Sunday Mail* a little over a week ago. He said that he was aware of two existing mining operations which could not raise money overseas because of perceived doubts about tenure. That was before the draft legislation leaked and before this extraordinary current memo leaked. If companies had no chance of raising money a few weeks ago, they have got Buckley's now, and it is because of Premier Goss and the Queensland Government. I have had in my office senior people from the mining industry operating in Queensland making exactly the same point: international financiers will simply not invest in Queensland with this cloud hanging over the heads of miners.

All honourable members will be aware that the claim by the Wik people—which threatens the bauxite mining operations at Weipa, and the jobs of hundreds of workers in Gladstone as a result—is the first real test of Mabo on the mainland. When that case was lodged with the Federal Court in Brisbane on 30 June, the conventional wisdom was that it did not have a chance. The conventional wisdom among the lawyers who had pored over Mabo was that mining leases had extinguished native title and that, in any event, any substantive title such as a mining lease issued before 1975 would be automatically validated. Then we got the Commonwealth draft—and Ms Byrnes' backup for it—which shows that the Queensland Government supports the Commonwealth's view that this interpretation was wrong. By

adopting an interpretation which says that mining leases have not extinguished native title ever—I repeat "ever"—the Commonwealth and the Queensland Government have said to the Wik people, "Go for it! You're on the right track."

I remind honourable members that the Wik case seeks an injunction to stop mining—to halt mining—at Weipa. What project is next? The answer has to be Century, the project that the Premier said nothing would be allowed to stop but which he has now put at even greater risk than was already the case. Honourable members will no doubt be aware of the problems relating to land rights that already threatened Century even before Mabo. They began with this Government. When CRA was trying to buy Lawn Hill station, so was the then Minister for Environment and Heritage. Century is now surrounded by land which is available for claim not only under the Government's own 1991 legislation but also under Mabo. Now there will be additional threats via potential claims over the two properties adjacent to Doomadgee—Konka and Pendine—which would be major elements of the route to the gulf for the ore from that mine. When and if arrangements can be made to get that ore to the coast, it will have to traverse the tidal flats. Who could have missed the smirk on Frank Walker's face last night on the ABC when he described how, under Mabo, the biggest threat to the McArthur River project, further north and further west of Century, in the Northern Territory, would be the passage of ore across the beds of seagrass. What chance Century now!

The Labor Party's plot is clear and self-interested. The overturning of the conventional view that mining leases extinguished native title has a very simple motivation. The Labor Party wants extensive land rights, but it does not want its voters in the cities to pay for it. It wants the warm inner glow, but it does not want the pain. What better fall guy than the mining industry! Leave the entire problem in the bush! Make the miners pay! All they had to do to implicate the industry was to turn the Mabo decision on its head and declare that mining leases do not extinguish native title. For a clearer understanding of Labor's thinking, one only had to watch the ABC's coverage of the issue last night in which, along with Frank Walker, we heard from Noel Pearson.

Mr Pearson identified the mining industry as the principal way of overcoming the problem of how to empower the Aboriginal people. This is only the beginning of the most

foolhardy act of sabotage on one of the most important industries in this country. Still open is the question of who is going to pay for the national land acquisition fund—the fund that will pay for the national land rights regime Labor still wants to impose on this country, falsely claiming Mabo is the justification. Still open, too, is the question of the ambiguous statement that Aborigines should gain a greater stake in resource development in this country. Miners will doubtless be hit again.

The Australian Labor Party did its worst right around the country to ensure that this nation missed the boat in the 1980s, leaving behind a trail of destroyed economies and a million people unemployed. Clearly, it is determined to finish the job in the 1990s. It could not make a better start than by destroying the mining industry with this foolishness that has been disguised and hidden from the mining industry in Queensland and throughout Australia by this Premier and this Government.

Public Housing; Insurance on Fortitude Valley Business Premises

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central) (11.31 a.m.): I have two matters I want to raise today: one is in relation to local government and housing; the other is in relation to insurance coverage problems in Fortitude Valley. One of the proudest areas of achievement of the Goss Labor Government since its election on 2 December 1989 has been in the housing area. The Government has provided dignity and self-respect to the occupants of what used to be termed Housing Commission houses now administered by the Housing Department.

We have widened the eligibility for people to occupy those houses to reflect more accurately the family structure and twentieth century society. We discontinued the identification number system that used to exist on Housing Commission units which were, to some extent, like the Star of David used by the Nazis. Anyone driving by could easily identify Housing Commission houses. That system stigmatised the people who were living there. When Tom Burns was the Minister for Local Government and Housing, he removed that system and institutionalised a system by which numbering was similar to units which afforded the people who lived in them the dignity and self-respect to which they were entitled.

Anyone who has read the recent report on housing in Toowoomba by the Public Works Committee will see exactly what we

have done under the Goss Government. We have followed models that have been introduced and successfully used in South Australia whereby people driving into the suburbs cannot tell the difference between the Housing Commission houses or the houses owned by the Department of Housing and Local Government and those owned by private people. That degree of dignity was necessary, and it is an area in which this Government takes great pride.

Today, I want to refer to developments that have eventuated in my electorate under the Goss Government. I do so because a lot of electorates, such as mine, were held by Labor for long periods and were neglected under the National/Liberal Party coalition Governments and under the National Party Government for short-term political reasons. Those sorts of problems are now being redressed. They were ignored because the National Party had a very political agenda. They were not implementing their policies based on fairness and equity; they were based on political consideration—something we do not do any more.

In terms of what this Government has achieved, I am pleased to say that I have received advice from the Minister, Terry Mackenroth—who has carried on the good work started by Tom Burns—that the Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning has purchased land at 335 to 339 Boundary Street, Spring Hill, for use as a future site for seven one-bedroom, four two-bedroom and two three-bedroom apartment rental accommodation. They have accepted the tender of Iezzi Constructions Pty Ltd of Tingalpa for the construction of 10 apartments at 60 Annie Street, New Farm, for use as rental accommodation. In addition, a number of housing cooperatives have been well funded. The Inner Western Suburbs Housing Collective Ltd, the New Farm Housing Cooperative Ltd and the Spring Hill Cooperative Ltd, which are rental housing cooperatives operating in my electorate, have been granted approval for further funding under the cooperative housing program—something about which I am absolutely delighted.

The Inner Western cooperative has been allocated a total grant of \$470,000; the New Farm housing cooperative, a total grant of \$360,000; and the Spring Hill cooperative, a total grant of \$365,000. The grants will be used to purchase housing for low income families and singles who are members of their respective organisations. This Government is actually helping those people who are in the

greatest need. The cooperative housing program is a long-term community-managed rental housing program that is funded through the Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning. A primary purpose of this program is the provision of secure, affordable, tenanted, managed housing.

In addition, I was recently advised by the Minister that my electorate is also going to receive additional housing funding. Land is being purchased under the House/Land Package Scheme at 48 Bonython Street and 32/34 Hooker Street, Windsor, to accommodate six two-bedroom apartments and 20 one-bedroom apartments respectively for use as future rental accommodation. Again, I applaud that decision. In addition, in June, I was further advised that accommodation units are being acquired at 14 Harcourt Street and 71 Kent Street, New Farm for conversion to boarding houses.

I am delighted with those decisions, but that is not all. Only last week, on Saturday, the State Government called tenders for its new home assistance scheme in the New Farm/Teneriffe/Valley area. The Fortitude Valley/New Farm area has been one of the first areas, along with five others, that will benefit from this important scheme. The Home Assist Program will provide elderly residents and people with disabilities with advice and assistance on maintaining and modifying their homes. The New Farm/Fortitude Valley area, as I said, is one of the first locations in Queensland in which the program will be trialled.

Previously, I have mentioned in the House that my electorate has a disproportionately high percentage of senior citizens, so they will be particularly pleased with this scheme. Many older people or people with disabilities are finding it increasingly difficult, both physically and financially, to repair and maintain their homes and gardens. This can often affect the safety and security of the home and eventually have a bearing on a person's decision to leave the home for something easier to manage. This problem can be experienced by not only older people but also people of any age with disabilities.

The Home Assist Program will allow people to take informed action to maintain and modify their homes to suit changing needs obviously associated with disabilities. Tenders have been called and selected community organisations will be chosen in a few months' time to receive funding grants for the provision of the following services—

information and advice about home repairs and modifications;

referral to accredited local tradespersons and home handy persons;

home inspections to determine the need for repairs and modifications; and

direct assistance with home and garden maintenance and repairs.

Eligible applicants for tender include a wide range of community-based organisations such as local councils or church-based groups. It is expected that these groups will be able to act as honest brokers by assessing individual needs and engaging suitable, reliable tradespeople. Most of the services will be available to older people and people with disabilities who are home-owners or private renters, subject to an assessment of their needs and circumstances. I set on record my appreciation of the assistance of the Minister and the department and acknowledge the excellent work that the Goss Government has done in the public housing area, which is something that I have supported energetically. I am delighted to acknowledge that work as something I support and something that will benefit people who are in great need.

Let me turn now to the last matter of concern I wish to mention. I refer to the activities of insurance companies in relation to premises in the Fortitude Valley area. Today, I call on the insurance industry in Queensland to adopt a more responsible role in insuring buildings in Fortitude Valley. As members of this Parliament would know, over a long period I have advocated a rejuvenation program for the Valley in cooperation with the State Government and the Brisbane City Council. This program is working, but one of the impediments to the program is the attitude of insurance companies. Again, I urge them publicly to consult more fully with the organisers of the Brisbane urban renewal program and local businesspeople, particularly the Valley Business Association, to overcome existing problems.

Briefly, an increasing number of traders have reported to me that they are being denied access to policy renewal on their business premises by many of the major insurance companies. When the insurance companies accept the business, there is a tendency for policy premiums to show quite marked increases to the point of being unaffordable and uncompetitive with policies that are offered in respect of similar businesses in other areas. In the majority of cases that have been brought to my attention, businesses have had a longstanding no-

claims history, and no forewarning is given by the insurance companies that policy-holders will be dropped at renewal time. I instance as an example of this the problems being experienced in the Valley by Lucky's Restaurant, which is something of an institution.

The resulting scenario is that businesses are unprotected and without cover for a period while they renegotiate a policy, and they generally have to resort to offshore companies or insurance companies which cater for businesses that have been rejected by mainstream insurance companies, which naturally comes at a price. In response to this situation, in November last year the urban renewal task force and the trader body, the Valley Business Association to which I referred earlier, convened a meeting with several major insurance companies. Unfortunately, that meeting did not succeed to the extent that I would have liked it to do so. It is important to note that at this meeting a senior contingent of police officers highlighted the police resources at the Valley branch and confirmed that crimes statistics in the area had decreased by 40 per cent compared with statistics for the previous year.

I turn now to mention the extent of the problem about which I am concerned. Among the rejected policy-holders are an increasing number of owners of concrete buildings which pose very limited fire risk. SEQEB authorities have confirmed that the risk of fire that is caused by old electrical systems is a minute one, but this was one of the reasons cited by the insurance companies for problems associated with renewal. Certain business-owners have been denied access to basic insurance cover such as public liability, and there would appear to be no basis for this type of action. I table a letter that was sent to me by Samantha Goddard on behalf of the urban renewal task force and express my concern at the attitude adopted by insurance companies. I now call on them to come on side with the Valley renewal program.

Time expired.

Public Service Salaries Increase

Mrs SHELDON (Caloundra—Leader of the Liberal Party) (11.42 a.m.): I rise today to speak on a matter of genuine public interest and a matter that is becoming of increasing concern to more and more Queenslanders in this the fourth year of the Queensland Goss Labor Government. The matter to which I refer is money—taxpayers' money—and how it is being spent. This week, we have seen the

spectacle of the State Labor Government cutting back teacher numbers in high schools, slapping charges on national parks, closing down rural railways and breaking promises over the QEII Hospital to try to claw back \$100m-odd to prop up its ailing budgetary process for 1993-94. This is Queensland that I am talking about, not Victoria under Kirner or South Australia under Bannon. This is Queensland, the fastest-growing State in Australia and the State that has everything going for it.

This is the State which, in 1989, had a Government that was free of financial problems and was well-placed to take Queenslanders into the next century with confidence and prosperity. Where has the money gone? Just how has this State Labor Government, under the financial mismanagement of Mr Goss and Mr De Lacy, managed to squander such a healthy financial position? Upon looking at the Budgets of this Queensland Labor Government since 1989, one thing becomes blatantly clear. The Queensland Labor Government has done what Labor Governments across this country have done; it has spent, spent, and spent some more. An analysis of spending on wages for public servants from 1989-90 to 1992-93 reveals just what has happened to all the money which this Labor Government drags out through taxes and charges. One billion dollars is how much the wages bill for the Queensland public service has increased under this State Labor Government, and \$1 billion is an incredible sum. In fact, this State Government now spends \$5.3 billion a year just on public service wages and associated costs, which is a 23 per cent increase in the Queensland Government's wages bill in just three years.

When the people of Queensland ask where all the money has gone, they can be informed that there is \$1 billion which is not being spent on hospitals, roads or railways. In fact, it is worth while looking at just where that \$1 billion was spent. During the worst recession in 60 years, it would be fair to assume that the Government has poured this money into putting more public servants in the departments which help industry and encourage investment, but that would be wrong. During the time of the breakdown of the State's hospital system and an overburdened education system, it would be fair to assume that the Government would spend the lion's share of the extra \$1 billion in those areas, but that, again, would be wrong. The wages bill for public servants in the Department of Resource Industries and QEC

has risen only 5.7 per cent during that time. The Department of Primary Industries has had a 9.33 per cent increase while the Department of Lands has had an increase of 5.58 per cent. CPI growth for the corresponding period was 9 per cent. So which area got the lion's share of public servants over the last four years of Labor?

The Attorney-General's Department tops the list with a 142 per cent increase in its wages bill. It has risen from \$35m a year in 1989-90 to \$86m a year in 1992-93. Where has it all gone? Who are those new people and what are they doing? Well may one ask. It certainly has not gone to providing appropriate legal aid for Queenslanders, because everyone in legal circles or anyone who has been associated with the law in the past year knows that the legal aid system has collapsed. What about the Housing and Local Government Department, which has had a wages bill increase of 71 per cent, or Treasury, which has had a wages increase of 42 per cent? What about the Environment and Heritage Department, which now has an annual wages bill of \$40m—an increase of 70 per cent over the past four years? Again, just what are all those new staff doing?

We have heard of all the extra teachers that the State Government has put on, yet the wages bill for the Education Department increased by a comparatively small 27 per cent over that period. The Health Department's wages bill has also increased by a comparatively small 26.8 per cent over the four years. In fact, it is quite sad when we have to talk about a 27 per cent increase in the public service bill for a department that is so comparatively small. The Government has shouted loud and long about extra teachers and extra nurses, but we see from those figures that Education and Health have done comparatively badly on the appointment of service deliverers when compared with some of the, quite frankly, less important departments.

This State Labor Government has thrown hundreds of millions of dollars into hiring public servants but is still having to close hospitals over Easter because of a lack of funds. It is not just hospitals, either. In the past few days, in my own electorate, a special school was told that it faced closure. So while the Treasurer was in Cairns saying that schools would not close, the Education Department was working on closing a special school. There are 36 disadvantaged children at that school. Those 36 children range from 5 to 18 years old and from moderately to severely mentally and physically handicapped. The families of

those children have high praise for the Currimundi Special School and its teachers and are hurt and angry that Government cost cutting will now make life so much more difficult. Under this Government, which inherited such an economically sound Treasury, the school will be closed down because of a lack of funds.

It is a fact that this Government has thrown money at some departments without any idea of how to properly spend that money. Former PSMC Commissioner David Shand summed up the policy of the State Labor Government very well. During a recent speech at Griffith University, while speaking about the State Government, David Shand said—

“We found that they were desperate to get their expenditure up to national levels, particularly in health and education. They weren't necessarily clear what they wanted to spend the money on. The important thing was spending up to the national level.”

When one puts David Shand's comment in context with the EPAC report of 1990, which stated that, although the former Queensland National Party Government's spending per capita was relatively low, its provision of services and efficiency was equal to or better than any other State, one sees the real deceit of the Labor Government. It has thrown hundreds of millions of dollars in, but the provision of service and efficiency levels are no better. It has been a case of quantity, certainly not quality, with this State Government.

Every State Government department now also spends millions of dollars a year on outside consultants. Those departments are using consultants for media services, consultants for accounting and financial systems, consultants on management, consultants on just about anything. It is a wonder that those departments are not hiring consultants on how to tie one's shoes in a politically correct way. The Government has gone consultant crazy. The increased use of consultants is amazing considering the massive blow-out in the number of public servants hired since Labor came to power. The question has to be asked: just what are those expensive consultants doing that the army of public servants cannot?

That overuse of consultants can be highlighted by the Environment and Heritage Department, which spent \$447,435 on management consultants in 1992. I have

information which shows that that money—almost half a million dollars—was spent with only one or two firms which involved former departmental staff. Although I applaud the entrepreneurial skills of the firms in question, I have serious concerns about the overuse of those expensive consultancies by Government departments. If a relatively small department such as Environment and Heritage was spending almost \$500,000 a year with only one or two consultancy firms, how much were the other departments spending?

In the area of media and information services, the Government has created one of the largest and most expensive media manipulation machines in Queensland. The Electoral and Administrative Review Commission found that the Government spent \$36m on public relations in 1991-92.

Mr Littleproud: An absolute disgrace.

Mrs SHELDON: The honourable member is quite right. It is an absolute disgrace, and the Treasurer has made great claims about how the Government has been forced to cut \$3m from the PR budget this year. That is less than 10 per cent. In 1991-92, the State Government spent almost half a million dollars on producing glossy annual reports alone, at an average cost of about \$10 a brochure. Of course, the Administrative Services Department spends an average of \$32 for each of its 1 000 annual reports. There is a total waste of \$32,000.

So we come back to the State Labor Government's \$1 billion increase in public service funds. To spend \$1 billion on extra public servants without greatly improving services from departments such as Health and Education is a disgrace. It highlights the fact that the Labor Government and the Treasurer have the money management skills of Cain, Kirner, Bannon and Burke. Heaven help Queensland. As Labor puts on a billion dollars worth of public servants over three years yet still manages to have to close hospitals, schools and railway lines, we see the writing on the wall for the Queensland Government's financial position. It is very sad for every Queenslander that this has happened at all, let alone as fast as this.

The State Labor Government must now rein in spending where it counts: through efficiencies, through cuts to bureaucracy, through ending the policy of massive middle management build-up in the public service and not through basic services such as health, education and transport. Instead of safe public servant jobs for the Labor boys, the

Government should now get back on track, cut spending and create real jobs through incentives to small business and cuts to taxes and charges instead of increases.

Brisbane Traffic Study

Mr ROBERTSON (Sunnybank) (11.52 a.m.): On 5 June this year, truth and honesty took second place to political point scoring with the residents of Kuraby thanks to their local alderman and council Opposition leader, Bob Ward. It was on this day at the public meeting of residents concerned about the possibility of the construction of the southern bypass road to connect the Gateway Arterial with the Logan Motorway that the Don Quixote of local government, Alderman Bob Ward, called on residents to fight the road and fight the State Government.

If only Alderman Ward had demonstrated the same commitment to that cause and to his constituents when he was, firstly, chairman of the development and planning committee and then chairman of the transport committee in the former Liberal city council administration with Sallyanne Atkinson at the helm, because it was while he held those positions that the Atkinson council administration commissioned a number of reports, including the Brisbane Traffic Study and the Brisbane town plan, which, among other things, recommended upgrading of the road network throughout Brisbane.

Significantly, both of these reports recommended a four-lane road link between the Gateway Arterial and the Logan Motorway. And what did the alderman for Runcorn, Bob Ward, do when these reports were released? Absolutely nothing! There is no record in the local newspaper, the *Southern Star*, of a statement by Alderman Ward that he disagreed with these recommendations, nor is there any record of Alderman Ward notifying all the residents who would potentially be affected by the construction of a link between the Gateway Arterial and the Logan Motorway. Again, there is no record of Alderman Ward stating publicly that he would campaign against the recommendations of his own council's traffic study; and there is certainly no record of Alderman Ward crossing the floor of council to oppose the recommendations contained in the Brisbane Traffic Study.

The only recorded public mention of concern by Alderman Ward is in a letter to a small group of residents in an estate off Warrigal Road in November 1991, some eight months after the Liberals lost the council

election; and this was only in response to concerns raised by residents that one of their residential streets might be used as an on/off ramp if the road was constructed. Yet again, Alderman Ward, in his pathetic attempt to rewrite history, sloped his shoulders and shirked his responsibilities in this matter. Ward's letter to residents in Bellmead Street began—

“Recently, various State Authorities have made mention of a proposed Gateway Extension that would link the Gateway Arterial with the Logan Motorway. Additionally, the State Government Department of Transport has conducted a study which has implications for this proposal.”

At no stage did Alderman Ward refer to the transport manifesto of the Atkinson administration—the Brisbane Traffic Study—that preceded the so-called “unnamed State Government reports” referred to in his letter. And no wonder, because it was this report, the Liberals' Brisbane Traffic Study, that put firmly on the transport planning agenda a road connection between the Gateway Arterial and the Logan Motorway.

It was this 1989 Brisbane Traffic Study which was described by Ward's then leader, Sallyanne Atkinson, in the foreword to this report as—

“The most comprehensive study of its type ever undertaken in Australia, and is the basis for good traffic and transport management for the future of this city.”

She went on to say—

“The need for this study came from the fact that no long-term traffic planning had been carried out for two decades before I took office. As Brisbane's population and associated car ownership continues to grow, we can no longer ignore the traffic implications of tomorrow.”

So important was the Brisbane Traffic Study to the Liberal council administration that it even published—and unfortunately Mrs Sheldon is not in the Chamber to hear this—glossy summaries of the report for distribution to the public. We hear a lot about the costs of the reports that the State Government produces; one can only imagine how much that report cost the ratepayers of Brisbane. It was on the back page of this glossy public summary that the proposed link between the Gateway Arterial and the Logan Motorway was vividly portrayed in coloured maps. But did Alderman Ward distribute these

summaries to the residents of Kuraby, Runcorn or Eight Mile Plains? That was, after all, the purpose of spending ratepayers' funds on publishing in glossy format the recommendations of the Brisbane Traffic Study.

It is not good enough for Alderman Ward to now try to adopt some kind of high moral ground on this issue, because his record on this matter is clearly one of sitting on his hands and doing nothing for four years since the Brisbane Traffic Study was released publicly. When he was finally questioned on the issue at a meeting of concerned residents, what did he do? He simply blamed the State Government and accepted no responsibility whatsoever for his involvement in an initiative of the former Liberal city council of which he was a part and, by all accounts, a willing participant. Frankly, his ability to duck and weave on important issues such as this would not be out of place on the back line of a football team.

Even in front of the meeting of residents at Kuraby in early June, when questioned about the Brisbane Traffic Study, he ducked, weaved and then tried to throw the ball back to the State Government by claiming that the Liberal council's Brisbane Traffic Study closely involved the State Department of Transport. He even went on to make the quite false claim that it was solely the Department of Transport which believed that there was a need for a road link between the Gateway Arterial and the Logan Motorway. I ask you, Mr Speaker, which party was in Government at the time of the commissioning and completion of the Brisbane Traffic Study? The answer is: the National Party!

However, Alderman Ward's involvement goes far beyond just being part of a Liberal council administration that commissioned the Brisbane Traffic Study and adopted its recommendations with such pride and fanfare. Let us not forget that Alderman Ward was a former chairman of the city council's development and planning committee—the committee responsible for vetting rezonings and approving the allocation of council land for residential development. Given that Alderman Ward knew about the prospect of a road link between the Gateway Arterial and the Logan Motorway as far back as 1987 when the Brisbane Traffic Study was commissioned, one needs to ask the obvious question: why was it that estates such as Paradise Crest, Warrigal Heights, Sunnyview Heights and Kuraby Grove were allowed to be developed and sold to an uninformed public, particularly since it is the development and

planning committee of the Brisbane City Council that has the responsibility for approving residential developments?

Mr Ardill: Did they or did they not provide a corridor through those estates?

Mr ROBERTSON: The then city council did. I thank the honourable member.

If any of the members of this Chamber wonder why politicians are thought so little of by the general public, we need look no further than that champion of political expediency and half-truths, Alderman Bob Ward, to discover why. In his desperate attempt to make cheap political mileage out of the current environmental impact assessment before a public meeting of concerned residents, he exposed his own miserable failure to represent the interests of his constituents.

I will be viewing with a great deal of interest the Liberal Party's candidate for Runcorn in next year's council elections. The Liberal candidate will have a lot of explaining to do as to why the former Liberal city council administration and the former Liberal alderman for Runcorn did not tell the residents of Kuraby, Runcorn, Eight Mile Plains and Stretton about the recommendations and ramifications of the Liberals' Brisbane Traffic Study.

Shredding of Heiner Documents

Mr LINGARD (Beaudesert—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.01 p.m.): On 2 December 1989, Wayne Goss hoodwinked the people of Queensland into believing that he and the Labor Party were incorruptible and that he in particular and his Ministers would never misuse or would never misappropriate moneys. He claimed that this was a reformist Government and that it would never, never misuse its office. Within a matter of two months, the Goss Government was to commit an illegal, a dishonest and a surreptitious act.

Government members interjected.

Mr LINGARD: I refer to the shredding of the Heiner documents. To those members who are interjecting, I say that that was an illegal, dishonest and surreptitious act. The Heiner inquiry was established under the grievance procedures of the Public Service Management and Employment Act and regulations of 1988. Because retired Magistrate Noel Heiner was not an officer within the meaning of the Act, in carrying out a grievance procedure the people involved in the investigation could not be granted indemnity against legal action for defamation.

The inquiry was set up to investigate written complaints against Mr Peter Coyne, the manager of the John Oxley Youth Centre. These written complaints were handed to the then Director-General of Family Services, Mr Alan Pettigrew. They were not considered frivolous or vexatious and were accepted by the department. Consequently, they became public records and had the potential legally of becoming part of Coyne's personal file or a departmental record, and all the appropriate protection thereafter.

The inquiry was terminated abruptly in mid-January 1990, when the Solicitor-General pointed out the legal problems, the vulnerability of everyone to defamation action and also the evidence. The documentation was sealed in an identifiable box by the Department of Family Services and, one week later, was forwarded to the then Secretary to Cabinet, Mr Stuart Tait, who defined them as public records. Peter Coyne had already demanded, both verbally before witnesses and in writing, that the Director-General of Family Services, Ruth Matchett, allow him to see the specific charges that had been laid against him during the Heiner inquiry. Coyne had a statutory right, under PSME regulation 65, to see those documents.

What will really damn this Government and Minister Anne Warner is that on 16 February 1990, the Solicitor-General advised the Minister that Coyne had a statutory right of access to this material. On 8 February 1990, Peter Coyne's solicitor, Rose Berry Jensen, placed a legal demand on Ruth Matchett, stating that Coyne wished to exercise his legal rights under PSME regulation 65 to view the documents. Various unions had also contacted Ms Matchett, lodging official demands that Coyne be allowed to see the documents.

I want this Parliament to note that the Heiner documents were required for possible legal action, and that the Government had been formally informed of this and that it was legally bound to make this material available. No matter how the Minister or the Premier will try to twist the truth, we are now about to see how the Goss Government in 1990 engaged in a criminal conspiracy to pervert the course of justice—a fact which has been admitted openly by an investigator of the Criminal Justice Commission.

On 16 February 1990, Stuart Tait, the then Secretary to Cabinet, prepared a submission for a Cabinet meeting on 19 February, which would argue that all the material gathered by Heiner should be

destroyed. The submission would deny someone his or her statutory rights and suggest that the Queensland Government destroy material to avoid legal action. Did Stuart Tait decide unilaterally to do up a submission and take it to Cabinet, proposing that the Queensland Government pervert the judicial system and destroy evidence? Of course he did not! The submission was at the instigation of Minister Anne Warner, her departmental head Ruth Matchett and the Premier of this State, Wayne Goss. Only the Premier could direct the Secretary to the Cabinet to write a submission, because the Secretary to Cabinet is responsible and accountable only to the Premier. Anne Warner cannot tell him to prepare such a submission. It was the Premier.

The Premier of this State quite willingly led the charge to destroy evidence to protect the Government—this so-called accountable Labor Government—from legal action. On 19 February 1990, the entire Labor Cabinet took a decision to destroy evidence required for legal action against the Government. So much for honest, open and accountable government! What we have in Queensland is a Government willing to destroy whatever evidence is necessary in order to remain in power—a trait that it has continued in order to survive.

The Cabinet Secretary was ordered to seek urgent permission from the State Archivist, Lee McGregor, to shred the Heiner inquiry documents. On 23 February 1990, the Cabinet Secretary faxed a letter to the State Archivist, seeking urgent approval to shred the documents. The same day, the documents were delivered from the Cabinet Office to the State Archives at Dutton Park. Let us not forget that the State Archivist is charged with preserving non-current records of commissions of inquiry, not with destroying them. It will come as no surprise to find that Ms McGregor, on the same day that she received the documents and on the same day she was approached by Stuart Tait, gave her permission to destroy the material.

Ms McGregor's role in this affair would appear to be in direct contravention of the provisions of the Libraries and Archives Act 1988. The Act provides that before records are destroyed the following criteria must be considered: firstly, their legal value; secondly, their financial value; thirdly, their administrative value; and, last of all, their informative value. The legal value criteria state—

“These are records which involve the rights of private citizens which are

enforceable by the courts. In general, the record should be retained long enough to ensure the rights of any individual concerned are fully protected.”

On 23 March 1990, the documents were secretly shredded in the Family Services building. Ruth Matchett's executive officer, Mr Trevor Walsh, personally did the shredding and advised the State Archivist to decline making any comment to Peter Coyne on the shredding.

This whole action shows that we have in Queensland a Government that will act illegally. It will destroy evidence and it will willingly engage in a criminal conspiracy to pervert the course of justice—all to save its hide. Peter Coyne was justifiably angry that material that he and his lawyer had requested, and to which they were legally entitled, had been destroyed.

The Minister for Family Services, of course, was still left with the problem of what to do with Peter Coyne. On 13 February 1990, Ms Ruth Matchett, the Minister's permanent head, placed Coyne on special duties and removed him from his substantive position. Ruth Matchett was acting on the instructions of Minister Warner, because on 9 April 1990 she openly admitted to staff of her department that she was personally responsible for removing Peter Coyne. After ensuring Coyne's legal options had been destroyed, the Minister now needed to get rid of Coyne permanently. Coyne was offered an inducement to leave the public service by the Minister. It was the Minister who authorised the payment of \$27,000 to Peter Coyne to induce him to leave the public service. Where did the figure of \$27,000 come from?

Coyne knew that his career was finished at the hands of Warner and Matchett. He had no option but to look to private enterprise for a future career. The department actually offered to set Coyne up in a business to ensure that he would leave the department. He took nearly one month off on full pay, but not on recreation leave, to work in a small business to see whether or not it was suitable for him. Coyne needed an additional \$27,000 to buy it, and the Minister obliged. To make up the \$27,000, it was decided by the Minister and Ms Matchett that Coyne would be paid overtime and travelling expenses for commuting to work in Brisbane. Coyne lives approximately 20 kilometres from Brisbane, yet the Minister decided that—unlike every other public servant who pays for his or her own commuting expenses—he should have his expenses refunded.

So Peter Coyne and an official spent days working out the longest distance that he would have to travel. However, the amount—contrived as it was—was still insufficient to make up the \$27,000 that was required. It was necessary to find additional moneys. That is where the overtime payments came in. Coyne was told to submit an overtime claim for the additional money and the Minister approved that also. Unfortunately for the Minister, who is now well and truly down the path of corruption, not only was Peter Coyne not entitled to overtime and travelling expenses but also the Minister did not have the authority to approve such payment. I will prove this in another speech later today.

Peter Coyne's position in the Department of Family Services was several grades higher than the level at which overtime payments no longer apply. He could not be paid overtime, and had not been entitled to it for years. As I have indicated, the rest of this story will be told later today.

Owanyilla Woodchip Mill

Mr DOLLIN (Maryborough) (12.11 p.m.): The Maryborough/Hervey Bay region has prospered under the Goss Labor Government. The Maryborough City Council, the Hervey Bay City Council and the Tiaro and Woocoo Shires are going ahead in leaps and bounds with building figures breaking record after record. The Maryborough/Wide Bay region is one of the fastest-growing regions in Queensland. What a contrast to the doom and gloom the Nationals and Liberals poured into the region during the Fraser island logging issue! Their political bias and scaremongering created much unnecessary concern for workers in the towns and cities in the region. It was with glee that those people did their damndest to talk down and rock the economy of the region. As it is very plain for all to see, they failed and failed miserably.

I am proud that my Government stood by the timberworkers, their families and workers generally in the Maryborough/Hervey Bay and surrounding districts by honouring promises made to them prior to the closure of the logging on Fraser island. The promise was that they would be looked after. The \$38m growth and development package has done that and more. It has created more jobs than were lost from the timber industry.

We could be doing a lot better if the woodchip mill at Owanyilla was operational. This \$100m project, to operate over 10 years, was put forward by the Queensland Government as part of the growth and

development package. A Maryborough company, Hyne and Son, in partnership with a Japanese consortium, Sumitomo, won the contract against competition from seven other companies, some of them large companies that were well experienced in the woodchip industry. The Hyne-Sumitomo tender offered the best return to the Government per cubic metre of standing timber. The citizens of Maryborough were delighted—as I was—that Hyne and Son had been the successful tenderer. For over 100 years, Hyne and Son has been involved successfully in the timber industry in Maryborough and Queensland and it was trusted by the citizens of the Maryborough and Hervey Bay region.

This mill should have been operational by now. Let me point out to all honourable members of this House the many great advantages to our State of having this project under way. Firstly, up to 80 full-time jobs would be created. That would enhance greatly the lifestyle of up to 80 families. We would be culling our pine plantations—weeding the garden, if you like—by thinning the stands and by removing crooked and poorer stems. That is essential. If that is not carried out, the whole forest becomes stunted. In the past, those stems were felled to waste, and what a waste that was.

If this mill was operational, one double-engine train would now be turning around every 24 hours, six hours a week, hauling the chips to Gladstone harbour for export. There would be jobs for approximately 30 Queensland Rail workers, and other jobs at Gladstone wharf. The export of the chips would assist the country's balance of payments by hundreds of millions of dollars. Apart from all of those great advantages, it would boost further the economies of the Tiaro and Woocoo Shires and the Maryborough and Hervey Bay City Councils. Best of all, it would be turning a waste product into a \$100m industry.

Would members believe that we could have knockers among the Maryborough business people—people who want to sprag this project? Unfortunately, we do. A prominent businessman, Mr Neil Anderson, who operates two chemist shops in Maryborough, who is a big wheel in the local National Party organisation and who has investments in real estate and land in the district—he is not a poor man and he is not out of a job, but he is very greedy and selfish—has been holding to ransom the economy of the region and preventing the creation of up to 80 jobs, along with all of the other advantages that would come to fruition if

the woodchip mill project was allowed to proceed.

Mr Anderson informed me that he did not really want to stop the mill, but as it was a \$100m project, and he owns an irrigation farm 2.1 kilometres west of the mill site, he thought that it would be worth \$200,000 or \$300,000 for him and his mate—a dentist by the name of Ian Harvey, whom I firmly believe has been conned by Mr Anderson—not to be a nuisance. Mr Harvey has reassured me over and over again that he wants the mill to go ahead, but he is convinced that some easy money is to be had if he sticks with Anderson. He has a farm 1.8 kilometres from the proposed woodchip mill site beside the main northern railway line. It is very close to the railway bridge that spans the Mary River.

I am sure that honourable members would realise that the noise from the railway line that this chap chose to live near would be far louder than any noises that the mill would create. In fact, sound recording equipment was set up on the boundaries closest to the mill—not at their homes, which are some distance from their boundaries—and logs were loaded onto trucks and unloaded again with forklifts in an effort to simulate the operational noises. The only noises that were recorded were from parakeets and cicadas. It was claimed that this was not fair because the local noise was too loud and they could not hear the bumping of the logs.

I call upon Neil Anderson and Ian Harvey to put aside their greed and to do the decent thing for the workers, the unemployed and the economy of our State and country. Neil Anderson and his mate should remember that to a large degree their business viability is dependent upon the continued patronage of workers and citizens of Maryborough who could well decide not to do business with people who are prepared to put that project at risk in a selfish effort to try and pick up a few hundred thousand dollars of easy money—a form of blackmail. I send a clear message to Mr Anderson and company that if their meddling should lose that project from our region, the backlash from Maryborough and district residents will be horrific.

On speaking to Mr Harvey this morning by phone, he informed me that in consultation with Mr Neil Anderson they had agreed to accept less than the \$200,000 or \$300,000 talked about originally. Mr Harvey said that they were now prepared to accept \$50,000 each. Mr Harvey claimed that he definitely wanted the mill to go ahead, but he said that Mr Anderson thought differently from him, and

that if he did not get the money asked he would do his best to stop the project. Those two go-getters have been successful in holding up this program for seven months. Other neighbours would be closer to the mill than they are—some are only 800 metres away. They are all decent, hardworking people. I am more than happy to see the mill go ahead. Those fellows are not really concerned about any environmental problems. They are concerned about their hip pockets and their greed. They have seen the opportunity to make a quick dollar. I condemn them, and I am sure that the citizens of Maryborough will do likewise.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1)

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

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act authorising amounts to be issued and applied for services in the financial year that started 1 July 1993.”

Motion agreed to.

Message from Governor

Mr SPEAKER read a message from Her Excellency the Governor recommending that the provision of the following amounts be made from the public accounts for supply services in the financial year that started 1 July 1993—

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| (a) From the Consolidated Fund— | \$ 2 570 000 000 |
| (b) From the Trust and Special Fund— | <u>\$ 3 200 000 000</u> |
| | <u>\$5 770 000 000</u> |

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)
(12.19 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

This legislation is purely technical in nature and provides appropriation for Government expenditure until passage of the 1993-94 Budget legislation. Specifically, it provides for \$2,570m to be expended from the Consolidated Fund and \$3,200m through the Trust and Special Funds. This is in

addition to a sum of \$4,130m appropriated by Appropriation Act (No. 2) of 1992. Accordingly, this legislation, together with last year's Appropriation Act, will provide sufficient Supply to cover normal expenditure requirements of Government until the completion of the Budget debate process and the passage of the main Appropriation Bill.

Given the financial nature of the Bill, I will take this opportunity to briefly comment on the Budget outcome for 1992-93 and, in light of the disappointing outcome of the recent Premiers Conference, I will be tabling an Interim 1993-94 Budget Statement outlining the Government's strategy to deal with that outcome.

The Consolidated Fund outcome for 1992-93 was an accumulated surplus of approximately \$5m. While in cash outlay terms the result is essentially a balanced one, in terms of the Government Finance Statistics used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the result for the Consolidated Fund is now expected to be greater than last year's surplus which, honourable members will recall, was several hundred million dollars. I invite honourable members to contrast these figures with the Leader of the Opposition's claim that the State Budget is "running on empty". The surplus largely reflects the fact that included in Consolidated Fund expenditure are scheduled debt repayments and investments made on account of accruing long-term liabilities such as superannuation and also in respect of carried forward commitments to 1993-94.

The surplus, therefore, does not represent funds available to be spent on general Government services, to reduce taxes or to deal with real reductions in Commonwealth financial assistance grants. Rather, it reflects our commitment to a policy of progressively reducing State debt, not borrowing for social infrastructure and building up reserves to meet accruing liabilities. We are therefore continuing to meet our commitments as they occur, and not leaving them for the next generation to pay for.

As was the case last year, this result was able to be achieved despite the impact of the international recession, a severe drought and depressed world commodity markets. The Goss Government is committed to strong and responsible fiscal management and has ensured that our spending has been kept within our means. The lower inflation outcome for the year and the absence of a general wage increase also assisted in holding down outlays during the year.

The House will, of course, have access to the full details of the 1992-93 Budget outcome through the State Budget papers, the Treasurer's Annual Statement, the Queensland Economic Review and the detailed financial reports prepared by each department. Accordingly, I do not propose to discuss the Budget outcome in detail at this time. However, I think it is worth comparing the Budget outcome achieved by this Government with that faced by other Governments around the nation.

Queensland's challenge over the balance of this decade is to accommodate strong population growth and a less certain Commonwealth funding formula while continuing to produce fiscally responsible Budgets. Access Economics recently published projections of State Budget outcomes for 1992-93 and 1993-94. Access estimated that Queensland would achieve a substantial negative Net Financing Requirement in 1992-93 and again in 1993-94. The estimates reflect Access Economics' assessment of the strength of the Queensland economy and its confidence in the management of the economy and Government finances. In 1993-94, Queensland's negative NFR would represent the fourth consecutive year of net debt reduction by the Goss Government.

By way of contrast, no other State or Territory is expected to have a negative Net Financing Requirement in 1993-94. Well publicised efforts by a number of States to improve their positions by asset sales and large scale redundancy programs are expected to reduce the underlying NFR for other States and Territories from \$5.7 billion in 1992-93 to \$4.1 billion in 1993-94. Thus, whilst Queensland is making a positive contribution to national savings and continues to improve its financial position, the situation elsewhere is still one of dependency upon private sector savings and few signs of real improvements in economic fundamentals. Despite dramatic—and painful—improvements in some States, it will be a long time before any other State comes close to matching Queensland's achievements.

Interestingly, Access also includes in its report projections of State debt levels to 1997. Over this period, Queensland is the only State expected to decrease its debt levels. In fact, Access predict that by 1997 Queensland will have negative net debt, that is, gross financial assets will exceed gross liabilities. In contrast, New South Wales' net debt is expected to increase from \$22.6 billion to \$26.4 billion, Victoria's from \$31.8 billion to \$37.9 billion and

the other States from \$21.6 billion to \$27.2 billion. States other than Queensland will find it difficult to make real progress in improving their positions with debt burdens of this magnitude.

The implications of the debt burden carried by other States can be demonstrated using debt service ratios published by Access. Net debt as a proportion of gross State product is 3.2 per cent for Queensland. For the other States, it averages 24.6 per cent. Net interest to own revenue is 4.8 per cent in Queensland, compared to an average of 31.3 per cent for the other States. Similarly, net debt as a percentage of total revenue is 16.7 per cent in Queensland compared to an average of 121.3 per cent for the other States.

Although the financial position I have outlined is one which is the envy of the other States of Australia, the Government is not prepared to allow our strong fiscal position to be eroded as a result of the outcome of the recent Premiers Conference. The outcome of the 5 July Premiers Conference represents a real reduction of \$115m in Commonwealth financial assistance grants to Queensland. Further, this shortfall is expected to increase to \$220m in 1994-95, due to the Commonwealth's refusal to guarantee the real maintenance of the total financial assistance grants pool and the fact that the smaller States, including Queensland, will be required to effectively contribute additional funds from the pool to meet the Commonwealth's ongoing Medicare guarantee to New South Wales and Victoria.

Commenting on the Premiers Conference outcome, the Leader of the Opposition and some media outlets have peddled the line that the cutbacks are a mere drop in the bucket and, besides which, total Commonwealth funding to Queensland is set to increase by 5.3 per cent. Let me nail this dishonest and anti-Queensland approach here and now. This year, Queensland will receive an increase in untied recurrent funds of a mere 0.8 per cent, or \$21m. By contrast, inflation is forecast to be 2.85 per cent and our population is set to grow by 2.4 per cent. In other words, we needed a 5.3 per cent increase in our untied or general revenue grants this year merely to keep pace with inflation and population growth—instead, we received a 0.8 per cent increase.

The Leader of the Opposition's figure of 5.3 per cent is phoney. It includes amounts which provide no benefit at all to the State Budget. For example, it includes a \$64m

increase in specific purpose payments for which the State is no more than a postbox on the way to institutions such as universities. But to illustrate just how phoney the Leader of the Opposition's figure really is, the fact is that nearly 80 per cent of his so-called 5.3 per cent increase reflects reduced debt repayments on old debt owed to the Commonwealth from the National Party's time in Government. The debt itself has not disappeared—the Commonwealth has forced it off its books onto ours, thereby making its figures look good because we are now servicing this debt directly to the Queensland Treasury Corporation rather than to the Commonwealth.

So much for an increase in Commonwealth funding of 5.3 per cent, and so much for attempts by the Leader of the Opposition to act as an apologist for the Federal Government. Having said that, I fully expect him to repeat his fatuous arguments, thereby consolidating his fast growing reputation as the slowest learner in the game.

The Queensland Government is not prepared to allow the State's financial position to deteriorate, and considers that immediate action is required to meet the prospective budgetary shortfalls arising for 1993-94 and beyond from real reductions in Commonwealth funding. In determining appropriate action, the following strategic decisions have been taken—

- a firm adherence to existing fiscal policy settings which preclude the use of borrowings to meet revenue shortfalls;

- there will be no new taxes such as a fuel tax for 1993-94—

- some limited adjustments to revenue may be considered to improve the existing revenue base—particularly where increases in fees and charges through user-pays principles may be applied to encourage efficient use of public resources—or to remove anomalies in current tax bases;

- however, necessary budgetary adjustment will need to be largely in terms of expenditure savings;

- a firm commitment to maintain essential community services;

- the full implementation of the Government's election commitments, including the \$150m Jobs Plan and the commencement of the \$1.5 billion 10-year hospital rebuilding plan;

- recognition of the particular difficulties being encountered by rural areas due to

the impact of the rural downturn and drought; and

recognising the significant infrastructure demands of a rapidly growing population, the State's normal capital works program will be maintained, with expenditure savings to be made from recurrent programs.

An adjustment plan consistent with these strategic decisions will be implemented in 1993-94 and is detailed in a 1993-94 Interim Budget Statement that I will now table.

Key elements of the adjustment plan are—

a reduction in the non-teaching staff in the Department of Education and the improved deployment of regional educational consultants to schools;

a reallocation of surplus pre-school teacher positions to the primary school sector and allocating teachers in the secondary sector on the basis of a more appropriate teacher/student ratio;

improved arrangements for teacher in-service training which will reduce the need for relief staffing;

introducing modest entrance fees for national parks and rationalising some grants and subsidies in the Environment and Heritage portfolio;

a change in focus for QEII hospital to community health services and the better integration of services between the QEII and PA hospitals will achieve operating savings;

a reduction in management overheads in Queensland Health;

the closure of uneconomic, very low volume rail lines and the withdrawal of associated uneconomic passenger services, some carrying on average just eight passengers per train;

a performance dividend will be applied to the Queensland Treasury Corporation's financial management liability operations to allow an appropriate sharing between the Government and public sector borrowers of the benefits of Queensland's lower borrowing costs relative to other States;

in addition to normal productivity dividends, further savings will be achieved within departmental administrative costs and through general efficiency improvements in areas including Government purchasing, telecommunications and

specialist services such as media and information services; and

the Parliamentary Service Commission will be requested to achieve savings in the areas of travel—including a freeze on first-class travel, a freeze which will also be applied to Ministers and public servants—catering and other support services.

The Government will also negotiate with relevant unions on savings to be gained in school cleaning and hospital hotel-type services such as cleaning, laundry and catering. Considerable capacity exists to improve efficiency and reduce costs in these areas which presently involve outlays of around \$100m in schools and \$300m in hospitals.

The Government considers that the package is a balanced response to the budgetary shortfalls arising from reduced Commonwealth funding—

There will be no diminution in basic services to the community.

There will be virtually no job losses, with the exception of areas such as staff in the Government's media and information services. In the case of closure of very low volume, uneconomic rail lines, there will be no forced redundancies in line with the Government's Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme policy;

In recognition of the difficulties facing the rural sector, no reductions in outlays on rural programs are proposed, and existing drought assistance measures will be fully maintained for as long as required.

Most importantly, the package ensures that the Queensland Budget remains structurally sound, the State's superior financial position is maintained and our existing low-tax structure is preserved. I commend the Bill to the House.

Mrs SHELDON (Caloundra—Leader of the Liberal Party) (12.35 p.m.): It is ironic that this Goss Labor Government has introduced the Appropriation Bill to the Queensland Parliament so soon after the Premiers Conference in Canberra. This Bill is about carry on finance for the Government of Queensland until the Budget is formally introduced. The Premier's appearance in Canberra was about negotiating a fair deal for Queensland over the next financial year. By any standards, the State of Queensland should have been in the box seat. For starters, the Queensland and Federal Governments are both Labor, and one would

think that these leaders of the Labor movement could negotiate as brothers in arms in the ongoing struggle on behalf of the working man against the dark forces of economic rationalism.

There is no doubt that the Goss Government and his Ministers helped the Labor cause well beyond the call of duty. After all, Mr De Lacy gave political direction to his department to cobble together a very bleak picture of how Queensland would suffer if Labor's fair dealers in Canberra were defeated in the March Federal election. The figures were so much rubbish, of course, and professional Treasury officers must feel extremely embarrassed about that particular episode of misinformation and political interference in the public service. The Goss Government's aid to the Federal Labor Party did not stop even after the Keating Government fell over the line in one of the great political tragedies in Australian history.

Having helped convince many Queenslanders to vote for Labor and Keating's income tax cuts, the Goss Government duped those same people into voting against the real tax cuts proposed under the coalition's Fightback package. Prior to the election, it was common knowledge that the Australian economy under Labor could not afford the tax cuts promised by the Keating Government. But Labor cemented in the lie by actually legislating for those tax cuts. Now, Labor's Mr Keating is squirming on the same hook as the Australian economy. He desperately wants to squirm out of his solemn promise to the working men and women of Australia to give them genuine tax relief and, may I add, a great number of the people—

Mr Beattie: Tell us what you would do.

Mrs SHELDON: —who fitted into that tax bracket which would have received the major cuts are working women of Australia and Queensland, and they are the people who are going to be mainly hit by this— women. Not that that would interest the honourable member or his Labor mates. In Labor's usual style, it is of no account that the Prime Minister used—

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mrs SHELDON: No doubt that is a very sexist statement, is it not? In Labor's usual style, it is of no account that the Prime Minister—that is Mr Beattie's statement, of course, that I am referring to—used the promised tax cuts to buy his way back into the Lodge. Who volunteers to act as the stalking-horse for Mr Keating to give him enough excuses to break his tax promises? None

other than the Labor members' leader, the Premier, Mr Goss. He told the people of Queensland that it would be irresponsible of them to insist on Labor's promised cuts. This \$3,000-a-week Premier told the working men and women of Queensland that they did not need tax cuts and that the need for money by Labor Governments was much greater. He sternly advised the Keating Government to bite the bullet on the tax cuts issue and that he would support Mr Keating's going back on Labor's promises.

Mr Beattie: We don't go back on promises.

Mrs SHELDON: We have seen, of course, how many of those shonky promises made by Mr Keating have been broken in rapid time. I think that would warrant a plaque and a medal, and I hope that members of the Labor Party such as Mr Beattie will give them to him. After all the kowtowing to the Keating Labor Government, one would think that the Premier and Mr De Lacy would have been the flavour of the month at the Premiers Conference, but that was not so. Mr Goss had the distinction of being the first Queensland Premier in history to leave Canberra with less money than was contained in the original offer document. That is the mark of just how professional these Labor politicians really are.

At a time when millions of dollars from the Medicare agreement was being discussed, Mr Goss had not done his homework, nor had the Treasurer and the Health Minister. Instead of the professional negotiating skills that are to be expected from a Premier, "Wimpy" Wayne wanted to go to Canberra and beat his chest on the national stage. He thought that would cement him into the role that he keeps talking about—that of the longest-serving Premier in Australia.

Mr Beattie: Where are all your people? Why aren't they listening to this?

Mrs SHELDON: In short, the Premier's mouth cost Queensland a lot of money, like the member for Brisbane Central's mouth is continuing to cost him. This is the very same Premier and the same Labor Government which have come to the Parliament today seeking a funding appropriation for the government of Queensland. When this Bill is approved by the House, where will it leave Queensland under this Government? The budgetary output for the Queensland Government on a no-policy-change basis for the next five years shows that Government outlays will outstrip Government revenues, which will impact on the Budget, resulting in Budget deficits. These will increase

significantly in the latter part of this five-year period.

The *National Fiscal Outlook* reports on the Premiers Conference dated 5 July 1993 stated that the partial offset in the expenditure pressure in Queensland will come from population growth over this period. However, these additional revenues will be absorbed under the present Queensland Government's strategy for health, police and education. Employee award wage increases and administration are being raised to bring them into line with the national average spending levels. That is the big financial sponge. Other expenditure growth endorsed by the Labor Government is the employment of public servants who do not produce or provide services. These expenditures have no revenue equivalents and are partly to blame for the public service spending-led recovery in Queensland.

A traditional area for revenue is stamp duty. Over the next few years, stamp duty is not expected to be a big earner, due to the low level of commercial and residential building activity. Similarly, as any growth in property values will be restricted to the residential sector, land tax revenues are expected to have a minimal impact. This sector is largely excluded from land tax. The arena for the fastest growth in revenues for the State Government will come from Government owned enterprises. These revenues will be in the form of payments to the State Government in lieu of State taxes that are charged at the rate, may I add, of 39c in the dollar for every dollar of operating profit for each GOC; dividends that are charged at 40c in the dollar for every dollar of operating profit after tax equivalents; and the payment of credit enhancement fees by all GOCs for the privilege of borrowing through the Queensland Treasury Corporation.

It should be noted that credit enhancement fees have grown from nought in 1989-90 to \$42.6m in 1992-93, which makes them a great milch cow. It is interesting to note that, if Queensland GOCs are supposed to be commercially competitive, why are they the only GOCs which pay State taxes? Is our Queensland Electricity Corporation going to be competitive in selling power interstate when our QEC has to pay 39c in the dollar in State taxes while other State Government enterprises do not? Will Queenslanders be paying higher electricity rates in a secret agenda to sell lower-cost electricity over the border?

Other expenditure problems in the State Budget have resulted in Federal Labor's policy

of keeping students longer in schools, in vocational training and in other training programs, which is Labor's idea of decreasing the unemployment problem. As these students roll through the system, the expenditure and unemployment problem will be exacerbated. As growth in south-east Queensland continues, Queensland's deteriorating public infrastructure, such as roads, will come under budgetary expenditure pressures. For example, rapidly increasing traffic volumes are placing pressure on existing and tired road networks. These require the construction of new roads and substantial upgrading of existing roads.

The Treasurer announced cuts in rail services when the growth in Queensland's population is resulting in a need to expand and upgrade passenger rail networks. This really is an expenditure mire. Health expenditure will continue to grow as a result of population increases and as a result of the ageing population. A continuing problem with the Queensland Labor Government is inefficient delivery of essential services. This problem was pointed out in the FitzGerald national savings report. These expenditure pressures for this Labor Government will continue indefinitely.

In summary, all expected revenues for the Government will not meet the required expenditures, and something has to give. The latest announcements for cutbacks will be in service delivery and not as a result of the sacking of non-service-providing public servants. These service cutbacks will target, in particular, the Government's community service obligations, such as rail services to remote areas.

One genuine area of expenditure cuts could come from stopping the wasteful practice of public servants carrying out cleaning duties in Health and Education. These were to be replaced by more efficient private sector contracting firms. The Treasurer mooted this cutback over the weekend, but that was before he received a phone call from the all-powerful public service union boss. Mr De Lacy had not realised that sacking 12 000 people in a cost-cutting exercise would not be as simple as imposing a massive increase in tobacco tax. The Treasurer's attitude towards Queensland's budgetary position is the result of a series of lectures delivered by the union bosses at Trades Hall. That is very evident, as any structural changes in Labor's Budgets result in an increase in indirect taxes—the sly, backdoor approach.

Mr W. K. Goss interjected.

Mrs SHELDON: Yes, I will give the Premier a copy, with the main points highlighted and underlined. That and any other expenditure cutback is preferred to the rationalisation of public service union members. The Treasurer's approach does nothing for the provision of essential services for a rapidly growing population. I shall refer to the comments made by union leader, Mr Laurie Gillespie, in the *Courier-Mail* on 9 July. He said that he would fight the cuts and protect public education. We see what that translates into: class sizes go up from 26 to 28, while some 8 000 teachers remain unemployed. In addition, school administrators will be told to get back into the classroom. Those are cuts from the wrong area of that department.

Meanwhile, job ads in the Government employment gazette appeal for more assistant regional planners, senior industry development officers, corporate service advisory planners, policy coordinators, principal policy advisers and so on. Is it any wonder that we do not have teachers, doctors and ambulancemen?

Mr Quinn: Too many planners and not enough doers.

Mrs SHELDON: The honourable member is certainly right; there are too many planners and not enough doers. The member for Merrimac is exactly right. Not one of those positions delivers a service; not one is in any way connected to the coalface.

There are very serious problems affecting the foundations of the finance system of Government in this State. I wish now to speak about the QIDC and the unholy trilogy which has worked to destroy the organisation's reputation for its own gains. I am speaking of a conspiracy—a conspiracy which is becoming well known in financial circles of the city and which involves the Treasury, the Treasurer and the Under Treasurer, Henry Smerdon. That is a conspiracy which touches on the Treasurer of this State and which was touched on in this week's edition of *Business Queensland*. It involves elitists within the Government and Government bodies who have decided that the QIDC should not be corporatised but carved up and sectioned off to various power-hungry departments.

It is a story of Suncorp's desire to avoid at all costs falling under the State Government's new corporatisation legislation for Government owned enterprises. It is the story of the Treasury Department's desire at all costs to keep the QIDC within its fold and to strangle any opportunity of its being successfully

corporatised, and it is the story of Henry Smerdon, whose position as a director of the QIDC and Suncorp and as Under Treasurer has allowed that conspiracy to develop.

The focus of the conspiracy has been the commissioning of the Kendalls report into the QIDC and its subsequent leaking by the Treasury Department, probably through the GOE section. The leaking of the Kendalls report has put the spotlight on the QIDC at a very delicate time in its evolution, and that is no coincidence. The report raised questions about the debt management of QIDC, particularly in relation to its valuation of rural assets. At a time when the State Government announces that it will use the QIDC as a test case of its new corporatisation legislation, it has been publicly held up to scrutiny by a report which it has not even had the opportunity to see, a report which the Treasurer says that he has not even seen. Some Treasurer!

Whether the Treasurer will actually work to find out who leaked the report and, even more importantly, on whose orders it was leaked, we have yet to discover. But the damage has been done. Possibly, the Treasurer should listen to this speech instead of endeavouring to deliberately talk through it, because his performance is very much in question including, may I add, in the business community. But the closed-ears, hear-nothing see-nothing, know-nothing attitude fits in very well. Let us go back to the history of the QIDC under Labor.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: No-one believes that sort of rubbish.

Mrs SHELDON: The honourable member should speak to members of the Brisbane business community. They believe it, but the honourable member would not have anything to do with them, and neither does the Treasurer. Let us go back to some of the history of the QIDC, in particular, the past 18 months. Let us go back to that high point in Treasurer Keith De Lacy's public life, Compass, and the State Government's involvement with the airline and, more particularly, Southern Cross, owners of Compass II.

Mr Borbidge: *Flying High*.

Mrs SHELDON: *Flying High*, indeed. Henry Smerdon as Under Treasurer and QIDC director was brought on side by his boss, Keith De Lacy, to act as running dog to find the funding for Compass II. Mr Smerdon then used his position as a director to try to obtain a \$7m bridging loan from the QIDC to prop up Mr De Lacy's pledge to fund the company.

Imagine his surprise when the QIDC fund manager actually knocked him back and was later supported by the board. QIDC had decided that the venture capital fund should not be used to provide a bridging loan for Compass. In fact, the fund manager, John McCawley, refused the application because he was worried about the airline's management structure and feared that the underwriters of the float would back out.

Smerdon was miffed but undaunted and went off to Suncorp, where he is also a director, to obtain the funding there. Suncorp complied and the deal was done. However, Mr Smerdon was to gain his revenge on the QIDC and McCawley when, last July, he convinced Mr De Lacy that the Government should raid the venture capital fund managed by QIDC. The State Government's involvement in Compass II was under question, and Smerdon convinced Mr De Lacy to underwrite the float by using \$6.8m from the QIDC venture capital fund. So Mr Smerdon got the money that he was after and in the process put John McCawley out of his job as QIDC's chief venture capital fund manager.

As we now all know, Mr McCawley's fears about Southern Cross were justified. Mr Smerdon manipulated the Treasurer to get the money and then left Mr De Lacy holding the baby when the whole thing fell down. Ministerial responsibility means that the buck stopped with Mr De Lacy, but one cannot help wondering whether the Treasurer knew exactly what was going on.

Mr Beattie: Of course he did.

Mrs SHELDON: If he did, he has a lot of questions to answer. Of course, it was not just Mr De Lacy who was left holding the baby.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mrs SHELDON: They certainly need some rescuing, but then they leave Mr Beattie there on the back bench.

Mr Borbidge: With friends like Peter.

Mrs SHELDON: The honourable member is quite right. It was not just Mr De Lacy who was left holding the baby; it was the QIDC as well. Henry Smerdon's role in that whole affair has been largely overlooked but cannot be underestimated. He used his position not necessarily in the best interests of the Queensland taxpayer and lost the Government millions of dollars. He used his position as a director of Suncorp to obtain the bridging loan; then as Under Treasurer and QIDC director he attempted to rob the venture capital fund of \$6.8m. In fact, as Under

Treasurer, his record so far is far from perfect. We must remember that Mr Smerdon is also on the board of the Gold Coast motor events company, which has had the distinction of losing Queensland taxpayers \$63m. The Treasurer has written the debt off. It is the Government's electors out there, its voters and its constituents who are being cut down on teachers, nurses, doctors and rail services because this Treasurer has written off \$63m in debt for a grand prix on the Gold Coast, where the Government does not have a hope in hell of winning a seat.

Let us look now at the QIDC and the inquiries which are being carried out into it. We now all know of the not-so-secret Kendalls report, but what about the study by KPMG Peat Marwick on loan loss provisions? And what about the Taylor Byrne audit being carried out into security valuations? These security valuations were prepared by QIDC staff and independent valuers also employed to look into the QIDC. The difference between these later reports and the report prepared by Kendalls is that they were all commissioned by the QIDC itself, and they have not been leaked.

Of course, there is also the Auditor-General's report which showed up no irregularities in the QIDC's operation. The questions have to be asked of the Treasurer, who obviously is not listening: who commissioned the Kendalls report and why was it commissioned?

Mr Vaughan: He's not missing much.

Mrs SHELDON: He is not listening because he might have to answer the questions, and he would rather not. "Duck the issue" Keith, his name is. Who then leaked the report?

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mrs SHELDON: I ask the Treasurer to answer me. Who leaked the report? Did he leak the report to the *Australian Financial Review*? If so, why did he leak it? This is all part of the conspiracy, is it not—the conspiracy which involves the highest level of Government bureaucrats and tens of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money. And where is the Under Treasurer, Mr Smerdon, when all this breaks? You guessed it, he is overseas. Yet, to whom does Mr De Lacy immediately turn to investigate the source of the leak? None other than Mr Smerdon, the head of the Treasury's GOE unit, the very unit which is suspected in business circles, as well as by the Treasurer, of leaking the document. This is a pathetic piece of unaccountability in the so-called new era in Queensland.

Mr Beattie: Hear, hear!

Mrs SHELDON: I am very pleased that the member for Brisbane Central is saying "Hear, hear" to my statement, but this is a pathetic piece of unaccountability. It is! The Treasurer stands to be condemned.

Henry Smerdon should not be investigating this leak when he himself is one of the suspects in leaking the document. However, he has been sent overseas so that he can investigate the leak overseas and he can answer the questions overseas, and the Treasurer sits here and smiles happily at that agreement. And at the top of the tree, of course, we have Mr De Lacy, the Treasurer of Queensland. The public of Queensland have a right to know just who is running this Government's finances. Is it the Treasurer, the man elected to lead? Is it the boss of the Treasury Department, Mr De Lacy? Or is it a cadre of senior bureaucrats after their own ends? Either the Treasurer of this State has been a willing participant to this charade, or he has been duped—taken for a sucker by senior public servants. I tend to think it may be the latter, but I am giving the Treasurer the benefit of the doubt. I think it is time that this Government stopped pretending that all I have just spoken about did not happen and just hoping it will go away. It will not go away. The corporatisation process has yet to begin, and it is time that some of the actions of some of the individuals and organisations involved were put under the spotlight.

I urge the Treasurer to institute an immediate and wide-ranging inquiry into the commissioning and leaking of the Kendalls report, the events surrounding the Southern Cross funding by Government through Suncorp and the QIDC, and the role of the Under Treasurer, Henry Smerdon, and other current and former senior public servants. This is really serious stuff and it is time it was brought out from under the mushroom under which the Treasurer and this Government have tried to push it.

Mr BENNETT (Gladstone) (12.57 p.m.): I am pleased to speak to this Appropriation Bill because of the economic importance that the central Queensland region has to the economy of Queensland and, in particular, the Gladstone/Calliope region. The Gladstone/Calliope region is a region with a bright future, and people from all walks of life are working very hard to realise that future. Of all the major economic facilitators during Gladstone's history, the most successful has been the Gladstone Port Authority. Currently, the port authority is about to expand its

Clinton coal facility to a capacity of some 30 million tonnes by completing a second ship loader by the first quarter of next year.

Mr Budd: It's managed by a very capable man, the Gladstone Port Authority.

Mr BENNETT: It certainly is. The Clinton coal facility then will be the third largest coal exporting terminal in the world and, most significantly for the Queensland Government, it will be the only publicly owned and port authority operated coal exporting terminal in the world. I think that is a unique achievement. It is, by comparison, a world-class facility attracting the attention of Japanese and Asian power utilities as a port for the export of additional energy coal to Asia in preference to coal coming out of Newcastle and Port Kembla.

Within the last financial year, the terminal exported some 23.7 million tonnes of coal, up from 20 million tonnes previously. The value of coal exports is some \$2.1 billion, and, with mineral ore, some \$2.9 billion worth of trade is generated through the port. Following comments from the Minister for Minerals and Energy after his recent visit to Japan, the added export growth in coal and minerals is expected to continue, and the port authority will continue its role as an economic facilitator for the Gladstone region, drawing on the resource-rich hinterland.

The Queensland Government is involved with local authorities, the Gladstone Port Authority and with a number of planning studies to ensure the future industrial expansion of Gladstone is placed on a basis which is economically attractive to major multinational firms to process minerals and at the same time ensuring that planning and implementation is taking place in a manner in which the Gladstone/Calliope region can be shown as a model for an industrial centre for the twenty-first century, and ensuring that the environment can be maintained at a level acceptable to the community.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

Mr BENNETT: The studies to which I have referred include the industrial land use study, the Gladstone area transport study and the Gladstone Port Authority 50-year strategic plan. All of those studies have been done with the cooperation and assistance of the Goss Labor Government. Those studies ensure that mistakes made in other industrial centres throughout the world will not be made in Gladstone. Currently, the Curtis Coast study is being undertaken in conjunction with the Gladstone Port Authority and the Queensland

Government. That study is tackling the environmental concerns of our coast.

At Easter-time, the Mount Isa City Council aldermen and Chamber of Commerce visited Gladstone to learn of our experience. I offer invitations to other cities and groups to visit Gladstone and learn from our experience. Our God-given asset, Gladstone Harbour, is second only to Sydney Harbour as the best natural harbour in the country. However, Gladstone Harbour is far and away the best commercial harbour in the country. It is centrally located to expand into a container terminal in the future. Sydney Harbour has been primarily handed back to the people and the port industries have moved out of Sydney to Botany Bay. Gladstone Harbour has deep channels and vast amounts of land available for future industrial expansion.

Gladstone's industrial future is secured. Gladstone is a focus not only for the Goss Labor Government but also for the Federal Labor Government in value-adding and mineral-processing industries. Two major studies have identified the Gladstone region as Australia's most cost-efficient industrial site. The first is by Professor Wolfgang Kasper of the Department of Economics and Management at the University of New South Wales. The report on that study states—

“For resource processors, Gladstone has a substantial competitive edge over the Australian average. The region must be counted as one of the top 6 to 8 locations in the world. The competitive strengths are:

a clear international orientation and a community-wide understanding that all are 'sitting in the same boat' competing against similar plants in other countries;

good government support for productive effort;

excellent efficiency management and productive industrial relations, which is reflected also in a high rating on the 'Quality of the People Factor', and

an excellent infrastructure (both natural resources, but equally importantly measures to deliver the resources, like, eg. a well-run, efficient port, and good water, electricity, rail and technical training services).”

The second report is by Dr Shad Linley, the Director of the Centre for Advanced Material Processing, and it is a prefeasibility study in the light metal industry. That report states—

“This assessment of potential industrial sites in Australia by Industrial leaders clearly showed that Gladstone, Queensland, is the premier site for future major industrial development in Australia. The major attributes of Gladstone are:

Its first-class international port facilities;

The existence of relevant industrial and social infrastructures;

Land availability; and most importantly

Community acceptance of intelligent, responsible industrial development.

The recognition of Gladstone as the preferred site for future major Australian industrial development places a great responsibility on Industry and Government planners to ensure responsible, integrated and long term planning.”

The Goss Government is doing exactly that.

Those studies pose the question, “Why Gladstone?” The reasons given include—

“A deep water sheltered Port with virtual unlimited capacity for expansion as demonstrated by the 50 year strategic plan of GPA; and

Available for industry in close proximity to the Port, large areas of suitable land which have not yet been intruded upon by alternate developments which would conflict with industry; and

Hinterland resources:

Minerals including: Coal; Limestone; Oil Shale; Mineral Sands; Natural Gas;

Infrastructure in place:

Electric power; Water supply; Railways; Roads.”

Most of all—

“A community recognising that the region's future lies in sound industrial development. The community has the skills to operate and maintain industrial plants.”

It must be clear to all honourable members that Gladstone's God-given asset, the harbour, is a vessel for continuing growth and development in the Gladstone region. Most importantly, it is a publicly owned facility that is willing to compare its efficiency with the efficiency of other port facilities throughout the world. This clear evidence makes any privatisation push such as that put forward by

the conservative Opposition an economic nonsense.

It is interesting to compare the capital invested elsewhere with that required to be invested in a similar facility in Gladstone. For example, Dalrymple Bay is expending \$160m to get an augmentation of 8 million tonnes of coal per annum. A 9 million tonnes per annum increase is being obtained at Gladstone's Clinton Coal Facility for an expenditure of some \$80m. Gladstone Special Steel personnel also advise that, because of the existing infrastructure in place in Gladstone, a saving of \$200m in establishment was effected compared with locations elsewhere. Those figures show the benefits accruing from Gladstone's sheltered deep water port.

The Gladstone Port Authority is the only port authority in Australia which operates on the wharf and operates its own facilities. I believe that this is the proper approach to take for a regional centre. The port authority installs the facilities and allows multi-users in a manner which ensures the most effective utilisation of the capital invested and the best productivity from labour which is used to operate those facilities. This is a major reason why the Gladstone Port Authority is one of the first publicly owned facilities to be corporatised. The Government believes that it already operates on a fully commercial basis.

Another reason why investors look to Gladstone is the excellent work done by the promotion and development bureau—DBIRD—in promoting Gladstone to industry. I thank the Government for getting involved with the steady stream of major companies which are looking at the feasibility and prefeasibility of setting up at Gladstone.

Currently, a due diligence process is under way, which is to be completed by 31 December 1993, to ascertain the viability of the third potline at the Boyne Island aluminium smelter. The project team has completed the draft impact assessment study. The study points out that the smelter's existing work force of 980 has been on site since 1982 and has remained reasonably stable. The work force is made up of 854 full-time employees and 126 contractors. At this stage, the addition of a third potline to the Boyne Island aluminium smelter is expected to employ a further 375 operational staff. That will consist of 343 employed personnel and 32 equivalent permanent positions for annual contractors. The operation of the potline is expected to commence by month 26 of the construction phase. At that time, a start-up work force of 206 people is expected to be on

site. For the remaining six months of the construction phase, the additional work force will expand to the projected total of 375. Once the expanded smelter becomes fully operational, the total work force is expected to be between 1 330 and 1 370.

The construction period is estimated to extend over 32 months. During the construction period, the directly employed construction force figures will represent a bell-shaped curve, peaking between months 18 and 24 with more than 1 100 employees. The highest number on site is expected to be approximately 1 400 in quarter 7 of the 32-month project. The community looks forward to the establishment of this facility not only because it creates jobs and wealth but also because it adds to the 25 per cent of Queensland manufactured goods that are originating already in Gladstone.

I acknowledge the cooperation of industry, Federal, State and local governments and the port authority on the commencement of the Gladstone marina campus of the University of Central Queensland. It will be a centre for engineering excellence. In fact, Professor Geoff Wilson of the UCQ says that it is a unique site for a university campus. The whole community is behind the facility. In fact, the Gladstone Port Authority has committed more land at the marina for future expansion of the UCQ.

In conclusion, I wish to outline one project that is of interest to Gladstone, and that is the \$120m dry mineral sands mill. This integrated Clinton titanium minerals project is based on five mining leases covering approximately 77 square kilometres of land granted by the Federal Government within the Shoalwater Bay military training area in central Queensland. The leases are allocated approximately 100 kilometres north of Rockhampton. Heavy metal concentrates from mining operations on the leases will be processed at Gladstone. Currently, those leases are under review by a Commonwealth inquiry into sandmining at Shoalwater Bay.

It is proposed to mine those parts of the leases containing economic mineralisation using standard industry methods, in particular dredging followed by wet-gravity separation. Those operations will produce a heavy mineral concentrate, which will be sent to Gladstone by barge for further processing. The dry mill at Gladstone will treat the concentrates from the mining operations to produce finished rutile, zircon and ilmenite products. Standard electrostatic, electromagnetic and gravity processes will be used. Prior to sale, the

ilmenite produced will be processed further to a synthetic rutile. That will be carried out in a plant using the murso process, which employs technology developed jointly by the CSIRO and Pivot's predecessor, Murphyores Inc. In this process, the titanium oxide content of the ilmenite, which is approximately 50.4 per cent, will be increased to 95 per cent by removal of the iron oxide and other metal oxides from the ilmenite.

The mining lease documents were executed on 19 October 1992, and become effective for 21 years from 1 November 1992. To date, the reconnaissance drilling indicates excellent potential for large volume, high and medium grade ore bodies. A murso plant pre-feasibility study confirmed the technical and economic viability of this process, and predicts very competitive capital and operating costs.

The estimated annual production from the integrated project is rutile, 22 500 tonnes; zircon, 32 000 tonnes; and murutile, 100 000 tonnes. The total capital expenditure is estimated to be \$180m. At current market prices, the projected annual gross revenue from the project will be \$76.8m, and an annual operating surplus of \$40.4m is projected. This integrated program will provide employment for 126 people and it will create an estimated 420 jobs, mainly in central Queensland.

It is possible for the murso plant to process ilmenite from other sources, and that would result in an expanded output to meet marketing requirements. The murso plant alone would cost an estimated \$104m and generate an annual gross revenue of \$66.1m, with an operating surplus of \$29.5m. It would employ 80 people and create 210 jobs. A feasibility study of the murso plant is expected to be completed by September 1993, with the feasibility study for the mining operation to be completed by 1994. The current projections are for an integrated project to come on stream at the beginning of 1997.

The murso plant could be established by early 1996 if market conditions dictate. It would process imported ilmenite from at least two projects in central Queensland, one of which relies on the murso plant for its viability and the other which would benefit considerably from having an ilmenite beneficiation plant nearby for its ilmenite product. A third existing operation is located at North Stradbroke Island and it is also a potential supplier of ilmenite feed stock. In addition, imported ilmenite from existing operations in Western Australia is available. Those sources are a ready supply of ilmenite

and they will be integrated with the proposed Clinton mining operations once they are commissioned.

In conclusion, I pay tribute to the good corporate citizens in Gladstone, an innovative union movement and a State Labor Government that has not had the luxury of a mineral boom or an upturn in world economic activity but is proceeding in a manner that will benefit the Gladstone region and create jobs in that area.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Leader of the Opposition) (2.43 p.m.) The Opposition has long been warning that this Labor Government is taking Queensland down exactly the same road as every other State Labor Government took the rest of the country down in the 1980s. As the record shows, that road is the road to administrative and economic bankruptcy.

The proof of that proposition is now emerging. The Premier went to Canberra, received a mere \$115m less than he asked for—not \$115m less than what he should have received, but \$115m less than what he actually begged for—and it was the end of the world as we know it.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: The Treasurer would know all about it because he plucks figures out of the air. The fact is that the Premier came home from Canberra with \$300m more than what he received last year. For the third year in a row, he and you, my little friend, received a record allocation from Canberra. You received \$5,731m, which was an increase of 5.4 per cent.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! I remind the Leader of the Opposition to refer to members on the Government side of the House by their correct titles.

Mr BORBIDGE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Yet the Premier had the cheek to suggest that he had been duded. Yesterday, in Cairns, the Premier made the bush pay again. He made the bush pay again not because he had been duded in Canberra, but because the Premier is continuing to dud the people of Queensland. The simple fact is that the \$115m that the Premier never had in any event represents barely 1 per cent of total outlays in the Queensland Budget Estimates last year. Even if the Premier had lost \$115m in the overall scheme of things, to competent and prudent managers of the Queensland economy, \$115 million would be a fleabite.

The Premier's desperate reaction to this non-loss proves that after just three Labor Budgets, the formerly best-managed public economy in the country is running on empty. Labor managers cannot even absorb the shock of a measly \$115m shortfall—not in what the Premier should have received, but in what he actually wanted. In just over three years, the Queensland cupboard is bare. After just three and a half years of Labor administration, the best cashed-up State Government in the country is on the verge of being broke.

So it is that after 30 years of the most sound economic management of any public economy in the country, the Queensland economy has been dissipated by Labor, just as other Labor Governments around the country have dissipated the economies in every other State. It is so familiar and such a great pity that Queensland is now so clearly going through what Victoria had to go through before it woke up to Cain, what Western Australia had to go through before it woke up to Dowding, and what South Australia suffered before it woke up to Bannon. It is a great pity that we have to go broke before we wake up. If honourable members do not believe that the Premier is just the same, then cop this!

Mr De Lacy: Do you think anybody believes this?

Mr BORBIDGE: These are the Treasurer's Budget figures. If my figures are wrong, his Budget must be wrong.

The biggest spending Government in Australia is the Goss Government of Queensland. It has overseen the fastest growth in outlays of any Government in this country since it came to office. Even the last Cain/Kirner Budget could not outdo Wayne Goss and Keith De Lacy. From 1990-91, total Budget outlays in Victoria increased by 20.4 per cent when we take out—as we reasonably should—a one-off payment of \$600m so that Mrs Kirner could start downsizing the public service. In Queensland, over the same period, which is the total budgetary life of the Goss Government, the increase has been 20.6 per cent. We have even outspent Joan Kirner in her last desperate Budget in Victoria, and we outspent the rest of Australia by a country mile.

I will tell honourable members about the rest of the country. The increase in New South Wales over the same time frame was 3.4 per cent; in South Australia, 5.6 per cent; in Western Australia, 8 per cent; and in Tasmania, 12 per cent. But the Premier, in the middle of the deepest recession since the

Great Depression, with a policy that promised not only no new taxes and charges but also no increases in taxes and charges above the level of CPI increases, managed to increase spending by 20.6 per cent. Positively miraculous, isn't it!

Contrary to what the Treasurer is saying, there has not been a miracle. We have had the same sort of deceit—and this Government excels in deceit—that has been the hallmark of Labor Governments around the country through the eighties, when people were fooled into thinking that everything was fine until it crumbled around their ears. There are only a couple of possible answers to a Government which increases spending so massively at a time when it says that it is not increasing taxes or introducing new ones.

One is growth. We might have legitimately achieved a \$747m increase in revenues over the past three Budgets if we had had extremely strong growth. But as everybody except the Treasurer seems to know, we have not had extremely strong growth. We have had weak growth. In the first year of this Government, Treasury initially forecast growth of 2.4 per cent. But we ended the year with an economy which actually shrank by about 1 per cent. In 1991-92, Treasury estimated growth at 2.3 per cent, more than halved that midway through the year to 1.1 per cent, and claimed that we actually ended the year with growth of 3.2 per cent.

This financial year, the first estimate was 4.1 per cent, which was recently revised down to 3.5 per cent, with a proviso that it could come down further, principally because of the drought. So at best we have averaged growth of around 2 per cent since this Government started producing Budgets. That is no answer to a 20.6 per cent increase in spending from growth. Inflation is the only other possible stimulus. But inflation from June 1990 to June 1992 was 5.18 per cent. If growth and inflation are not the answer, where has the money come from? Where did the Goss Government pick up the extra \$1.5 billion to spend?

Since 1991, the Commonwealth, which copped so much last week from the Premier, has provided an extra \$821m in on-Budget funds. That represents an increase for which most of the other States would have given their eyeteeth. That leaves \$747m more that has come from the pockets of Queenslanders for a Government which says that it did not introduce any new taxes and charges and did not increase taxes and charges above the level of the CPI during the deepest recession

since the Great Depression, during a period of near-stagnant economic growth and low inflation. Not a bad windfall!

So where did it really come from? Income from taxes, fees and fines is not up by the inflation rate of around 5 per cent. It is not up by the 2 per cent economic growth that we have averaged over the life of this Government. It is up \$368m, or over 13 per cent. Receipts from goods and services—the user-pays section of the Budget—are up 62 per cent, or \$132m. Property income is up by over 300 per cent from about \$42m in 1990-91 to \$180m in last year's Budget—over 300 per cent from Clayton's corporatisation! If that is what the Government can do with corporatisation income before the introduction of the legislation, then we had better hold onto our hats and our wallets. The Government's history in relation to these property income lines is one of the clearest lessons about this Government and where it is taking us.

In his first Budget, the Treasurer announced the introduction of a levy of 0.05 per cent on the guarantee that it provided the QEC for its loans. That was going to bring in around \$17m. In the same Budget, the other principal ingredient of property income which comes from dividends paid by State-run businesses under corporatisation was going to be around \$5m. But there was a bit of a mid-year revision from the Treasurer because dividends brought in \$26.2m—over five times what the Treasurer estimated. So in 1991, these forms of property income were going to bring in about \$22m, and they brought in almost double that. Then, in succeeding Budgets, the levy became the credit enhancement fee, and was extended to all Government guaranteed borrowings except by local government. In the Budget just past, that credit enhancement fee was estimated to earn the Government over \$46m, alongside dividends which went from an estimated \$5m just two years ago to over \$133m. So in just three broad areas—

Mr De Lacy: Do you know how much we got?

Mr BORBIDGE: The Treasurer should sit and cop it. In just three broad areas, \$680m of the increased revenue is accounted for in ways which show just how deceitful this Government and this Treasurer have been about their revenue raising. I spent a bit of time on property income because that area will become increasingly important.

The very substantial increase in the amount of money that we have seen this

Government bleed away from Government run businesses over its Budgets to date is just the beginning of an assault which has all the potential for this State of a Victorian Tricontinental, a South Australian State Bank or a WA Inc. The burden on Government businesses is, doubtless, going to be expanded substantially in the Budget we will shortly see, since we at last have had the benefit of the Government's corporatisation legislation. Corporatisation is not of itself a bad thing. All that is needed is the right motivation. It can be a good mechanism for improving the performance of public sector businesses. By definition, it means making Government run businesses run more like private companies—but that is not the Government's intention. If the Government is to take corporatisation on, there is one clear measuring stick for how fair dinkum it is, that is, labour market reform. There is now a vast body of evidence from around the world indicating that genuine labour market reform is what can make Government enterprises more competitive and more successful.

The legislation that this Government rammed through this House recently denies that very right to our State-run corporations. They will be expressly tied to the constraints of the public sector labour market. It is a joke, and if increased efficiency is not the goal, what is? The answer, of course, is "revenue"—more grist for the mill. The Government plans to charge corporations full State taxation, full Commonwealth tax equivalents, dividends—which can be as high as annual profits—and the credit enhancement fee. Under this formula in the Government's legislation, corporatisation has the capacity to become a source of revenue for the Treasurer and his mates, rivalling payroll tax and stamp duty, which are currently the two largest State-based sources of revenue.

Mr De Lacy: What's wrong with that?

Mr BORBIDGE: The Treasurer asks, "What's wrong with that?" I will illustrate to him how deadly this insidious, dishonest, conniving revenue grab can be. Honourable members will have noted the very well informed speculation at the weekend that the QEC's profit, which will probably be between \$300m and \$400m, could be garnisheed by the Government in the next Budget. Some members such as the Treasurer might be tempted to say, "Well and good. Let the QEC help meet the Government's revenue needs; leave the people alone." But, of course, it does not work like that.

In its 1991-92 annual report, the QEC warned that, if the Government had not made a decision by the end of June 1992 to proceed with the Tully/Millstream hydro-electric project, it would need to announce an alternative generation scheme, and get cracking, because the new power would be needed by 1998. The Government has since tried to maintain that it has been able to reduce demand via advertising and, of course, the recession. But the fact remains that, if we are going to see a return to the growth levels of the eighties, very soon the QEC and the Government will have to commit to another major power station in Queensland.

How is the QEC going to pay for the new generating capacity if its profits are being raided by the Government? Where will it get the money? It will have to borrow. And who pays in the end? The consumer and the taxpayer. We might not have a new tax, but we will have the best run State electricity industry in the nation suddenly with a millstone around its neck—and this principle applies to all the Government enterprises this administration now wants to use to fill its coffers. The beauty for the Government, of course, is that the impact is not immediate. It might take years before the full extent of the damage is known, just as was the case in Victoria, in South Australia and in Western Australia, where Labor Governments just like this one—exactly like this one—got hooked on big spending and found ways of hiding the true cost of that spending from the taxpayer. Corporatisation could be Queensland's Tricontinental or Queensland's State Bank, because all this Government wants—it has revealed this by the form of its legislation—and all the Government is concerned about is cash, not efficiency.

Let us discuss efficiency from another angle that links this Government and its appropriations into the Labor grid. The previous Government was often vilified by the then Opposition over the level of spending on education and health, in particular. It is one of the trendiest and most stupid pieces of conventional wisdom among Labor Governments—as it is among their most ardent supporters—that the degree to which one cares about service delivery is in direct relation to the amount of money one throws at it. The Premier, by the way, is one of the most ardent supporters of this simplistic and stupid theory.

The reality, of course, is that in order to provide a high quality of services to the taxpayers, the best approach is to make good rather than extensive use of their money. That

is what was done very efficiently by previous Governments in Queensland. If the doubting Thomases need proof, I ask them merely to do two things: obtain a copy of the 1990 study by the Commonwealth's own Economic Planning and Advisory Council, which looked at health and education management around Australia State by State, and compare expenditure with services. What EPAC found, of course, totally supported the economic management of the previous Government. Services in the National Party's Queensland were at least the equal of services interstate—

Mr Fenlon: That's rubbish.

Mr BORBIDGE:—and in some specific areas, arguably, substantially better. They are not my words; they are EPAC's words. They come from the honourable member's own Commonwealth Government's EPAC. Services were substantially better than they were in the Labor States, where spending was higher. Not only did we have the lowest taxes in Australia, but we had a Government and a public service which delivered top quality services to the people.

Now, to the contrary, we have the ALP attitude of the eighties—which wrecked Government services around the country—alive and well in Queensland in the nineties. The theory is: spend, spend, spend! There was an extra half a billion dollars more in the Health budget last financial year than there was in 1990-91. Is the health service better? We have a health system almost in chaos. With half a billion dollars more in the Health budget, the Government could not keep the hospitals open over Easter. Where has the half a billion dollars gone? The Government does not know. All it wanted to do was get spending up to the national average levels—the levels which have sent the rest of this country broke and taxes skyrocketing, because that was the warm inner glow way to go. That was the way John Cain went, the way Neville Wran went, the way Dowding went and the way Bannon went.

Honourable members should listen to the words of David Shand, one of the original PSMC commissioners. At a recent seminar at Griffith University dealing with the first term of the Goss Government, he put the matter very succinctly. In discussing the Government's attitude towards spending on health and education, he stated—

“We found that they were desperate to get their expenditure up to national levels . . . they weren't necessarily clear what they wanted to spend the money

on. The important thing was spending up to the national level.”

He stated further—

“At the rate we are going in Victoria in terms of reducing our expenditure, and dragging down the national levels, before you know where you are you will be much too far above the national levels . . . you’ll have to pull yourselves back very quickly.”

So that is where the extra half billion dollars in health and the extra \$430m in education is going! It is very interesting to note that, although the Premier can find in over three years in a recessionary environment almost \$1 billion more in these two areas alone, the sum of \$115m now has the capacity to reduce him to a blubbering heap.

There is one more symptom of this Government’s massive mismanagement of the affairs of this State which is achingly similar to the mismanagement which has occurred elsewhere, and it relates to the public sector. Growth in the public sector was a hallmark of the early years of Labor administration in other States, and it has been a hallmark of this Government because this Government is operating notwithstanding the disasters on the 1980s road map of Labor interstate. When the Institute of Public Affairs gave the Queensland Government its prize as runner-up in the lemon award for the 1991-92 round of State budgets behind Victoria but on a par with South Australia, one of the principal remarks was that the Queensland Government alone among State Governments was expanding the public sector. It has done so in each of its Budgets to date in what must be a most expensive exercise of changing the guard. Now we have the biggest spending Treasurer in the biggest spending Government in Australia—a man who proudly states that he has outpaced John Cain and Joan Kirner; a man who today, by way of interjection, has admitted that corporatisation is his secret tax agenda.

Time expired.

Mr McELLIGOTT (Thuringowa) (3.03 p.m.): It is fortuitous that I follow the Leader of the Opposition in this debate because I am going to devote a considerable amount of my contribution to boasting about the services that this Government has provided to Townsville and other parts of north Queensland. Prior to doing that, I want to make the comment that there is one thing that Queensland is not, and that is, broke. Honourable members would appreciate that the finances of this State compared with those of any other State are in a very healthy

condition. As the Treasurer has said on numerous occasions, the joy of being in Opposition is that the Leader of the Opposition can make accusations about high-spending Government Ministers, but shadow Ministers can travel the State demanding that the Government spend more money in their portfolio areas.

In October this year, in common with a number of other members, I will have been here for some 10 years. I suppose that it is natural with the passage of time that one starts to reflect on what one might have achieved in that period. If I wanted to be remembered for anything it would be, firstly, my compelling loyalty to and interest in Townsville and north Queensland and, secondly, perhaps my interest in public health services arising out of some two and a half years as Opposition spokesman and, later, two years as Health Minister.

For my contribution today, I have prepared some figures on the capital works and initiatives that have been provided to Townsville and other parts of north Queensland under the regionalised health system adopted by this Government. In preparing the list—which, incidentally, comes to some three pages—I could not help but reflect again on the total abolition of the delivery of health services to the northern parts of the State by the previous National/Liberal Party Governments. The most infamous example of that was the Ward 10B saga. Evidence clearly suggested that that drama arose quite simply out of a lack of concern shown by the Government of the day and a series of National Party and Liberal Party Ministers. It is with considerable pride that I will discuss some of the initiatives that have been taken by the Goss Government since it was elected, and the way in which those initiatives reflect on the quality of life for people who live in the northern part of the State.

In preparing the list, I felt that I had to come to a decision about what has been the most influential, the most critical or the best, if you like, initiative of all. Perhaps the latest initiative fits the Bill. I refer to the opening last Friday of the Clinical School of the University of Queensland at the Townsville General Hospital. The establishment of that clinical school has already attracted, and will continue to attract to north Queensland a wide range of specialist services that were never previously available. The school has a regional and rural focus, and it hosts four professorial chairs in general practice and rural health, medicine, surgery, and psychiatry. As I mentioned, the

facility and tutorial rooms were officially opened only last Friday.

Among the other achievements of this Government is the accreditation of Townsville General Hospital. Again, reflecting on performances of previous Governments, it was a policy of those Governments not to allow the accreditation system to look at our public hospitals. I am particularly pleased that the Townsville General Hospital was the first public hospital in Queensland to be credited under the national accreditation system. Of course, the reason that previous Governments were not prepared to open up our public hospitals for that sort of independent assessment was simply that they were ashamed of what that assessment program would find.

Earlier, I mentioned Ward 10B. I am proud that that ward will be replaced by a new acute psychiatric unit that is presently under construction. The completion date is the end of 1993. Since the middle of last year at Townsville General Hospital, we have had in operation a magnetic resonance imaging system. In late 1993, a nuclear medicine facility and equipment is expected to be commissioned. Most importantly, in January of this year a functional plan for cardiac services was completed, and cardiac medical appointments are now pending. Similarly, a functional plan for comprehensive oncology or cancer services was completed in November of last year, and a design brief is in preparation. In relation to those two areas, members should understand that, in the past, patients requiring treatment had to travel to Brisbane which not only involved costs for them and their families but also removed them from the support of their family and friends, which is so critical at those times. As soon as these programs become operational at the Townsville General Hospital, the people of north Queensland will be able to avoid that pressure.

The initiatives to which I have referred relate not just to Townsville or, indeed, to Labor electorates. For example, in Charters Towers, the completion of Eventide Stage 3 was officially marked on 4 May this year. Expenditure at the Charters Towers Hospital on refurbishment of the kitchen and upgrading of patient amenities at Mosman Hall have taken place, and I will refer to that in more detail at a later stage. In Ingham, a new maternity ward and a new geriatric ward were opened in January 1992, and a new dental and physiotherapy unit was completed in early 1993. On Mornington Island, a new Aboriginal community health centre has been opened

and security at the hospital has been enhanced. On Palm Island, the emergency room has been upgraded and the Government has provided a birthing suite and a grieving room. A new seven-bed hospital was opened at Doomadgee on 1 July, and some \$4m will be spent at the Mount Isa Hospital on refurbishment of the children's ward, the obstetrics ward and the third floor general wards. This refurbishment is at the documentation stage.

Some other initiatives that I believe deserve to be highlighted are the construction of a new mental health rehabilitation unit at Kirwan in my electorate, which was officially opened on 4 May 1993. Recently, I launched the palliative care unit at the Townsville General Hospital which will service the whole of north Queensland. That service has been sponsored by the Queensland Cancer Fund. Through its Health budget, the Government has provided funds for 10 Aboriginal workers to undertake programs at the Cairns TAFE during 1992 and 1993, and has provided for the integration of hospital and community alcohol and drug services. Recruitment has commenced to appoint Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander liaison officers at the Townsville General, Palm Island and Kirwan Hospitals.

A number of the initiatives that I have mentioned fulfil longstanding Labor Party commitments to the people of Queensland in respect of health services. I refer particularly to the part played by Aboriginal health workers in the provision of health services in Aboriginal and Islander communities. Quite frankly, previous Governments took advantage of willing workers who were prepared to work long hours for a pittance and undertake quite dangerous activities without receiving proper remuneration or decent training. As I said, this Government had a longstanding commitment to change that state of affairs, and I am pleased that it has done so, by providing, in particular, a career structure for Aboriginal health workers.

When I was in Opposition, it was often brought to my attention that the Labor Party had a commitment to appointing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander officers in hospitals when we won Government. As I have already said, this has begun in the northern health region. This is important because Aboriginal people who have to go to hospital require assistance in understanding directions that are given to them by specialists, etc., and the appointment of liaison officers will help them to understand the treatment they are receiving and to take full advantage of the treatment.

I point out that planning has commenced for the upgrading of Mosman Hall at Charters Towers to accommodate female residents. Again I make the point that the attitude of the previous Government was simply to close Mosman Hall because it was regarded as being ineffective. This would have resulted in the clients of that hospital having to travel to Brisbane or Toowoomba to be accommodated and to receive treatment. When this Government came to power, it substantially upgraded both the fabric and the services provided by Mosman Hall so that the people who live in north Queensland would be able to take advantage of long-term treatment in an environment with which they are familiar and with the support of family and friends. It is particularly pleasing that the facilities at Mosman Hall are to be upgraded and changed to allow for the accommodation of female patients whereas previously those services were made available to male patients only.

I draw to the attention of the House the significant steps forward that have been taken at the Mater Private Hospital in Townsville. I have always believed that the public and private health sectors should cooperate in the delivery of health services, and I do not think there would be any argument about that. I am particularly pleased, therefore, that the Mater Hospital has undertaken some significant redevelopment works. The most recent program was estimated to cost some \$19.2m and comprises the following works: a new four-storey building with an 80-bed medical/surgical ward; a 22-bed maternity unit with four birth suites; an endoscopy unit with two procedures rooms; a laser unit; an interventional radiology/cardiac catheter laboratory; a four-cot neonatal nursery; renovation of the administration offices; renovation of theatres; and the provision of five ICU beds, four CCU beds and two step-down CCU beds with remote monitoring.

The Mater and I take considerable pleasure and pride from the fact that the first heart bypass operation was conducted at the Mater Hospital in Townsville about a month ago. I come back to the point I made earlier about this Government taking significant strides in the provision of health services in north Queensland. Prior to the election of this Government, people who required specialised treatment could receive it only at the major teaching hospitals in Brisbane, yet heart bypass operations are now being conducted at the Mater Hospital in Townsville and will soon become available at the Townsville General Hospital.

During my speech, I have concentrated on the initiatives taken by the Northern Regional Health Authority which operates in my electorate. I simply make the point that, as the Minister responsible for the introduction of regionalised health services in Queensland, in my view, regionalisation has been an outstanding success. It is pleasing to me to note that even members of the Opposition appear to have dropped any sort of criticism of regionalisation. I hear them now saying that they will retain regionalisation if and when they achieve Government in this State. They may make some alterations to it, but even members of the Opposition now accept the advantages that regionalisation has brought with it. Certainly, the Northern Regional Health Authority has the runs on the board, and today I have outlined some of its initiatives.

I take the opportunity to congratulate Stuart Durward and the members of the Northern Regional Health Authority and Mr Allan Hicks, the regional director, for the substantial progress that they have made in the relatively short time that the authority has been in operation. It is interesting to comment that the Northern Regional Health Authority has been able to achieve many of those services simply by good management, good bookkeeping and efficient operations. Those are the sorts of predictions that we made as to what would happen when regionalisation was introduced. I am sure that that is the result in other parts of the State, as well.

The other item to which I want to refer briefly is the question of the possible amalgamation of the Townsville and Thuringowa Cities.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber, both upstairs and downstairs.

Mr McELLIGOTT: I want to refer to the possible amalgamation of Townsville and Thuringowa Cities, which is a matter that is before the Commissioner for Local Government at the present time and it is a matter about which I feel very strongly. Those members who were here at the time would recall that, prior to 1986, Thuringowa Shire Council was a rural shire surrounding the City of Townsville. As Townsville expanded with the growth in population growth, the influx of new industries and so on, that expansion spilled over the boundaries into the neighbouring rural shire. In my view, Thuringowa City should never have been created. It should have resulted in a change of boundaries, which had occurred on previous occasions. Those boundaries would have been adjusted over

time until the rural Shire of Thuringowa ceased to be viable and ceased to exist.

However, for political reasons, in 1986 the then Minister for Local Government, Russ Hinze, agreed to create Thuringowa City as a city and we now have what, in my view, is the ludicrous situation of two cities existing side by side with a combined population of some 130 000 people. The fallacy was demonstrated clearly at that time when I challenged the then member for Flinders to tell me where the City of Townsville became the City of Thuringowa, and he admitted that he could not do that. That demonstrated clearly to me, as I am sure that it did to other members in the House, that it is one community, that the people have similar interests and that they share the same sorts of facilities and services. The opportunity is now with us to correct the mistakes of the past and to establish Townsville clearly as one local authority, as one united community—the largest city in the tropics in Australia.

There are any number of reasons to justify the amalgamation of the two cities. The most obvious one is the fact that two mayors and 21 aldermen represent 130 000-odd people. That is clearly unnecessary. We have ongoing conflict between the two cities in respect of planning matters and the future management of growth of services and population. Clearly, unless amalgamation occurs, there will always be the potential for conflict.

One of the suggestions that I understand has been considered is that some sort of coordinating committee should be appointed to try to ensure that the two councils cooperate. I find it unbelievable that, in this day and age when people suggest that we already have too many politicians, somebody is seriously suggesting that we should introduce another level, whether it be a bureaucratic level or whether it be comprised of political representation. It is simply ludicrous to talk about that sort of coordination. The obvious way to ensure that there is a unified approach to management of growth is through amalgamation.

As I understand it, the Commissioner for Local Government will release a discussion paper in the next two weeks, which will be subject to public scrutiny and comment. I appeal through the forum of this Parliament today to the people of Townsville and Thuringowa to consider the matter very seriously. On several occasions, I have said that this is the most critical decision that will be made in respect of our community, at least for the foreseeable future. Townsville/Thuringowa

is undergoing significant growth. It is important that that growth be properly managed and that not only residential development but also industrial development is planned in such a way that the services that go with that development are available, whether they be a public transport system, recreational facilities, services or whatever.

The opportunity is now with us to establish the situation that will carry Townsville/Thuringowa forward into the future. I believe that Townsville/Thuringowa has the runs on the board and that there is every indication that, with the advent of things such as the Suns' participation in the National Basketball League and the Cowboys entry into the New South Wales Rugby League, the opportunity for national promotion of the City of Townsville is unlimited. Again, the concept of one city certainly stacks up in the promotional stakes much better than some sort of concept of two cities sitting side by side. I repeat my passionate belief in the need for amalgamation and urge the people in the area to consider the matter very, very seriously when it comes before them.

Mr LINGARD (Beaulesert—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (3.22 p.m.): This morning in the Matters of Public Interest debate, I spoke about how Minister Anne Warner and the Premier contrived to destroy documents known as the Heiner report. In doing that, the Government perverted the course of justice by preventing legal action against itself and its employees. Minister Anne Warner, by allowing the Heiner documents to be destroyed, ensured that Peter Coyne's legal options were destroyed. So now there was a need to get rid of Coyne permanently. What happened is an example of illegal payments and another example of how the Government has misappropriated money. Coyne was offered an inducement by the Minister to leave the public service. It was the Minister who authorised the payment of \$27,000 to Peter Coyne to induce him to leave the public service. Where did the figure of \$27,000 come from? Well, Coyne knew his career was finished at the hands of Warner and Matchett. He had no option but to look to private enterprise for a future career.

The department actually offered to help set up Coyne in a business to ensure he would leave. He took nearly one month off, on full pay but not on recreation leave, to work in a small business to see whether it was suitable or not. Coyne needed an additional \$27,000 to buy it, and the Minister obliged. To make up the \$27,000 it was decided by the Minister and Ms Matchett that Coyne should

be paid overtime and travelling expenses for commuting to work in Brisbane. Coyne lives some 20 kilometres from Brisbane. Yet, unlike every other public servant who pays his own commuting expenses, the Minister decided that Coyne should have his expenses refunded.

So Peter Coyne and an official spent days driving between Coyne's house and work to determine the longest way possible. Coyne was then paid a daily mileage rate based on the longest possible distance to and from work, for the previous six months. The amount, contrived as it was, was still insufficient to make up the \$27,000 required. It was necessary to find additional moneys. This is where the overtime payments came in. Coyne was told to submit an overtime claim for the additional money, and the Minister approved this also. Unfortunately for the Minister, who is now well and truly down the path of corruption, Peter Coyne was not only not entitled to overtime and daily travelling expenses, but the Minister also did not have the authority to approve such a payment. Peter Coyne's position in the Department of Family Services was several grades higher than the level at which overtime no longer applies. He could not be paid overtime, and had not been entitled to it for years. No public servant in Brisbane is entitled to be paid a mileage rate to go to work each day, especially when public transport is readily available.

The payment the Minister for Family Services made to Peter Coyne was contrived, illegal and corrupt. The Minister is guilty of breaching section 408C of the Criminal Code applying to the misappropriation of property. She is also guilty of breaching section 92, relating to abuse of office. The head of the Department of Family Services, Ms Ruth Matchett, conspired with her Minister to commit a crime. This is an offence under section 541 of the Criminal Code.

But let us not leave out the role of the Premier and his Cabinet in February 1990, when they all conspired to defeat justice by authorising the destruction of material required for a legal challenge against the Queensland Government. This is an offence under section 132 of the Criminal Code. The entire Goss Cabinet conspired to obstruct, prevent and defeat the course of justice. The Opposition demands that the CJC be given full authority by the Attorney-General to investigate these illegal activities and publicly report its findings. Then the corruption and double standards of this Goss Government will be exposed.

For months prior to the recent Premiers Conference, the Premier of this State has been whingeing that his Government would not have sufficient moneys to fund all its activities. We know that he has gone to great lengths to show why there would be cutbacks in services, and obviously he promoted the raising of new or increased taxes. All of this, of course, was going to be Paul Keating's fault. It had nothing to do with Wayne Goss and his extravagant Government. Since December 1989, the Goss Government has relied on two sources of funds to finance its giant jobs for the boys and the girls of the ALP program.

Firstly, it has spent hundreds of millions of dollars transferring money from trust accounts into consolidated revenue. Let us not forget the Auctioneers Fidelity Fund; let us not forget the Nominal Defendant Fund; let us not forget the Workers Compensation Fund, from which money has been used for workplace health and safety; and let us not forget the recent ambulance debacle. Secondly, Commonwealth payments to Queensland have increased by hundreds of millions of dollars each year, including the current financial year. In five years we have seen payments to Queensland increase by over—and I repeat "over"—\$2 billion. But where has all this money gone? We have not seen improved services. We have not seen an improvement in the health service. We have not seen an improvement in the education system, nor in the Ambulance Service. Similarly, our streets are not any safer since Wayne Goss came into power. So where has all the money gone?

I believe it has certainly all gone to Labor Party cronies—or most of it has. Certainly, at the start of Labor's rule in 1990, we saw that 118 of the 133 inspectors in the Education Department were retrenched. Most of those people went out with payments of more than \$520,000. One hundred and eighteen times \$520,000 is a lot of money. Similarly, with the Transport Department, we have seen leaked a secret document to Cabinet in Townsville skiting about the fact that 3 000 workers were put off over the last two years and that there have not been any industrial disputes. We know why. It is because those retrenchment packages were so massive. This is a Labor-infested bureaucracy in which everybody whom Labor has appointed has his snout in the trough of public money.

Let us look at some of the classic examples of the replacements of all of those people who were put off in the 1990s. We have the perfect example in Craig Emerson, the Director-General of the Environment and

Heritage Department. Mr Emerson was formerly the chief economic adviser to Bob Hawke. It is hard to see how anyone could have a worse recommendation than personally destroying the entire Australian economy. However, Wayne Goss grabbed him with both hands. But Craig was not coming to Queensland just to be a permanent head. As part of the deal, he also wanted the Goss Government to fund a job for his friend Cathy Hudson. Goss gave Ms Hudson a job in his own department as a consultant, paid on an hourly rate, and the job was not even advertised. Supposedly, it was for only two or three days a week. However, Ms Hudson works five days a week and, because she is still paid hourly, takes home a veritable fortune. They are a nice couple of ALP stalwarts who rip off the Queensland taxpayers to the tune of over \$200,000 each year.

I saw in yesterday's *Courier-Mail* that Mr Emerson has teamed up with Ms Fleur Kingham, who is David Barbagallo's partner. Barbagallo, of course, is the Premier's chief adviser. Evidently, Emerson and Kingham will be letting us know how, by the year 2000, everybody's friends can have a job in the public service.

Let us look at two other husband and wife package deals entered into by Wayne Goss. The principal policy adviser to the Treasurer, Mr Michael Roche, was brought up from the Prime Minister's Department to help run the Queensland economy. It is beyond me why an adviser cannot be found from this State with its so-called successful economy. No wonder Mr Goss is unable to live within his means! Mr Roche sat down with Mr Emerson and said, "If you can get a job for your friend, Goss can find one for my wife, too." Mrs Roche, of course, works under her maiden name. The Roches are also into the Queensland taxpayer for \$150,000 per annum.

This little lurk of employing one's wife under her maiden name to try to cover up what is going on was taken to the limit by the Director of the Wet Tropics Management Agency, Mr Peter Hitchcock. Mr Hitchcock, who is based in Cairns, sat on the interview panel for his deputy, who is also based in Cairns. Guess who got the job? Yes, his wife—under her maiden name, of course. How convenient! Mr Hitchcock gets a job in Cairns and, by all the principles of equity and merit, his wife also gets a job as his deputy. Another \$150,000 per annum out of the Queensland taxpayer!

Most of the increased funds to the Queensland Government are being wasted by ALP cronies. Services cannot improve when husbands employ their wives and their friends; when people previously on \$35,000 per annum are now on \$100,000 per annum; and when everybody has a car and unlimited free petrol. The taxpayers of Queensland do not mind paying taxes and paying Government charges when they can see their money being well spent. Unfortunately, what they are getting in return are inexperienced, overpaid cronies whose advice and greed is destroying this State.

Recent surveys undertaken of manufacturers in Queensland demonstrate that nine out of 10 manufacturers believe that unemployment will either remain static or become worse. Queensland's unemployment rate is now 10.5 per cent. Since the Labor Government was elected, foreign investment in this State has declined by 70 per cent. New South Wales is now the leading State for investment. All of those poor statistics are coming through because the Premier's economic advisers are from failed economies. The public service now costs Queensland taxpayers double the amount that it cost in 1989. The growth in employment in Queensland has been in the number of public servants, and that is possibly all. Certainly, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trading, the transport industry and agricultural production are all in decline in this State. Private sector employment is declining. I challenge the Treasurer to claim that the number of public servants is not increasing dramatically in this State.

Any economic adviser worth employing would tell the Premier that a bloated public service does not generate income or productive goods for the State. It is a drain on the public purse of Queensland which has ruined the economies of southern States and which is dragging this one down. Even though the Government has put more money into education, the service delivery is not as good as it was prior to 1990. I challenge the Treasurer to claim to the contrary. Education Department employees will support my assertions. The Government cannot continue to restructure its departments. Restructuring was tried in Victoria. It was a failure there, and it has been a failure in Queensland. This Government has wasted millions and millions of dollars on restructuring certain departments, creating massive departments and placing cronies in from down south who are paid massive amounts of money.

The Premier can find \$40m each year to fund a slick media machine. He can find the time and money to massage his image and fragile ego; yet he cannot keep schools open, maintain railways or improve health services. Previously, the Government touted its \$3.3 billion Capital Works Program. Then it claimed that its \$150m Jobs Plan would create 28 000 jobs. But the \$3.3 billion Capital Works Program was supposed to create only 39 000 jobs. That program gives a pretty poor return for the huge amount of funds dedicated to it, when one considers that \$150m is supposed to create 28 000 jobs. How many jobs were really created by that \$3.3 billion Capital Works Program? Where did all of those jobs go? How many were long-term jobs? Very, very few long-term jobs were created. The unemployment rate still stays in double figures. The Goss Government is concerned with creating only temporary jobs in the private sector. The only permanent jobs seem to be those of ALP cronies in the public service. Those jobs will be very temporary after the 1995 State election!

Goss, of course, realises that his power base is in the south-east corner of Queensland. One can travel anywhere in the rural areas and people can quote the money spent on the Indy car race; the money spent on South Bank; the money supposedly dedicated to the redevelopment of Lang Park; the money spent on the refurbishment of the Gabba Cricket Ground; and the money wasted on Compass, but those people do not see money coming into rural areas. All they see is a supposed rationalisation of rural programs—rationalisation which is occurring because of the recession we had to have and because of corporatisation. The Government is well aware that cutbacks will occur everywhere outside of Brisbane and the major provincial cities.

The Government has given away country and rural areas completely. It intends to redistribute many of the State seats. It will combine those great western and northern seats and create an extra couple of seats south of Brisbane and an extra couple of seats north of Brisbane. The Government knows that it will win those seats because it will create them in Labor areas. Then the Government will not have to put money into rural areas. The people of the rural areas know it. Continually in this Parliament, the Government is challenged to demonstrate that rural areas are being supported. The people of rural areas know that they are not being supported. The Premier believes that if Tom Burns runs around the State shaking

hands and patting heads, this Government can get away with that lack of support.

For months, the Premier has been hinting that small schools throughout Queensland face closure. He receives a 5 per cent increase in Federal funding, yet what happens? The Premier, the media and the Minister for Education refer to school closures, older teachers being forced out of the system and an increase in class sizes. If there had been any talk in 1987-88 of a decrease in funds for education or an increase in class sizes, the media would have covered it on the front pages of the newspapers and the union would have really screamed. However, it seems that it is okay for the ALP Government to do just that.

The ALP Government has indicated that it will close small schools—it is putting them on notice. The Government has indicated that older teachers will be forced out of the system. It is indicating to all of those kids who are doing four years' teacher training that there is no chance whatever of a job at the end of their four years' training. It is all on hold regardless of whether a student receives a 5, a 6 or top marks—it does not matter. There are no chances whatsoever for those young kids who are going through college—3 000 to 4 000 of them will be unable to get a job. At least the National Party maintained a better education system than this Labor Government. The National Party did it on far less money, and Government members know it.

Throughout Queensland, railways face closure under this Government—a Government which has the largest Budget of all time, yet it cannot even maintain what it inherited. The hundreds of millions of dollars that it cost to build the rail network of Queensland will be wasted when this Labor Government either allows it to deteriorate, or pulls up hundreds of kilometres of track deliberately. What a tragedy! Wayne Goss is totally wasting the inheritance that was left to him by the best economic manager in the country.

Police and ambulance services in country areas have been decimated by this Government. Overtime is non-existent. Restructuring and regionalisation—or as it is called in socialist terms, collectivisation—has meant that, in most circumstances, the emergency response time has doubled or tripled. Funds have been misappropriated and misused. Funds raised through voluntary efforts by Queenslanders have been seized by the Labor Government, and wasted on

propping up the giant bureaucracies that have been created. How ridiculous to say that, because ambulance trust fund moneys were given to ambulance boards and it was not stipulated exactly what they were to be spent on, that money can be taken back into a central bureaucracy! That is absolutely ridiculous. Some people left money to ambulance centres in their wills, but did not stipulate exactly what it was to be spent on at the local ambulance centre. All that money has now gone from the local boards.

The Goss Government has systemically turned the rural areas of Queensland into its own killing fields. It has taken away services, staff and facilities. It has introduced the user-pays principle, but it still keeps taxing rural areas at a higher and higher rate. It then sends in Tom Burns to sympathise, but Tom does nothing. He stops nothing and he changes nothing. The schools will close soon, the railways are closing, the courthouses have gone and the roads are deteriorating. In nearly four years, this Government has not built one single dam, it has not signed for any development projects and it has not made one hard decision, except to line the pockets of its members.

Mr Bredhauer interjected.

Mr LINGARD: I see the former teacher laughing. I say to him: just remember that when the ALP was in power for 34 years, not one new high school was built. His party was in Government for 34 years, yet it did not build one new high school. Over the last four years, the Government has not built one new dam.

Wayne Goss was given the best-run economy in Australia, the lowest debt and an economy that was dynamic. Now we have an economy in which the Government coffers are empty. We have a Premier who can only wring his hands and whinge and a Government that is interested only in reducing services and destroying infrastructure.

Mr NUNN (Hervey Bay) (3.41 p.m.): It is with a great deal of pleasure that I rise to support the Appropriation Bill, which oversees an expenditure of approximately five and three quarter billion dollars. Today, I heard the Leader of the Opposition speak about a high-spending Government. I remind members on the Opposition side of the House that, when compared with the last Government, I suppose this Government is a high-spending Government. However, that is only because the money had to be spent.

When I took over the seat of Isis—and Isis was the former Government's power base, it was that Government's jewel in the crown—

the hospital at Childers was falling to bits, and patients were eating outside the pan room, which did not have a door. Today, within three years of Labor coming to power, Childers has a brand spanking new hospital, which has been properly planned and properly designed as a hospital. That contrasts starkly with the way in which the National Party Government planned the Hervey Bay Hospital which is, at present, catering for a population of 34 000. The National Party Government did it on the run for an election. Its purpose was dishonest and the outcome was shabby. During my time at Hervey Bay, I have overseen a lot of this rubbish, and if the Government has increased its spending by 20.6 per cent, I remind Opposition members that 20.6 per cent of nothing is a very small amount. When the Opposition was in Government, it spent nothing on infrastructure. It stashed away money in the bank. It allowed schools to become dilapidated, children to be educated under substandard conditions and people to live in Housing Commission houses and to put up with a dreadful quality of housing that the Government would not use as a pigsty. That does not leave Opposition members very high in my estimation.

I can be justly proud of what this Government has done for Hervey Bay and Isis. I just heard a plaintive plea from somebody on the Opposition side of the House asking Government members to remember that we have built not one dam. No, we may not have built a dam. I do not know whether or not this is the only instance, but when I took over the seat of Isis, it had a half-finished irrigation scheme, which was again depriving the National Party's own power base of a much-needed water supply for the sugar industry. To say that members of the previous National Party Government paid lip-service to its rural communities is, indeed, to give them higher praise than they should have. That scheme was designed to cost somewhere between \$7m and \$10m. Because members of the previous Government roused about it all over the place and wasted time and money, it ended up costing over \$20m. Again, within three years of Labor coming into Government, the scheme was completed.

Those sorts of projects should have been completed by a Government which, instead of completing such projects, was busy stuffing money into hollow logs, on the pretext that it was a good manager. In 1989, the people of Queensland decided wisely that the National Party could no longer be trusted with the Treasury purse, because it was the reason for

an inquiry that cost over \$100m. A National Party Government was not the result of the inquiry; this Labor Government is the result of the inquiry.

In Hervey Bay, this Government has supplied two new schools; around \$7m in roadworks; a community health centre with a dental clinic, which the former Government could not bring itself to provide, even though Hervey Bay was showing signs of significant growth; and a women's health centre. A total of 60 housing units are built each year by the housing authority. The schools in my electorate are in good shape with regard to maintenance, facilities and class sizes. A new birthing unit at the Hervey Bay Hospital has been designed to carry us through until the start of construction of Hervey Bay's new hospital in 1995.

I remind members that the shadow Minister for Health, the member for Toowoomba South, recently paid a visit to Maryborough and Hervey Bay, during which he promised to expose an inadequate health service run by a pumped-up bureaucracy known as the Wide Bay Regional Health Authority. He came away from there with his tail well and truly between his legs. One could not tell his tail from his umbilical cord, because it was so far between his legs. I am Maryborough born and bred, and I am not related to half of that city for nothing. It is not because I am related to half the people in that city that I get the information that I do.

Mr Cooper: You have been around, boy.

Mr NUNN: I have. I also know a bit about the honourable member. Would he like to discuss Roma with me? I can give him a bit of a hurry up. I might talk about that in a debate about Aboriginality—just to give him fair warning.

Mr Cooper: You and Presty would get along well.

Mr NUNN: I do not believe that there was anything wrong with the previous member for Gladstone. He was a nice fellow and an enjoyable companion who was convivial at times. Although he had a bad habit of getting under the honourable member's skin, he should not hold that against him.

I get a lot of information from Maryborough because I am well connected there. The shadow Minister was briefed by the AMA. As I have said on another occasion, he came to Hervey Bay loaded for bear. He went away admitting that there was nothing wrong with the birthing unit at Hervey Bay. He went away without all the ammunition that he had

come with, because he stuck it in his little port and threw it over the first bridge that he came to. The Maryborough/Hervey Bay health service is progressing at a very good rate. We now have a day surgery, which we did not have before. When the operating theatre in the Hervey Bay Hospital was first equipped, the use-by date on the anaesthetic equipment had passed before the equipment was taken out of its wrappings. The hospital was built for a self-serving purpose, and that was all.

I suppose that nothing to do with Hervey Bay would attract more attention lately than would the tourist industry. I advise the House that the Cunard line has decided to make Hervey Bay a regular port of call, and in the next 12 months will make 17 visits. This is indicative of the recognition of the money that has been poured into tourism during this Government's term. I hope that there will be more forthcoming.

The listing of Fraser Island on the World Heritage register has enhanced its tourism capacity. We will probably experience a fairly tumultuous time over the next few years, because there is a Mabo-style claim over Fraser Island and the Great Sandy Strait. Personally, I believe that it cannot succeed, but I suppose that the courts will be the judges of that.

The claim over the seabed of the Great Sandy Strait might seem to be a strange ambit claim in the extreme. Members opposite might agree with that statement. However, a precedent was set by the previous Government when it gave title to the seabed at Sanctuary Cove to a fellow named Gore. As well, it gave him a \$10m gift. I do not know whether it was a coincidence, but that amount coincided exactly with the reported amount that it took to bring two faded stars from Hollywood to entertain friends of the National Party at the big bash when Sanctuary Cove was opened. That is just something that I toss in for members to think about. We are talking about good managers, which members of the previous Government were not. They should do a little conscience examining.

According to yesterday's editorial in the Hervey Bay *Observer*, heads are being shaken over the demolition of the head of the Urangan jetty—another act of monumental "foresight" on the part of the previous Government. To correct that now would take several small fortunes. I have said it before, and I will say it again: the previous Government gave the contract to somebody who performed less than creditably with the

aid of a previous Minister in the form of Mr Martin Tenni.

Mr Beattie: Oh!

Mr NUNN: Martin was a good boy. He looked after his friends.

Mr Beattie: He was very good at looking after his friends.

Mr NUNN: Indeed, he was. He was an expert at it. He joined the National Party late, and had good trainers waiting to train him. They gave him several good lessons on how to rip off local contractors. The demolition was done with his connivance. I guess that he is dead and buried now, and we do not have to worry about him.

Recently, the seagrass beds in Hervey Bay suffered a severe setback. The only expert opinion available is that this was caused by the proximity of two floods in quick succession which cut off the sunlight. Therefore, the photosynthesis could not operate, and parts of the seagrass died. Another opinion has been expressed that it could have been caused by pollution. I am not here to deny that that may be the case. I believe that in the next 12 months a requirement should be made of local authorities to monitor every stream in their area. In that manner, we will find out whether there is pollution in streams flowing into places such as Hervey Bay. Through progressive monitoring by shires of the rivers and streams, we will find out exactly where the pollution is coming from. That would be a desirable approach to the matter and would have the full support of all the shires which border on the Great Sandy Straits.

I have stated previously that I am very proud of the many services that the Government has provided for Hervey Bay. Results from the recent Premiers Conference in Canberra indicate that the Federal Government presented the Queensland Government with a rather dirty deal. The Queensland Government ended up receiving \$115m less than it should have—and that is the correct figure, regardless of how other people want to bump it around. That \$115m shortfall had to be found somewhere.

I regret that a decision has been taken to close some of the smaller railway lines. I cannot speak with authority about all of those railway lines, but I can speak with authority on the railway line from Maryborough to Hervey Bay. That railway line has been streamlined by taking out the unprofitable small freight component. The small freight is now transported on rubber tyres from

Maryborough, and that arrangement seems to be working well. However, to close the line which is being used on an on-demand basis by pineapple growers and timber processors of copper logs would seem to be the wrong decision. I do not think that, at this time, the Railway Department has any cost analysis on which to base that decision. However, if it can be proved to me that the line is running at a loss and that the exercise saves money, I would have to go along with it.

I serve notice on Treasury and the Transport Department that I will be requesting a consultant to be retained to report on when it would be considered possible to run a viable integrated rail service between the two cities. It is predicted that, by the year 2000, Hervey Bay will have a population in excess of 60 000 people. When one adds to that the population of Maryborough, which should be approximately 27 000 to 30 000 at that time, and includes a tourist population of between 20 000 and 30 000 at that time, it will be seen that we will have need for an integrated rail system which will serve a population, both permanent and transient, of between 120 000 and 130 000. A service catering for that number of people will pull its weight and pay its way. I am pleased to be able to support the Bill. I hope that some members have listened to my comments.

Mr COOPER (Crows Nest) (3.57 p.m.): It was not until the end of his speech that the honourable member for Hervey Bay made some interesting points. He commenced with his usual snide and sarcastic comments and attempted to do a bucket job on the previous Government, despite the fact that his Government has been in office for four years. He certainly attracted my attention when he said that he was related to half the people of Maryborough. That would be about 10 000 people. I congratulate the member on that feat, but I offer my sympathy to some of those people. I hope that the honourable member does not get too bitter and angry in his old age. The honourable member mentioned some of the services provided by his Government of which he is so proud. He mentioned how dreadful the previous Government was and how magnificent the present Government is. That is all we could expect from him.

I turn to a matter about which I have spoken previously in this Chamber, and I will keep talking about it, because it is nothing short of a tragedy. On 18 May last, I spoke in this House about the then very obvious crisis gripping the Queensland Ambulance Service. At that time, I said that the service was

“tottering towards a complete administrative, operational and financial collapse” and referred to the then very recent overwhelming vote of no confidence in the Ambulance Service administration by the rank-and-file officers.

The Minister at that time, Mr Braddy, flatly denied that there was any crisis. It is timely to recall what I said at that time. I stated—

“That obstinate refusal to acknowledge reality is appalling, and undermines the total insensitivity and lack of awareness by the Government of what is actually happening.”

Only a few days after I made those comments to the Parliament, the interim Public Sector Management Commission report on the service was released and it led to the demotion and transfer of the Emergency Services Bureau Director, Mr Howard Baker, and the sacking of the Queensland Ambulance Service Commissioner, Mr Noel Gillard. The Minister at the time staged a totally unconvincing display of shock, horror and concern, with the primary and most important message being that neither he nor either of his Labor Party predecessors as Ministers in the portfolio were even slightly at fault. Mr Baker and Mr Gillard were made the sacrificial lambs. Being bound hand and foot by the conditions of their contracts, they were unable to defend themselves.

From the very beginning, there has been a disgraceful and outrageous attempt to evade even a token acknowledgment of ministerial responsibility, a calculated and vicious denigration of the characters and professional performances of Mr Baker and Mr Gillard—both, incidentally, appointed by this Government—and a frantic attempt to try to persuade an incredulous public that the total loss in two years of some \$44.5m in accumulated ambulance trust and reserve funds has not decreased the standard of service one iota. Frankly, the Government's response has been pathetic in its effect and entirely self-serving in its motive. A brief review of the fiasco is now appropriate and, in essence, it becomes a matter of what did the Government know and when did it know it. The very meagre information that has been either leaked out or wrung out provides us with an overall picture very much at variance with the Government's desperate portrayal.

The Minister, Mr Braddy, has tried to suggest that the extent of the crisis only became evident when he initiated some brilliant detective work when he became Minister after the election late last year. Reality

is vastly different! In a letter dated 7 June 1993, the Treasurer, Mr De Lacy, informed me that what he quaintly referred to as a problem with the QAS became “clearly evident in July 1992”. Mr De Lacy's letter continued—

“Treasury initiated discussions with the Bureau of Emergency Services with a view to bringing the problem under control. These discussions culminated in formal correspondence from the Treasury to the bureau in October, 1992 when it became clear that the bureau was not putting in place a strategy to regularise the situation.”

What was the then Minister, Mr Warburton, doing during 1992 to ensure that the quaintly described “problem” was addressed? Obviously, very little, apart from keeping it a very dark secret prior to the election. One initiative that he did take in February 1992 was the creation of an interdepartmental committee comprising representatives from Treasury, the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development and the Bureau of Emergency Services. That committee was supposed to examine funding options for the ambulance service, although it did not include a Queensland ambulance service representative. Nothing has ever been heard of that committee and its work, although it does destroy the claim by the present Minister that he was the one to initiate procedures to consider funding alternatives. It also provides evidence that, during 1992, Treasury officers were in active touch with the Bureau of Emergency Services on the critical subject of ambulance funding, despite desperate attempts by the Government to claim otherwise.

An example of the Minister's woeful inaction was the creation and filling of 41 of the 48 training officer positions within the QAS by 5 August 1992. That was the month after the crisis was, in Mr De Lacy's words, “clearly evident”. The PSMC interim report identified training as a major contributing factor to the budget disaster. Of course, the then Minister, Mr Warburton, had come to the portfolio of Police and Emergency Services from the portfolio of Employment, Training and Industrial Relations. With that background he might have reasonably expected him to at least take an interest in the industrial relations and training aspects of the QAS, but obviously he did not in so far as training and financial consequences were concerned. But what of industrial relations?

The PSMC interim report noted that training procedures were "tied into the award negotiations and proved to be another significant drain on the budget". The ambulance union—the Australian Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union—filed an application for a new award in May 1991, and this was implemented on 6 March 1992. Astoundingly, the Department of Employment, Training and Industrial Relations was not, in the words of the interim report, "closely involved and attended only one sitting of the commission". This was the commission's hearing of the application.

Why did they not take a more pro-active stance? That is the question that requires an answer. I wrote to the present Minister, Mr Foley, on this subject seven weeks ago, but the only response so far has been a deafening silence. The PSMC interim report noted that this award restructuring was a Labor Party election commitment in 1989 and, therefore, had to be implemented. The QAS had to agree; yet the Government never provided one extra cent to it to help meet an undertaking given at the political level. Rather than praising the QAS for faithfully meeting a Labor Party election promise, the Government used that as another reason to abuse and berate it. "Well done, good and faithful servant" is not a phrase we hear used by Labor Party Ministers.

I return now to the matter of what did the Government know and when did it know about the awful financial crisis. It should be remembered that the original Cabinet decision in March 1991 to create this money-eating monster called the Bureau of Emergency Services and its wayward child, the Queensland Ambulance Service, required the bureau and Treasury to consult on the establishment of the bureau and the QAS. In his letter to me dated 7 June 1993, Mr De Lacy said it was the primary responsibility of the bureau to initiate these discussions. That clearly implies that Treasury at least had a secondary responsibility and, understandably from its point of view, the Government remains cautiously vague about how, when and where any discussions or consultations were held. Initially, there must have been some.

In May 1991, the then Minister, Mr Mackenroth, took a submission to Cabinet on costs involved in the QAS establishment. Mr De Lacy—again in his letter dated 7 June—advised me that—

"There was a reasonable expectation that the commitment to meet

restructuring costs from normal budget funds would be met."

Clearly, at that time, there was some contact between Mr Mackenroth's department and Treasury for Treasury to have reached that view. It was after that that the situation becomes very hazy, except for my disclosure of the interdepartmental committee that I mentioned earlier, and that has been made deliberately hazy by the Government's political damage smokescreen. Certainly, some 10 months passed between July 1992, when the Government was aware of the crisis, and April 1993 when the PSMC began its review. It knew all along. In June last year, the ambulance commissioner, Mr Gillard, told the Government that the revenue situation was increasingly desperate. We know that for a fact because the then Minister, Mr Warburton, commented on it publicly.

A memorandum from Mr Gillard to the then Minister's office dated 15 June 1992—and I table that document—stated that of the \$100m annual budget for the QAS, only \$80m would be raised by way of subscriptions, grants, fees and other sources, while \$20m would be funded "from ambulance reserve funds which have been put aside for capital works and major equipment replacement". That memorandum also warned that—

"In the 1993/94 budget, Government will need to approve an alternative funding base for the service; or increase the Government grant to some \$60 million (100% increase) and/or reduce services to the community."

Last year, Mr Braddy received from Mr Gillard a comprehensive briefing paper dated 29 September which again explained the dimensions of the catastrophe. The former Police Commissioner, Mr Newnham, has said publicly that Mr Gillard did warn the Government. On 31 May last, he said on ABC Radio—

"I'm fairly confident that Treasury did know and were trying to find a way out of the difficulty that their commitment in 1991 had entered the Government into but couldn't find a way through it."

It should be remembered that, at that time, Mr Newnham was the responsible officer under the Financial Administration and Audit Act although the bureau's director, Mr Baker, had delegated powers and responsibilities. In a covering letter attached to its interim report, the PSMC stated—

"Explanation is needed as to why it has taken so long to address the

problems which had been evident for some time.”

It is an excellent question but, incredibly, the Minister, Mr Braddy, does not believe it is one for the Government to answer. Since the release of that interim report, the sacking of Mr Gillard, and the demotion and transfer of Mr Baker, the Government's response has been chaotic, to say the least. The utter ruthlessness of the Government's buck-passing and cover-up was the calculated and cruel way in which Mr Gillard was dismissed. The sacking was done personally by the Minister, despite the fact that Mr Gillard's contract was with the Director of the Bureau of Emergency Services. Thus, Mr Gillard's option of an appeal to the Minister was rendered inoperative by the Minister's own actions.

Every decent Australian holds the belief that any accused person should have a right of appeal. Fairness and decency were also casualties of this whole sordid affair. One of Mr Gillard's alleged crimes was the supposedly unauthorised and presumably secret creation of 40 positions known as district operations coordination officers, or DOCOs. Mr Braddy's macho response to the interim report included a bold decision to abolish those positions immediately. Incidentally, in this context we are expected to believe that nobody in the Government at the time of the creation of those 40 positions knew about them, despite the fact that in order to get the best applicants they were widely advertised. If people believe that, they will believe in everything else—from the Government's complete innocence to the tooth fairy.

Sadly, however, Mr Braddy committed the worst sin imaginable for a good Labor man. He did not consult the union and, when he did, the decision to abolish these positions was abruptly reversed. The pathetic attempt at face-saving in this matter was the decision to keep these officers at the same salary for at least a year while they do some unspecified operational job. These are the DOCOs we have when we do not have any DOCOs. This move means a year of uncertainty for these officers and their families through no fault of their own and a continuing drain on an exhausted budget. Inept management and political naivety have meant the very worst of all worlds for the Queensland Ambulance Service.

The exhaustion of the trust and reserve funds that had been built up over many years by dedicated volunteers, hard-working officers and, as we all know, people in the community has meant indefinite delays in the building

program and a serious run-down in vehicle and equipment standards. Obviously, the service is suffering badly. One result of the debacle is the massive hike in fees and charges for subscribers and users. For non-subscribers, there will be a minimum fee of \$250 just to take someone for a trip around the corner. It is a huge impost, and I predict that bad debts will soar. And what will be the consequence of that? Will it be that the sick, injured and poor will be dragged through the courts? What a wonderful example of the compassionate Goss Labor Government at work on behalf of the battlers!

The Minister, Mr Braddy, had the unmitigated gall to state in the *Business Queensland* magazine of 5 July last that this huge increase would “make it even more attractive for people to become subscribers.” There are other words for that, however. Along with everything else, Mr Braddy has trouble with the English language. That precious bit of doubletalk really meant, “We are hoping that the fee increase will terrify the living daylights out of people and blackmail them into signing up as subscribers.” Of course, this laughable sort of abuse of the language—or, more accurately, this sort of deliberate carelessness with the truth—is inspired by the same Government public relations genius who will try to make us believe that the impending ambulance tax is not a tax, but a user-pays fee.

In many cases, ambulance vehicles are so poorly maintained that they would not pass a standard roadworthiness certificate inspection test. I challenged the Minister to order these tests to either prove or disprove my claim, and all he would say was that the PSMC had said that the standard of service was good. Until the Minister made that statement, I had not been aware that the PSMC had employed mechanics on its review team. The PSMC seems to know everything. Its interim report was nothing more than dial-an-excuse; it was nothing more than inept handling of this issue; and it was little short of a cover-up. It has given the Minister an excuse to do what he likes and to take whatever action he likes, including the sacking of Noel Gillard, and has provided a seal of approval. What a sickening farce!

We now face the possibility of court action for compensation brought by people who believe that they have suffered as a result of poor and inadequate treatment. The Minister has refused to provide a guarantee that, should disgruntled patients bring an action, ambulance officers will not face any personal liability, and that is having a

devastating effect on morale. Inevitably, there will be a universal ambulance tax imposed by this Government. While this option seems to have been temporarily deferred, it most certainly has not been ruled out. The Minister has refused to rule it out. The Queensland Ambulance Service is rapidly on its way to becoming an entirely self-funding body which will be affordable only to the rich—and therefore available to them only. It has lost its human face and it has lost its place in the hearts of so many people who freely contributed so much. It has become a monument to inept, amateur, irresponsible and unaccountable government. If ministerial responsibility meant anything to this Government and to this Minister, the Minister would at least abjectly apologise to every man, woman and child in this State for having reduced the service to its present level. Quite frankly, he should have taken the ultimate political step and resigned.

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central) (4.15 p.m.): In the *Life of Pitt*, Lord Rosebery stated—

“Few speeches which have produced an electrical effect on an audience can bear the colourless photography of a printed record.”

After listening to the honourable member for Crows Nest, I do not think his speech could even bear photocopying because it was so transparent.

Mr Cooper: You will have to do better than that.

Mr BEATTIE: I do not have to do better than that because it was quite obvious.

Mr Cooper: What a terrible pun!

Mr BEATTIE: No, it was terrific, but the member should not be insulted. I can see that he is mortified! While I am on the subject of poor performances, the contribution made earlier by the honourable Leader of the Opposition and member for Surfers Paradise referred to the Government's increase in property taxes and the credit enhancement fee imposed on local authorities by the QTC. He said that it was worth \$42m in the last financial year. He said that it was taxing by stealth.

What the honourable member does not realise—which gives some indication of the amount of research that he undertook in preparing his contribution—is that that fee was never brought in. The fee was never introduced. Certainly, it was announced in the Budget, but the Government did not go ahead with it. The fee was never brought in.

Last year, not one single cent—I repeat, “not one single cent”—was brought into the State Government coffers or Treasury from the credit enhancement fee. After that enormous faux pas by the Leader of the Opposition, his credibility on financial and economic matters would have to be strained, to say the very least. The missing \$42m never existed.

Let me move on to my contribution in relation to the Bill. I want to start by referring briefly to the Interim Budget Statement which the Treasurer produced following a Cabinet decision yesterday, following the Commonwealth/State financial arrangements for 1993-94, which showed that an adjustment has to be made for the loss of \$115m. In that document, he points out the following—

“The Queensland State Budget is heavily dependent upon Commonwealth grants to the State which make up approximately half of total State Budget revenue.”

He goes on to point out quite accurately the strategy which the Government is pursuing. He states—

“The Queensland Government has a long standing commitment to sound financial management through its fiscal strategy involving:

maintaining Queensland's low tax position;

borrowing only for assets that can effectively generate an income stream sufficient to meet debt servicing costs;

- this rules out Budget deficits which have to be debt funded and requires that social assets such as schools and hospitals be funded from recurrent revenues;

maintenance of financial assets sufficient to fully meet the Government's future superannuation liabilities and full actuarial funding of workers compensation and motor vehicle third party insurance liabilities.

...

In determining appropriate action”—
in terms of the above strategy—

“the following . . . decisions have been taken:

(i) firm adherence to existing fiscal policy settings which preclude the use of borrowings to meet revenue shortfalls;

- (ii) there will be no new taxes such as a fuel tax for 1993-94"—

a matter that I want to come back to in a minute—

- some limited adjustments to revenue may be considered to improve the existing revenue base (particularly where increases in fees and charges through user pays principles may be applied to encourage efficient use of public resources) or to remove anomalies in current tax bases;
 - however, necessary budgetary adjustment will need to be largely in terms of expenditure savings;
- (iii) firm commitment to maintain essential community services;
- (iv) full implementation of the Government's election commitments including the \$150M Jobs Plan and the commencement of the \$1.5 billion 10 year Hospital Rebuilding Plan;
- (v) recognition of the particular difficulties being encountered by rural areas due to the impact of the rural downturn and drought; and
- (vi) recognising the significant infrastructure demands of a rapidly growing population, the State's normal capital works program should be maintained, with expenditure savings to be made from recurrent programs."

In essence, a summary of the decision that Cabinet made yesterday forming the basis of that Interim Budget Statement from the Treasurer was as follows—

"No closing of schools or contracting out of cleaning and other support services. But there would be changes in staffing arrangements in schools which would result in adjustments to student/teacher ratios and to how teachers undertake in-service training.

A major restructuring of the QEII and Princess Alexandra hospitals. This would involve the merging of the management and administration of the two hospitals and services between the hospitals will be rationalised.

A freeze on first class travel for all Ministers, parliamentarians and public servants.

The Parliamentary Services Commission will be asked to find a range of savings in areas such as catering and support services.

Savings from the Government's public relations operations including rationalising publications and reducing the use of consultants for media related work.

The closure of a limited number of very low volume rail lines.

The establishment of a modest entry fee for selected national parks."

I went through that exercise because these are difficult economic times. Queensland is part of the Australian recession. We are slowly coming out of it; therefore, we need to look at the broad economic picture. I pay tribute to the work of the Treasurer, the Premier and the Cabinet in coming up with workable solutions, but I do flag that, obviously, in these economic times, a lot of people are hurting. Unemployment is a matter of grave concern for all of us. At this time, the level of unemployment nationally is 11.1 per cent—966 400 people out of work—and in Queensland it is 10.5 per cent, which is lower than the national average because of Queensland's sound economic base and the sound economic policies of the Goss Government. That 10.5 per cent is still 160 900 people.

As a Labor representative in this Parliament, I must say that unemployment at that level distresses me. In my electorate, I have unemployed people, and in common with many members in this House I regularly see unemployed people and the devastating and soul-destroying impact that unemployment has not only on families but also on individuals. When we are talking about the principles of equity and fairness and the principles in which we believe, I believe that unemployment is the greatest soul destroyer of all. It is a matter that obviously needs top priority.

The Goss Government has introduced the \$150m Jobs Plan. However, as a member of this Labor Government, I must say that I am concerned about the devastating effect that unemployment is having on the community. It is having an effect not just on the young. That is bad enough. I was reading an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, for example, that talked about over-forties battling age discrimination. The *Sydney Morning Herald* had conducted a survey. I am not saying this simply because I turned 40 recently. It points out that 62 per cent of receptionists' jobs contained an age

requirement, as did 42 per cent of jobs in the fashion industry and 39 per cent of secretarial jobs. By contrast, none of the 19 jobs for solicitors mentioned age and only 7 per cent of jobs for engineers and 9 per cent of jobs for sales managers mentioned it.

The remaining categories ranked as follows: clerk, 37 per cent mentioned age; accountant, 30 per cent mentioned age; salesperson, 23 per cent mentioned age; manager, 22 per cent; telemarketer, 20 per cent; and computer programmer, 18 per cent mentioned age. Job categories with the highest proportion of age requirements also tended to contain a high proportion of women. Youth was prized by many employers, with the widespread use of the adjective "young", often in conjunction with "dynamic" or "energetic". Overall, 25 to 35 was the most desirable age, centring on the late twenties. As I said, there is nothing more soul destroying than unemployment and the pain it brings, particularly to those people in that age group. One can understand why people in their forties who lose their job are obviously in a very difficult situation not only in terms of getting jobs but also in dealing with the family situations that confront them.

That brings me to the hub of what I wanted to say today. I know that in recent times there has been a lot of debate about the economic theories that we should pursue in Government. The economic rationalists, the economic dries, certainly have ascendancy in the economic arguments in Australia and in the world today. The National Party and the Liberal Party have always had their economic dries. In fact, most of them are pretty dried out. But my concern is with the argument that is being put forward.

During my consideration on this contribution today, I took a bit of trouble and went back and read some old publications involving the Keynesian theories. I know that Keynes is not as popular as he used to be and is largely discounted these days by a lot of academics and economists. John Maynard Keynes' *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* is one of the most important books ever written on economics. For a long time it became the basis of the economic policies of most Western nations. Keynes argued that Governments should increase demand to combat or forestall a depression. They could do this by increasing Government spending and keeping interest rates low. This encourages investment and employment and allows consumers to spend more. The level of economic activity depends on the total spending of consumers, business

and Government, with the Government being the most important player because of its greater ability to influence the behaviour of the other two.

If the Government acts in such a way that business expectations are poor, investment spending will be reduced and the economy will eventually move into a depression if the trend is not reversed. But Governments can increase their own spending and encourage the spending of their people by cutting taxes. They can also encourage economic activity by lowering interest rates and making it easier for people and businesses to borrow money which may then be either spent or invested.

According to Keynes, the level of demand coming from consumers, business investors and public agencies was the most important component of the economy. It determined output, income and employment. High levels of demand are essential for both full employment and economic growth. Without total demand, the economy could settle into a level of unemployment, the level depending on the circumstances. The Government had a role in maintaining full employment by means of managing the level of total demand. Governments may use fiscal policy to effect this, using the techniques already outlined to increase total demand and reduce unemployment.

Before Keynes, classical and neo-classical economic theory attributed self-righting qualities to the economic system. Keynes exposed fundamental errors in some of the premises governing these theories, notably the idea that labour had only to lower its price for full employment to be restored. In reality, no matter how cheaply the labour force is willing to work for, full employment is not possible without demand for its services. Employment is determined by total demand, which depends on the existing propensity to consume and invest.

In the United States, the Depression attested to the flaws of laissez faire economies. Roosevelt applied Keynesian techniques, most notably an increase in Government spending, to reduce unemployment in the United States. During World War II one Western democracy after another affirmed them to attain or maintain adequate levels of employment.

I know that to some extent that is a bit of history, but when one looks at the policies of the economic dries, one has to ask, "Where are we? Are we better off? Is it not time that we went back and had a look at some of the Keynesian theories?" Indeed, one of the texts

that I was looking at, which did an analysis of where we were, in fact made that suggestion. When we are dealing with people—and we should not be equated to those fat people sitting in their ivory towers buffered from the real world and not worried about the consequences of policy—and if we are people living in the real world, which I would hope all members of this House are, we need to be sensitive to the unemployment issue and we need to be sensitive about the economic policies which guide us and determine where we are.

The conclusion of *The Rise and Fall of Keynesian Economics* by Michael Bleaney stated—

“From the mid 1960s Keynesianism clearly began to fall out of fashion in the academic world, and though this process may now be beginning to reverse itself, the influence of Keynesian ideas on policy-makers is as low as it has ever been since 1945. Nowadays there is a general fatalism about macro-economic questions and a widespread belief that a policy of fiscal expansion cannot achieve very much to reduce unemployment.”

He then raises the question: “Is such disillusionment with Keynesianism justified?” He states—

“On a theoretical plane, I have argued quite categorically that it is not.”

And he goes on.

I would suggest—and I guess it is a bit highbrow in this debate—that we do need to look in a more rational but at the same time compassionate sense at the economic policies which dominate Government. We need to look at the funding issue. There are those who argue, for example, that in Queensland we need to broaden the tax base, that in fact our tax base is too low. We have been in an advantageous position because of our low-tax nature and because that has been one of the things that have attracted people here. I am not a high-tax person in any sense, but I do think that there will be a time, somewhere along the road, when we will need to look at widening the tax base and maybe issues such as the petrol tax need to be put on the agenda and discussed, looking at it from the position of equity.

For example, whether we want to accept this or not, we do have a low-tax base not only in Queensland but generally in Australia. If something like a petrol tax is looked at, for example, not only is it fair and equitable but it

means that those people who come to Queensland on holidays would pay a small percentage of a petrol tax towards State coffers that would release some of the money now used for road funding. That money could then be used in areas such as schools, hospitals, public transport, employment generation and generally for the infrastructure and social welfare of this State.

I know it is an unpopular concept for anyone to be talking about a new tax, and I accept that. I would be the last to be out there crusading for it. However, if we are looking at quality of life for Queenslanders, and we are looking at where we are when it comes to education, particularly, and health, which were ignored for so long under the National and Liberal Party Governments in this State, we do need to look at a broadening of the tax base, and we need to look at it very seriously. I believe that when the issue of unemployment is considered—which is the other major issue of concern—Queenslanders would be supportive of a one or two cents per litre petrol tax if it contributed to job creation schemes which the Government could pursue.

In the current economic circumstances, this Government has managed the finances of this State in an excellent and competent manner and in a manner which is in the best interests of this State. We must bear in mind that economic growth and expansion and development has occurred, particularly in the south-east corner of Queensland. That growth has been important and we have relied on it as a means of increasing revenue. That is fine. However, it may well be that if we are to maintain the services that are provided currently and that the people of this State want, it will be necessary to consider a petrol tax. I believe that this matter needs to be put on the agenda for debate.

In the few minutes that remain, I want to deal with some other issues relating to my electorate. I have been as supportive as I can—and I will continue to be supportive—of the attempt by the New Farm State School P. and C. Association to obtain funding for its after-school care program. That school has been seeking funding for some time. To date, funding requests have been unsuccessful, but I believe that the matter is now being pursued as urgently as it possibly can. That sort of quality-of-life program could be funded by a petrol tax. It would look after our families. Schools such as that need after-school care, and they need it now. I indicate my support for their efforts to establish that after-school program.

I indicate my support also for the retention of schools in my electorate in their present numbers. In the past, it has been suggested that the Fortitude Valley State School or the Brisbane Central State School will come under some sort of threat. This Government has made it very clear that that is not the case. I indicate my full support for the retention of those facilities.

I turn now to a program announced by the Brisbane City Council which I believe is fundamentally important to our quality of life. I refer to the reduction of waste strategy announced by the Lord Mayor. Unfortunately, we are disposing of much of our waste in an inappropriate manner. The Brisbane City Council, under its Lord Mayor, Jim Soorley, has announced a program which is supported generally by the State Government with some enthusiasm. The council is trying to reduce the community's impact on the environment—an endeavour that we should all applaud. The council has set a strategy titled "Half by 2000", which aims to achieve a 50 per cent reduction in the waste stream entering our tips by the end of this decade. In the 1990s, ours is more than ever a throw-away society. Over the past decade, our population has remained static, but our disposal of waste has almost doubled. Brisbane families currently generate more waste per head than families in any other capital city in Australia. Queensland families generate 1.2 tonnes of waste per person per year. Clearly, something must be done about that.

The Brisbane City Council has introduced a new compost bin program; a recycling and transfer stations program has been established; a voucher system has been introduced; the recycling program is in the process of being introduced; and a recycling technology park is on its way, as is an industrial waste guide and the sale of methane. A whole range of programs put the Brisbane City Council at the forefront of managing our waste more effectively. This is another quality-of-life issue. We must manage our waste effectively now, before south-east Queensland grows even larger, as it undoubtedly will. This program by the Brisbane City Council is one of the most important that it has introduced in recent times. I hope it has the full support of all members of this House.

Time expired.

Mr SANTORO (Clayfield—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (4.33 p.m.): Today, this Parliament is considering a Bill which aims to appropriate moneys from the Consolidated

Fund. This will presumably enable the Government to continue to provide essential Government services to the residents of Queensland. As we debate this Appropriation Bill, it is important for all members of this place to remember and appreciate the essential fact that consolidated revenue is predominantly made up of funds collected from the citizens and wealth-producing enterprises of this State. Thus, it is reasonable for citizens of the State to expect from the Government a level of service delivery which sees them enjoy value for the taxpayers' dollar.

Unfortunately, what my constituents are telling me about service delivery is not pleasing. It is certainly not pleasing to me, and it certainly should not be pleasing to this Government. My constituents are telling me that they and their families and friends in rural and urban Queensland have never felt more underserved by any Government. They tell me that they are sick of paying through the nose the myriad taxes and charges inflicted upon them by Labor Governments and receiving so little in return for their contribution to the public purse. They tell me that they have never seen a Government so indecisive in so many areas of Government administration; yet they also see a Government which is so decisive when it comes to decisions to cut back on essential services to help finance its financial extravagances elsewhere.

My constituents are beginning to understand the old adage that the Labor Party in Government is simply incapable of managing money, and that its idea of equity and social justice is at best vague and, these days more often than not, shows a total disregard of the needs of the citizens and businesses that pay the taxes. They are beginning to appreciate that many of them made a mistake when they elected what these days is a less glossy Goss Labor Government, and they are looking forward to making amends at the appropriate time.

My constituents and the majority of Queenslanders are beginning to see through the empty rhetoric delivered by smooth-talking ALP politicians wearing pinstriped suits, light blue shirts and quasi-establishment ties. These politicians are fooling no-one—neither the people they are seeking to impress or get on with nor the people who, to date, have formed their natural constituencies and who now feel betrayed by a party which has forgotten them. If members opposite do not believe this, I invite them to talk to the rail

workers of Queensland—labourers and stationmasters alike.

Having made these few and indisputable introductory remarks, I wish to talk about service delivery and employment opportunities in Queensland and actually determine whether my constituents are getting fair value out of financial appropriations such as those we are debating today. In defence against what I am about to say, the Government will undoubtedly seek to blame the so-called bad deal which it got from Canberra last week. Of course, Government members will conveniently neglect to remind Queenslanders that they—Goss and company—encouraged a vote for Keating only a few months ago because they said that Keating and Labor would look after Queensland better than would Hewson and the coalition. However, I ask the question: are they really worse off for revenue than they were last year? Clearly, the answer is, "No." For certain, when it came to Medicare funds, Queensland was duded by Keating and Federal Labor to the tune of \$42m, just because Mr Goss and Mr De Lacy, like faithful lap-dogs wanting to earn a pat on the back, did not hold out for a better deal, as did the smarter conservative Treasurers of New South Wales and Victoria.

Mr Davidson: Businessmen.

Mr SANTORO: Yes, businessmen. I take the interjection from the honourable member for Noosa. But Goss and De Lacy cannot deny that this financial year they received an extra \$303m from the Federal Government and that they have raised an extra \$368m from State taxes, charges and fines. That is an increase of 13 per cent. When one considers the total State revenue increase, that figure is \$747m. If that amount is added to the extra \$303m from the Federal Government, then that amount is well over \$1 billion in extra revenue. This Government has that extra amount to play around with this year—not an imaginary \$115m less, but over \$1 billion.

As Mr Lingard and others before me have said, on top of that figure, the Government has raided every hollow log possible, including \$13m from employer contributions to the Workers Compensation Fund, tens of millions of dollars from the Nominal Defendants Fund and \$80m from the Auctioneers and Agents Liability Fund, not to mention \$45m from the ambulance trust funds.

I want to get down to the nitty-gritty of service delivery and talk about value for money. I need not go beyond my own

electorate and the imminent termination of all passenger rail services on the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba rail line. The main points that I want to make about that issue are threefold: passenger rail services have been terminated totally; no consultation occurred with the rail workers along the line; and, more importantly, the travelling public and the alternative bus shuttle service is fraught with problems. My constituents believe that they are entitled to a passenger rail service along that line. They doubt that this track of line is making a loss when revenue from rail freight is included, and even if it was—and this is the important and general point—they believe that part of the tax taken from them should be used to cross-subsidise the small loss being incurred by the passenger rail service.

The residents of Doomben, Whinstanes, Hendra, Clayfield, Pinkenba, Ascot and Hamilton are unimpressed with the callous disregard shown by the Goss Government for their transport needs and their residential amenity. They resent that, prior to the decision being made, no real consultation was undertaken with them or with the commuters. They did not see a representative of Queensland Rail, or the responsible Government Minister, or anybody else from the Government, including all of those people who are supposed to look after the rail workers, nor did they talk to them at the rail stations, on their doorstep, or anywhere else in the community, as I did.

There were some off-the-record, inconclusive discussions with local Queensland Rail staff about what might happen. Those led to rumours circulating about rail closures, and they were finally confirmed at a press conference a few weeks ago. The people were not told, the rail staff were not told and the local member was not told until one and a half hours before the media announcement, despite a written undertaking by the Chief Executive of Queensland Rail to consult fully with me before any decisions were finalised and announced.

A week ago, the Minister responsible for Queensland Rail declined to attend and explain—let alone defend—the decision to terminate rail services at public meetings at which more than 250 people gathered to voice their views and concerns about this decision and, if necessary, be convinced that it was a good decision. However, nobody from Queensland Rail turned up. The Government is ignoring more than 1 000 petitions that I have tabled within this Parliament, or will table tomorrow, against what is happening, let

alone hundreds of letters, response forms and phone calls.

Queensland Rail is wrong when it claims, as it did in yesterday's *Courier-Mail*, that the people in my electorate support its decision to terminate passenger rail services along the Doomben-Pinkenba line. I challenge Queensland Rail to make public the details of responses, and I ask officers of Queensland Rail to come out and talk to the people, and read my petitions and the correspondence. What is the alternative? The alternative is a bus shuttle service that will increase pollution, road congestion and danger on the road—about which the honourable member for Archerfield should be concerned—disadvantage the elderly, the handicapped, school children, mothers and carers who use prams. It will also devalue the residential amenity and financial worth of homes along the bus shuttle route.

Of course, as the Government and my constituents know very well, a reduction in service delivery does not stop at Queensland Rail. If one considers the issue of law and order, one realises quickly that that malaise is well and truly on the march. Recently reported and official figures show that, during the first five months of this year, 350 armed robberies occurred, compared with 594 for all of 1992. That figure represents an increase of nearly 59 per cent over the same period last year. In my own electorate of Clayfield, despite the very good service that is provided by the local police, break and enters are a regular occurrence, particularly on business premises and many of my constituents' homes.

Despite the implementation of a police cluster scheme in my electorate—a scheme which is being implemented throughout the State—I have been told that it is not working as well as it could simply because there are not enough police to cope with the increase in the incidence of crime. Mr Deputy Speaker, you would be well aware of that problem. Thus more pressure is being placed on local communities to provide their own protection, whether that be by the introduction of guardian angels schemes, neighbourhood watch schemes or by hiring private security firms to do the job that should be done by this Government. People resent having to pay taxes and then having to pay more out of their own pockets for essential Government services such as law and order. I commend all of those people who are contributing to their own security by giving their time and more of their money. They believe that they should not have to do that, but they do it because of their

dedication to the community, their families and their businesses.

I mention also the crisis that is gripping the public hospital system because of irresponsible levels of wastage and mismanagement. Queenslanders will recall the shambles of a hospital system which, after Easter, was partially shut down and when all elective surgery came to a halt for three weeks. The Queensland hospital system has had to endure massive cuts in other areas, such as the non-replacement of staff, cutbacks in staff, delays in purchases of equipment and refurbishment, cutbacks in nursing rosters and cutbacks in allied health—all because of the massive financial bungle of unfunded wage rises and a burgeoning bureaucracy and administration, to which reference has been made by other speakers during this debate. Taxpayers have poured hundreds of millions of extra dollars into the health system, whilst at the same time witnessing a spiral in the queues and waiting lists. Almost everybody in Queensland knows someone who is suffering or has suffered under this system. I challenge any member of the Government to prove that this is not the case. So much for the delivery of essential health services under the Goss Labor Government!

What about education services? We have just been told that further cuts in funding of new teaching staff are to occur. You can bet your bottom dollar that replacement teachers will not be put on to replace those who leave the system because of illness, retirement or for any other reason. Class sizes will continue to increase and essential capital works will not be funded. It does not matter whether the schools are in conservative electorates or Labor electorates; they will not be funded. And p. and c. associations will be asked to shoulder even more financial responsibilities so their children can enjoy some of the basic facilities previously provided very easily by Government.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: Eagle Junction's just got a new million dollar school.

Mr SANTORO: I take that interjection from the honourable member for Chermside. I remind him that I was pleased to lead the delegation that initially got the agreement from the Minister for that extension.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: That's rubbish.

Mr SANTORO: I take that interjection, because this speech will be circulated to every constituent in Clayfield. That interjection from the member for Chermside, who tries to take false credit, will be read by many people,

including those with whom he is associated in my electorate.

I wish to quote my colleague the shadow Minister for Education who said that it is time for efficiencies within the Education portfolio to be implemented, because restructuring, endless committees and poor management have already cost Queensland taxpayers millions of dollars. This is evident because very little of the extra \$350m spent on education—and I say this deliberately before Government members get up and say that they have spent an extra \$350m on education—has actually found its way into classrooms. In fact, in a recent speech, former PSMC commissioner David Shand said of the Labor Government—and this is for all the people who will read this speech; do not take my word, take the word of the PSMC commissioner—

“They were desperate to get their expenditure up to national levels, particularly in health and education. They weren't necessarily clear what they wanted to spend the money on. The important thing was spending up to the national level.”

As my honourable colleague, the member for Fassifern said, it does not matter if they spend it on their cronies, it does not matter if they spend it on useless bureaucracy, as long as they spend it. And damn the service delivery!

At the same time, TAFE college budgets are being savagely slashed as the Goss Government tries to deal with its gross economic mismanagement. The preliminary budgets for TAFE colleges show that, on average, funding is being cut by 10 per cent to 16 per cent across-the-board. At the same time, the colleges are being instructed to increase the level of student contact hours that they are offering. This means that the colleges will be getting less money but having to offer more services. The Government is even attempting to cover up the cuts by inflating the figures given to colleges by adding the value of superannuation entitlements, which the colleges have never seen and never will see.

Not only have the operating budgets of TAFE colleges been cut, but there is virtually no provision for capital works. Young people, many of whom are unemployed and, in common with Mr Beattie, we on this side of the House are concerned about the unemployed, are being encouraged by this cynical Government to attend TAFE courses—to train themselves—while this Government is cutting TAFE resources to provide the

necessary training. Cuts have placed teachers under even more strain, and many are at breaking point. So much for service delivery in the TAFE system!

There are other, even more ridiculous examples of Government taking more money and giving back much less. Government members undoubtedly have many pensioners and retirees in their electorates. They should talk to those people who now have to pay a \$5 booking fee which applies to all rail bookings. All the families, all the greenies—upon whom Government members depend, or think they depend—and anyone else who wishes to enjoy our national parks will now be asked to pay for the privilege of enjoying their national and natural estate. They are being charged to walk on the green grass and breathe the fresh air, all because of the voracious revenue-raising inclinations of the Goss Labor Government, which is wasting the inheritance handed down by the previous National Party and coalition Governments.

Government members should talk to the pensioners and the sick who will not be able to use the Ambulance Service to take them to hospitals and doctors for routine but often essential check-ups. If members opposite were interested in real service delivery, real equity and real social justice, they would probably say to me that ambulances should not be used as ferries. But that is not the point. If they were prepared to make that interjection, I would probably concede the point that ambulances should not be used as ferries. However, the point is that this service used to be provided by an ambulance system that was efficient, well cashed up and always ready to service the community. Today, the Ambulance Service is in a shambles—broke, demoralised and another victim of the Goss Labor Government's ineptitude, greed and mismanagement. That will be the death knell for this Government.

I have been talking about service. To top it all off—under the new ambulance funding arrangements for this financial year, family subscriptions have risen by \$12 to \$78, while the minimum charge for new subscribers has soared from \$116 to \$250—more money for Labor's dubious social engineering experiments and economic bungling. This is from a Government that says that it is going broke. But at the same time, it keeps raising taxes. This Government says that it is going to balance its budget, yet it manages to increase expenditure by 21 per cent. One does not have to be Einstein or the economically illiterate—which the Treasurer is—to realise that one cannot balance a budget, take in an

extra \$1 billion and yet reduce services. Something is happening in the State of Queensland. Something is terribly, terribly wrong. Some people might say that it is terribly, terribly corrupt.

Last week, I had the pleasure to host a guest from Victoria, the Honourable Phil Gude, MP, the Minister for Industry and Employment. He said to me that on Friday he was listening to various radio news bulletins and he heard speculation about possible cutbacks to education services, the closure of small schools, the introduction of charges to enter national parks, and so on. He told me that he closed his eyes and put the specific Queensland names out of his mind, and what he was hearing was Victorian Labor all over again. Clearly, Wayne Goss, in the opinion of that Minister—and certainly in the opinion of people on this side of the House—is well on his way to achieving one of his greatest boasts—he can never live it down—that he will do for Queensland what John Cain did for Victoria. We in the Opposition will keep reminding the people of Queensland what that boast really means—not that they will need reminding, either today or at the next State election.

I conclude by reminding honourable members of the plight of a rail worker. Today in Queensland, one would not want to be a sacked rail worker who has just been mugged outside an unmanned police station on his way to an underfunded TAFE college, in obvious need of an ambulance to take him to a public hospital where, in all probability, the appropriate ward would be closed. That is the ridiculous situation in which Queenslanders find themselves, all because Government members are only interested in looking after their mates, indulging in social engineering and indulging in class warfare.

Time expired.

Mr DOLLIN (Maryborough) (4.55 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to join this debate. The fourth Goss Labor Government Budget Estimates are sound, solid and balanced. This Budget will promote our State as the lowest taxed State of Australia. That will be achieved in spite of a severe world economic downturn, the worst recession in Australia since the Great Depression of the thirties and the trade war that is raging between the USA and the European common market countries, which has forced many of our primary producers out of world markets or drastically reduced their produce incomes and deprived Queensland of approximately \$1 billion from primary industries contributions in the last 12 months.

In this Government's term of office, we have witnessed the worst floods that have been experienced in Queensland in the last 100 years, which have cost millions of dollars to our economy. Following on from floods, Queensland is now in the grip of one of the worst droughts in more than 100 years. Unless the rainfall that the coastal strip has enjoyed over the last few days reaches the western parts of Queensland, the drought will only worsen. The rain that we have received has been of great benefit, but in no way does it put an end to the drought.

More than \$45m from State sources and \$21m from Commonwealth sources have been made available to assist our hard-pressed rural producers who, because of floods, droughts and corrupt world markets, are fighting for their very existence. When consideration is taken of outgoings of \$24m from the State Budget, \$1 billion lost in revenue and the \$115m cut in Commonwealth grants, it is a miracle that the Treasurer, Mr Keith De Lacy, has been able to bring down better than a balanced Budget. If one could find in our State such a thing as a flooded river, I am almost certain that our Treasurer would not need a boat to cross it.

With the exception of a tobacco tax, there are no new taxes and no increases in existing taxes or charges above the CPI. The Budget provides relief also for businesses in the area of payroll tax. The payroll tax exemption level has been lifted to \$700,000 and the rate reduced to 5 per cent, yet businesses in other States are still paying 7 per cent. As well, the people of Queensland enjoy the lowest workers' compensation rates in Australia. Those factors will be a great incentive to small businesses to employ extra staff. The Opposition had 32 opportunities to do something about payroll tax. Opposition members are forever talking about how they would like to abolish the tax. However, they had 32 years to do something about it and all they ever did was increase it.

Maryborough and Hervey Bay are poised to continue to take full advantage of the exciting opportunities that are opening up through the World Heritage listing of Fraser Island. The switched-on tourist promoters of our region are at this moment investing hundreds of millions of dollars in either upgrading or adding to existing complexes and developing new, exciting resorts. Eurong resort, owned and managed by Mr Sid Melksham and Ms Angela Burger, a pioneer developer on Fraser Island, is already up and running. They have invested millions of dollars and are committed to investing many more

millions of dollars. They are taking advantage of the surge in tourism that has taken place because of the \$8m international and domestic promotion and the World Heritage listing of the island last year.

Corporate Queensland Limited has completed the first stage in the development of a very exciting resort on the west coast of Fraser Island at a cost of \$65m. The resort is situated near White Cliffs, not far from where the Commando Z Force operated during World War II. It is known as Kingfisher Resort and Village and already 100 people are working there. When completed, the resort will employ 150 permanent staff. Other small existing resorts are also gearing up, and there are other new ventures in the planning stages.

This Budget will also give a major boost to public health services. The Government will implement its election commitments, including the \$150m Jobs Plan and the commencement of the \$1.5 billion 10-year hospital rebuilding plan, which became necessary because our hospitals were falling apart. Over the last 20 years, they had virtually not had a nail hammered into them. Total health funding will increase by millions over last year's funding. For the second Budget in a row, the Goss Government has given a major funding boost to our public health services in an attempt to try to pick up the slack after the years of neglect by the previous National Party Government. For the five years prior to the election of the Goss Labor Government, expenditure on health did not even keep pace with inflation, let alone increase in real terms.

I congratulate all primary producers on their stamina, courage and determination in the way that they have fought back against floods, fires, corrupt world markets and the lousy prices that they have had to put up with. I know that this drought must feel like the last straw and that it must be hard to continue. I know that to work long hours month in, month out for little or no return is hard enough, but to have to watch animals starve and die after all that effort is pretty devastating. I commend the Premier and the Cabinet for their initiatives in the present drought relief packages that they have in place. I realise that no Government would ever have the resources to compensate adequately for droughts of the magnitude that we are experiencing. More rain is the only real solution.

I turn now to Maryborough and what has happened in that area. Some of the highlights include: a \$10m TAFE college completed last year which is now in full operation; a lands,

surveying and mapping regional headquarters established in Maryborough, creating 45 jobs; headquarters for the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development established in Maryborough that created seven jobs; a \$13.2m electricity line contract was won by a private contractor, Persal and Company; and close to a \$2m electricity pole contract was won by Hyne and Son. That ensured that the pole yard was busy well into 1993.

Kingfisher Bay was completed for \$65m, and is employing approximately 130 people. Eurong Resort has invested almost \$2m this year. Next year, it plans to spend more to cope with the extra boost in tourism expected due to World Heritage listing of Fraser Island. William's and Company constructed a large resort of 29 villas on Fraser Island for an investment of \$10m. Dale and Meyers Sawmilling Company at Tiaro near Maryborough has become the largest producer of landscaping timber in Queensland. This year, it installed a state-of-the-art treatment plant worth \$500,000 for the treatment of poles and other products. The mill employs 35 people. It was barely in existence four years ago. They are working two shifts and are still hard-pressed to keep up with demand. So much for our slump!

An \$80m contract has been won by Walkers Ltd to manufacture electric trains for the Queensland railways. It has been successful also in winning two sugar industry contracts worth approximately \$30m from South East Asia.

Mr Johnson: Don't worry about South East Asia. Think about Queensland.

Mr DOLLIN: Walkers work force is now 500 people; when the Labor Party came to Government, it was 330. Walkers has committed \$6.4m to upgrade its factory, and it has the fullest order book that it has had for many years. Hyne and Son and partner, Sumitomo, won a \$100m contract to chip 1.7 million cubic metres of pine cullings. It is estimated that it will create 80 direct jobs, and is expected to flow on to at least another 20 jobs—I spoke about this contract this morning—with two business people in Maryborough, one a high ranking National Party member, doing their damndest to jam and scrag this project. That is fairly typical of the National Party!

We have closed Zante Street opposite Albert State School to make it safe for children to cross. For years, the school has been trying to have that done, but with no luck under the National Party Government. Previously, the

children had to run across the street to their playground. Land has been purchased at Curra for the future development of a school. An ablution block and new teaching block at Bauple State High School has been constructed at a cost of \$380,000. New classrooms for Mungar and Brooweena State Schools, Gunalda and a new science block at Aldridge State High School have been constructed also. Other developments include a multipurpose shelter at Maryborough State High School worth \$750,000; extensions to the Maryborough day care centre worth \$125,000; and \$3m for public units and houses. I am confident that with those developments under our belt, the Maryborough and Hervey Bay area is leading our State out of the recession. I predict that 1993 will be a great year for Maryborough—the first half of it has been pretty good.

Some of the developments to look forward to include: Sunstate establishing its regional head office in Maryborough. That has now been completed. A travel terminus has been developed at the Maryborough historic railway station. Building of the new maternity ward for the Maryborough Base Hospital has commenced at a cost of \$2m. Hyne and Son have expended a \$3.5m addition to the Tuan complex, which now brings its investment to about \$25m. The division of sport and recreation regional headquarters has been established, creating nine jobs. Even the Commonwealth decided to establish its CES regional office in Maryborough.

I want to congratulate the Treasurer on his estimate Budget. I believe that it is the only Budget in Australia that is in the black—the rest are well and truly in the red. I will give credit to the National Party when it is due. It did not do too bad a job, but we have done a lot better. We are stuffing money up the hollow logs; we have a surplus. The Opposition should just sit back, enjoy the ride and see what a good Budget this is.

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South) (5.07 p.m.): The people of Queensland are absolutely staggered and perplexed about the financial shenanigans and cover-up by this Government. We have a record allocation to Queensland from the Premiers Conference of \$5,732m. It is an increase of \$300m on the previous year, or a 5.3 per cent increase, or over double that of inflation. Yet, the Premier bleats that we are \$115m short, just to set everyone up for the big cover-up of the massive spending hikes and the service cutbacks. With funding of that size, at the very least, everything done in 1992-93 should be capable of continuing; but it is not, because

this Government has priced itself right out of business.

Spending has gone through the roof, and the good basic services Queenslanders had come to expect under National and coalition Governments have disappeared. Queensland has become a State that has lost its ability to make proper use of public money and deliver the basic services. The disastrous mismanagement of Queensland Health tells it all—\$662m more money in the 1992 Budget compared with that in 1989. That is a 46.4 per cent increase. What do we get for all these millions? A litany of closed wards, end to elective surgery, ever-growing waiting lists, secret investigations of the health department by other Government agencies, staff not replaced, drugs and dressing supplies run down, wards closed and filled in with offices, all sorts of fancy schemes, promotions and programs, but no medical superintendents or junior doctors.

The department is obsessed with “de-medicalising” the system so that bureaucrats can run it their way instead of the patients’ way. Staff members are working to dangerous limits because they have not had any replacements or because their rosters have been cut back. The nursing profession is in total conflict with the Government over massive hikes in the cost of board and lodging; over the Government’s complete backflip in relation to the 38-hour week; over the Government’s refusal to have a registered nurse as the executive officer of the Queensland Nursing Council; over the continued demands on nurses to become more efficient, work harder with no rewards and just bear the pain of this Government’s mismanagement; and, finally, the pathetic removal of a total annual subsidy of \$15,000 per annum which assisted medical students to obtain work experience in rural areas. After four years of Labor, the result of its health policy is like a raging bushfire; smoke is billowing everywhere as health workers signal their unhappiness with the Goss Government’s scorched earth policy.

In 1989, one of the promises made by the Goss Labor Government was to inject more money into the Health budget. Since then, the State’s Health budget has grown by \$662m or 46 per cent, yet the system continues to be starved of funds. Where has the money gone? It is widely known that Queensland’s public health system is in decay. Owing to bureaucratic bungling, facilities are lying unused while there are lengthy waiting lists for a variety of surgical procedures. I cite the example of Townsville’s

Kirwan psychiatric hospital, which was empty for 12 months, and the complete double unit day surgery at the Toowoomba General Hospital which was fully furnished and ready to go, but which was empty for 12 months and is likely to be empty for another 15 months.

The Goss Government has made a complete mess of health policy. One only has to look at the following facts to realise this. In two and a half years, there have been two reviews of the Health Department, the first by the Public Sector Management Commission and the second, that is still under way, is being done at the behest of the powerful Cabinet Budget Review Committee. The undertaking of a review and an investigation in two and a half years indicates just how serious the problems are in the Health Department, and those reviews do not take into account the reprimands and directives from Treasury and from the Premier's office to the Minister's office and to the director-general.

One problem with the Health budget is quite clear and simple. The Government imposed on the State's hospitals and health services substantial wage increases which were unfunded; in other words, they robbed the hospitals to pay for the wage rises. The 1992-93 financial year has been marked by massive budgetary mismanagement of the system. Regions received their budgets half way through the financial year—in most cases, in January—and were forced to then make major cuts in their budgets and services to bring about balanced outcomes. Queensland hospitals have been forced to make these cuts to cover major unfunded wage increases imposed from above by the Government, and in which they had absolutely no say.

Let me examine the investigation being carried out by the Cabinet Budget Review Committee. The investigation is being conducted by a small group of officers from Treasury, the Office of the Cabinet and the PSMC. The following information comes to me in a letter from Dr Peter Coaldrake and it gives an insight into the serious problems being experienced by the Health Department at the top level of administration. Firstly, neither the Minister nor the head of the department was allowed to be part of the investigation. It is my advice that the investigation was planned and announced by the Premier while the Minister was on holidays. Of itself, that is an ominous sign of trouble and lack of confidence. Secondly, the powerful CBRC asked for an investigation, which suggests that there are continuing problems with departmental management of the Health budget. On top of this, the CBRC snubbed the Health

Department and did not include in the investigation team one single officer from the department.

Quite clearly, the investigation, coupled with the snubbing of health professionals from the department, is a vote of no confidence in the Minister and the director-general. It is just 12 months since the Under Treasurer wrote to the Director-General of Health about concerns relating to the program management issue. Because the CBRC investigation suggests that matters have not changed, I will quote from that letter. The Under Treasurer stated—

“The recent Treasury survey of the implementation of program management indicated that Health is behind the rest of the Queensland public sector, particularly in the areas of strategic planning, operational plans and performance assessment. This raises real questions about the capacity of Health to manage its resources without adequate links to achievement of results with obvious potential impacts on support for allocation of further resources to the Health area.”

This was a veiled threat, if ever there was one, and it should have been enough to make any Minister or director-general sit up and take notice.

The reprimand delivered in 1992, and the current investigation, show Cabinet's concern about ongoing problems with the Health budget and the ability of people at the top to solve the problems. The Cabinet Budget Review Committee sponsored investigation was confined to specific matters referred by the CBRC, according to the Chairman of the Public Sector Management Commission, Dr Peter Coaldrake, and is quite different in nature to the functional and structural departmental reviews that the PSMC has carried out—such as the one the PSMC carried out on the Queensland Ambulance Service. The CBRC's authorisation of this investigation shows that the Minister and the director-general were not able to supply the answers that Cabinet and the CBRC wanted.

Apparently, the outcome of the Health budget investigation will form part of the material that Cabinet and the CBRC will examine in the course of preparing the forthcoming Budget. The poor, beleaguered Minister and the director-general are in an invidious situation because they are not even in charge of their own patch. There is one clear way of telling people that they are running off the rails, and that is to begin an inquiry into their performance, particularly when they are away. That is exactly what the

Premier has done. The Premier has placed his Health Minister on notice and has indicated that the Minister has to lift his game or be shuffled sideways.

The Premier has good reason to be concerned. Funds have been poured into a melting pot of unnecessary middle management positions and this has left shortages of operational staff in the hospitals. At the same time, rural communities are crying out for urgently needed doctors. Rural communities need some 100 doctors, approximately 80 of whom should be general practitioners. Many of the doctors in rural communities who are carrying out their duties have not been able to take a holiday for three or four years. Because no Australian doctors want to work under the Federal Government's rural register scheme, doctors are being sought overseas. On top of this, the Goss Labor Government wants to increase board and lodging charges paid by nurses in rural and regional areas from \$47 a week to \$187 a week, which is just another slap in the face and disincentive for rural nurses. Unlike their counterparts in larger centres, rural nurses do not have the option of sharing houses or flats. If the Government persists with this 75 per cent increase, it will have a savage impact on first-year enrolled nurses who receive only \$222 a week after tax. The Nurses Union is absolutely opposed to the increase, which will result in nurses packing their bags and going back to the cities.

The Goss Labor Government is using the increase as one of the bargaining points in a trade-off for a 38-hour week for all nurses. That move demonstrates that the Health Department is looking for cash in a bid to cover up for the financial bungling of its senior management. If it is ever released, the CBRC investigation will come late in the ever-unfolding saga of the Health budget. The Premier, the Treasurer and the Health Minister could have obtained an extra \$40m for Queensland if they had not rushed in to sign the Medicare agreement. Premier Goss and Health Minister Hayward were totally outnegotiated, outfoxed and outmanoeuvred in the Medicare agreement negotiations. The result was a disaster—a \$40m financial disaster for Queensland.

Premiers from other States were able to extract a better deal than did Premier Goss and Mr Hayward. They were shown up as incompetent, inexperienced and naive. On each occasion that Medicare has been negotiated, it has always been a knock-down, drag-out fight, as each State jostled to get the best results for its citizens. But no, Premier

Goss and Minister Hayward were the first to agree to the terms in a great rush to slot into Keating's Federal election strategy. As early as 30 August 1992, Minister Hayward welcomed the terms of the agreement, which he said would give extra funds to States that treat more public patients. Then on 1 December 1992, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory indicated their in-principle support for the five-year funding agreement. Queensland signed the Medicare agreement on 2 February 1993. On the other hand, Victoria and New South Wales signed on 10 February, after much haggling, and got the better deal of the entire States.

One thing is quite clear: former Ministers for Health in the 1980s would certainly never have rolled over as easily as Minister Hayward did. The Premier now whinges that he is \$115m down. The point is that he did not do his job properly in negotiating the best Medicare deal for Queensland. He and Health Minister Hayward were directly responsible for a \$40m loss in general grants, which was used to fund the New South Wales Medicare money. They were outsmarted. States such as New South Wales and Victoria knew exactly the benchmark for negotiation once Queensland had caved in. They were able to negotiate upwards with the loss of millions to Queensland. As a result of the Medicare debacle, there will be more cutbacks, and this comes on top of the already bungled State Health Budget.

In today's *Courier-Mail*, the Minister foreshadowed \$20m worth of cuts. Who will they be? Will it be the nurses, as they have their career restructure ripped away, the cleaners, the laundry workers or the domestics? Since the middle of 1992, more than two dozen documents leaking ward closures, closures of elective surgery, increases in waiting times and delays in radium treatment for cancer have revealed the appalling state of the Health Department. The situation is beyond concern when Queenslanders are dying whilst awaiting treatment. Under the Government's disgraceful policies, several people have died awaiting cardiac surgery at the Prince Charles Hospital.

In April this year, 1 100 people were on the waiting list for orthopaedic surgery at the PA, with another 250 waiting for eye surgery. A pensioner was told that, through the public health system, he would have to wait two years for a set of dentures. The reason for that wait is that 500 other people were waiting at the same hospital. It is an indictment on Government policy that the elderly in our

community are subjected to that discomfort. Despite those instances of painful and even fatal circumstances, there have been repeated reports of ward closures and ever-growing elective surgery waiting lists.

At many Queensland public hospitals, elective surgery is almost impossible for public patients. If one lives on the Gold Coast, one just waits five years or more for orthopaedic or eye surgery. In addition to those waiting lists, there have been critical delays in the treatment of cancer patients and no replacement of vital equipment such as X-ray equipment. Meanwhile, the rural areas are getting a disgracefully low level of service. The medical practitioners, such as the members of the Flying Doctor Service, bush nurses and GPs who work in non-metropolitan areas are dedicated individuals. During this time, some of them have been on call for 24 hours a day. One cannot blame doctors for not wanting to practise in country areas under those sorts of conditions where they cannot get proper relief. Currently, there is no medical superintendent at Quilpie, Cunnamulla, Richmond, Julia Creek and Alpha. No matter which region one looks at, there is a disaster.

In January 1993, a review of the availability of specialist services in Gladstone was announced following criticism from the Gladstone AMA and the State AMA. The President of the AMA at that time, Graham Row, said that Gladstone had a critical shortage of medical specialists to deal with psychiatric and eye problems. Dr Row and Gladstone's association spokesman, Dr John Bird, said the standard of psychiatric care in the Gladstone region was on a par with that in Third World countries. But there is a drastic shortage of specialists at every hospital up and down the coast: ear, nose and throat specialists, orthopaedic specialists, ophthalmologists, urologists, psychiatrists, and the list goes on.

At the Nambour Hospital, a young man was told that he would have to wait 12 months for day surgery to determine the damage to his knee. He subsequently telephoned the hospital. It was revealed that he may as well be on a waiting list for a further two to three years. In January this year, a Queensland psychiatrist warned that tight budgeting by public hospitals was causing a psychiatric crisis. In January of this year, the Royal Brisbane Hospital confirmed that it would cut services in a bid to save \$4m. In January of this year, public hospitals were struggling to cope with a staggering \$52m shortfall in the State Health budget. Over the past six months, ward closures, the postponement of

elective surgical procedures, the axing of casual workers and full-time staff not being replaced when they leave has increased the strain upon the wavering strength of the State's health service. Public hospitals confirm that people are waiting as long as 28 weeks even for an appointment to see a specialist. Patients then face months or years before they enter an operating theatre for elective surgery.

Even services as vital to life as the Blood Bank have not escaped the squeeze. In February, the Blood Bank had to sack 27 staff, take a mobile patrol off the road and reduce the number of collections. Those measures had to be taken so that the Blood Bank could stay within the constraints of its budget. Hospitals Statewide were warned to use blood supplies sparingly in the wake of that funding crisis. A Gold Coast carpenter needed one day in hospital for wrist surgery. He could have been back at work in three months, but public health doctors told him that he could be on the waiting list for five years. In Mackay, public health administrators became embroiled in a row over leaked documents which showed that the Mackay Base Hospital was in the midst of a funding crisis with a predicted shortfall of \$780,000.

It is time for the Government to get serious with the Health Budget and stop the social experimentation. The unease within the regions about their future is preventing the proper delivery of services. No-one knows where they stand. Every health authority is in limbo. The Health Department has not even been able to reappoint health authority representatives who were due to be replaced on 30 June, so they cannot get a quorum, cannot meet and cannot decide. Those are the top-level committees of the Health Department—the regional authorities who oversee all funding and operations of every region.

Talk is running like a bushfire through the department of heaps of redundancies. The redundancies will be in the chief office in Brisbane and in the regional offices. If the rumours are correct, those redundancies will be expensive; they will bring to an end the administration experiment; and they will make no difference to the Health budget. The average redundancy could cost \$120,000. As a result of the special investigation, it is rumoured that regions will be cut from 13 to 8. Where will they be, and why will the Minister not announce them? Is South Coast going to go? Is Wide Bay going to go? Are the Sunshine Coast, West Moreton and Mackay going to go? Just what will happen? The most

worrying aspect is that the regions are going to get bigger—they will become almost mini-departments—and the regional centre more powerful.

It is clear that the Goss Labor Government has lost the plot and that it is into experimentation, trial and error—sack the cleaners, the laundry staff or domestics; rip away the nurses' career structure; cut back the nursing rosters; make everyone work harder and longer and threaten not to pay their overtime or allow them to take sick leave. The number of regional executive officers will be cut, it is rumoured, from 48 to 8. If that is right, why does the Minister continue to hide the special investigation report in his drawer? The abolition of regional executive officer positions will have an enormous impact upon the decision-making process. It could mean a Cunnamulla regional officer having to call Toowoomba. Someone at Dysart, instead of calling Moranbah, would have to call Rockhampton. It is administration gone mad. Dozens and dozens of people will be wanting decisions from regional directors who will be flat out coping but who at the same time will have their power increased considerably.

The Government has decided to get rid of middle management, but that will be at a cost, and the cost will be the death knell of local decision-making. The whole concept of regionalisation is simply collapsing around these bandaid hit-and-miss changes. It is interesting to note that while the queues get longer and the waiting lists more acute, money is presently being spent on the central health office. I might add that the rearrangement of a unit of 20 people costs around \$60,000.

One way of clearing the air would be for the Premier and the Minister to release this report. However, their extreme reluctance to release it shows the depth of the trouble in which they find themselves. The report was due to be finished by 30 April, but has been repeatedly held back and has still not been released. One wonders whether the Minister will ever have the courage to release the document in its entirety and rid the Health Department of its uncertainty and lack of direction.

After the 1989 election, the Health Department purged its talent and threw away the good, experienced, professional people. No wonder the current crop miscalculated by millions of dollars the cost of the classification remuneration system. It is just a shame that Queensland hospitals, the patients and the staff bear the pain of that bungle. No wonder

they were outfoxed and outnegotiated in the Medicare agreement by Keating and the coalition Governments of New South Wales and Victoria! It is a shame that it cost Queensland \$40m in Commonwealth grants and the jobs of innocent Government employees. No wonder there has been a special investigation into the Health Department's administration! It is a shame that the Minister hides the report and destabilises all his regional health authorities and decision-making staff. No wonder they are off side with doctors, nurses and hospital staff. It is a shame that these loyal staff have been led down the garden path with promises of better things to come, only to find in every Budget more cuts, more efficiency demands, more job losses and more broken promises.

Everyone knows that Queensland Health, like all other Goss Government departments, is costing itself out of the necessary basic hospital services that it should be providing. Everyone can see that last year's Health Department budget was \$2.1 billion—a huge amount of money—an increase of \$662m over the previous three years, and everyone keeps asking, "Where has all the money gone and where have all the hospital services gone?"

Time expired.

Mr PITT (Mulgrave) (5.27 p.m.): I am pleased to rise in this debate and speak to the Appropriation Bill. This Bill will provide carry-on finance to enable the Government to continue to provide important services to the people of Queensland until the 1993-94 Budget is brought down in September.

I wish to address my remarks to the current drought conditions in rural Queensland and the situation in south-west Queensland in particular. While there is nothing more soul destroying than extreme drought, history shows a proud record of recovery from this, the very worst that nature can throw at us here in Queensland. We cannot control nature, but we can overcome some of its effects, especially when Government, industry and the rural and urban communities are prepared to pull together for the betterment of the whole State, and we are seeing this at the moment.

The Goss Government recognises the vital role that rural industries play in maintaining the prosperity of the State's regional and rural communities and the State's economy as a whole. I believe that to match the rural sector's ability, the Government is pulling its weight in these trying times. If time permits later, I will detail a few of the ways in which that is occurring. However,

the situation in rural Queensland is still serious.

I turn now to rising indebtedness among farm families. Based on figures from producers using the DPI farm counselling service, average indebtedness has risen from \$169,000 in 1988 to \$478,000 this year, and 48 per cent of graziers have equity levels of 50 per cent or less. Inevitably, and almost regardless of what happens to the weather and to wool prices in the next few years, many will have to make the difficult decision to sell. Land degradation, including extensive soil erosion, and woody weed invasion costing an estimated \$52m a year in lost production have taken their toll. Yields of water from the Great Artesian Basin are down by half since the turn of the century. Hundreds of bore heads are no longer efficient, having deteriorated over that period.

Existing Government schemes for farm buy-out and consolidation of properties, such as the RAS and PIPES schemes in particular, are not meeting the scale of adjustment needed to resolve the problems of the regional economy by those means. Economic adjustment has been blocked by a depressed property market, drought, low wool prices and failing confidence. These underlying factors will make any rural reconstruction program difficult to implement.

In dollar terms, this drought has cost Queensland dearly, with this State presently standing to lose more than \$725m. This equates, one might say, to the loss of 15 500 potential full-time jobs. Given the outlook currently, this figure is set to increase. These dollar figures do not account for the social hardship that the drought is causing in rural communities. However, the Government has responded to this hardship, with over \$68m being committed in State and Federal funds to assist drought-affected primary producers since the onset of the drought in 1991. As serious as the situation is, rural Queenslanders are made of sterner stuff. They realise that this Government is doing its best for them in difficult budgetary circumstances. It was most pleasing on my recent trip to the south west to have the people of that region give credit where it is due.

I intend now to focus on the mulga region of Queensland. The mulga region, covering some 19 million hectares, produces 15 per cent of the State's gross value of livestock products—some \$127m per annum. This region is subject to severe land degradation. It has been estimated that more than one-third

of the region is seriously affected. Loss of production due to degradation has been estimated at some \$52m per annum, as I said before. This severe degradation has arisen through the interaction of climatic, ecological, human and economic factors. Property sizes are inadequate, even during periods of buoyant commodity prices.

In September 1991, Cabinet accepted a proposition from the Minister for Land Management that a position paper be prepared. This report, presented to Cabinet in January 1993, set out a comprehensive package of measures to arrest land degradation and to improve the viability of the pastoral industry in the mulga region of south-west Queensland. To accomplish this task, a Mulga Land Use Advisory Group was formed. Government departments, the pastoral industry, banks, the Queensland Industry Development Corporation and conservation and Landcare interests were represented on that committee. In April 1992, the group provided a preliminary report. The key issues to come out of that report were: degradation; property size and economics—that is, the build-up program; carrying capacities; property management planning; water supply—the serious situation with bore drains; nature conservation; kangaroo management; feral animal control—in particular, goats; and, of course, social welfare issues.

The excellent work done by the Mulga Land Use Advisory Group is well recognised. It is to be commended for its grassroots approach to the issues. Its approach is signalled by the cooperative manner in which it interfaced with Government departments and other agencies in the region. It is a good model to follow. I believe that the strategy that the Government will put in place in south-west Queensland has drawn upon the good recommendations of the Mulga Land Use Advisory Group.

What was the Government's response to this? Cabinet approved the Land Degradation Voluntary Build-up Scheme. The scheme has attracted a great deal of interest. However, I must point out that it has made only a modest contribution to solving the problems in the region, mainly because of the debt loads of property owners. That is one of the underlying factors that will make things difficult. The South-west Queensland Interdepartmental Working Group was set up to examine the various options developed in the position paper. This all led to what is termed the South-west Queensland Reconstruction Strategy. From the beginning, the United Graziers Association was involved with the

interdepartmental group. The association appreciated the opportunity to contribute to the process. The association is now a participant in the strategy to change the situation in the south west.

In broad terms, the studies in the mulga lands and the south-west Queensland region have concluded that the region is operating on an increasingly unsustainable basis in economic and ecological terms. It has been suggested—and these figures are open to interpretation—that as many as 200 of the 1 200 land-holders are unlikely to have a viable future. We certainly hope that the figure of 200 is too high. Sustainability depends on reduced grazing pressure and better management practices. A stable population is needed in the area. If that is to be achieved, a more diversified economic base is necessary.

The interdepartmental working group identified a number of strategies and actions to address those issues. These were considered by the Government. Recently, we had the opportunity to tour the south west and explain some of the details of that strategy to the people in that area. The first component was a regional strategy. It will attempt to address employment issues, infrastructure issues and options for economic development through the preparation of a regional development plan; through the involvement of the Commonwealth in funding a regional rural adjustment scheme; and through a plan to realise the potential of an expanded kangaroo industry. Some of the elements of that regional strategy include a regional plan to guide economic development in the area to create a broader and more stable economic base for south-west Queensland. Another element is a special regional focus for special Commonwealth Rural Adjustment Scheme support funds involving Queensland, and possibly New South Wales. As we all understand, south-west Queensland and the mulga lands have a great deal in common with the northern parts of New South Wales.

Another element of the strategy would be a Commonwealth/State plan to realise the full economic value of the kangaroo industry. It is currently estimated that the annual return from that industry is \$12m. It has a potential, some believe, to realise annual returns as high as \$70m. If some of the kangaroos are removed from the scene, improved environmental stability in the area will result.

The second element of the strategy is a property reconstruction strategy. It will use existing land trading provisions of the Rural Adjustment Scheme and changes to the

Primary Industries Productivity Enhancement Scheme—that is, the mulga voluntary build-up scheme—to accelerate property build-up. It also provides incentives and advice to encourage non-viable land-holders to leave earlier and release their land for property build-up. The strategy will look for reduced resource degradation and improved productivity and viability. Of course, in the long term, we will be hoping for a reduced dependence on Government assistance. All Australians like to stand on their own two feet.

There will be a need for social adjustment advice, in particular, to help land-holders make earlier decisions to leave and to integrate into new surroundings with a positive attitude. When I say “new surroundings”, it certainly is hoped that not all of those people will leave the region but that they will find homes in the south west in some productive capacity. There is also a need to look at flexible interest rate incentives to attract potential viable land-holders to improve their property size and viability. It was pointed out to the group as we toured around the south west that, for that to apply, an improvement will need to occur in the conditions in the area as a base from which to work.

We also need to look at sustainable use of the land guaranteed through the preparation and monitoring of binding agreements with land-holders, based on property management plans, where land-holders receive assistance. Of course, with water conditions being the way they are, bore piping and bore head rehabilitation loom high on the list of priorities. We need to enter into a program that will ensure sustainable water supplies, improve grazing management and control pests and woody weeds.

The implementation plan which would be put in place would probably have more than one element. We need to bring together on a regional basis—perhaps in the form of a regional implementation team—the full resources of the State, the Commonwealth and local government in some sort of integrated approach. We would need to link industry people, the lenders, the community and other stakeholders together to support the implementation process. Of course, above and beyond all that, a great need exists in the area to ensure local management and decision making. Of great concern to the people to whom we spoke was the need for local ownership of the strategy.

A regional implementation team will be established in Charleville to ensure a whole-of-government approach. It will coordinate with

agencies and local groups, including the Mulga Land Use Advisory Group and others. Although the departments will work together, their job will be to interface with community groups to make sure that the process is as cohesive and as coordinated as possible. The second tier is partnership councils. They are proposed for the major regional centres to ensure coordination between Government, financial institutions and land-holders. Of course, recognition will need to be given to varying local needs—for example, property build-up issues. Negotiations must continue with the Commonwealth Government, with the New South Wales Government and with the lending institutions, because this strategy will depend to a large extent on goodwill and cooperation between all parties.

Last week, I took the Premier's northern and rural task force through the south west. We were accompanied by some officers, and along the way met with officers from the Division of Land Management of the Department of Primary Industries, the Office of Rural Communities and, of course, from the UGA we had Mr David Moore and Mr Lindsay Godfrey. I am appreciative of their efforts over that week. They were very adept at explaining the industry's point of view. I must say that they gave due credit to the Government and endorsed the strategy wholeheartedly. I am sure that that feeling was reciprocated by most of the graziers.

We had to split into two groups because we had a lot of territory to cover. I led one group, which consisted of the member for Ipswich West, Mr Livingstone, and the member for Kurwongbah, Mrs Woodgate. The deputy chairman of the Premier's northern and rural task force is the member for Fitzroy, Mr Jim Pearce. In his first activity in that role, he led the other group consisting of himself, the member for Mansfield, Ms Laurel Power, and the member for Nudgee, Mr Ken Vaughan. We met in Toowoomba and, after an initial press conference, went to Roma. On the way, we called in to see Mr Littleproud—the member for that region—who at that time was laid up with an illness. We took the opportunity to brief him, as we did with Mr Hobbs, the member for Warrego, and Mr Johnson, the member for Gregory. It was clear to us and to those other members that the situation was serious and that it was not a time to play politics. It was a case of everybody working together towards a common goal. Of course, in the long term, the beneficiaries will be not only the State of Queensland but also the people of that region.

The group that I led went through places such as Bollon, St George, Cunnamulla, Augathella and Charleville. I must thank Rod and Cathy Avery of Wanganui, Kerry and Camilla Cowley of North Yanco and Mike and Sue Lyons of Buckeys Creek, who opened their properties to us and assisted us. In the process, Mr Pearce's group went to Mitchell, Tambo and Quilpie, and we all met again in Charleville on the last day. One good thing about it was that it rained while we were out there, and that was good to see. Some places recorded up to 80 points of rain. On the Friday, I took the opportunity to telephone some of the properties that we had visited, and most of them had recorded good rainfalls. Unfortunately, at the time I telephoned, one of the properties that I believed was most devastated and was most in need of relief, Wanganui, had not received any rain at all. That goes to show how cruel the situation can be.

We were warmly received, which was a general recognition of the valuable contribution that the northern and rural task force has made in listening to people in rural areas, assisting and explaining the Government's policy and, most of all, meeting people on their own turf. I think that the single most important aspect of the task force is that it goes to the people rather than the people having to make deputations to the Government. We were given that great brand of country hospitality. If I had been on a diet before I started on this trip, I am sure that it would have been blown.

Mr Horan: Pumpkin scones.

Mr PITT: Yes, not only did we have pumpkin scones and other sweet fare but we were also treated to good veal and beef all the way through. It was a pleasure to partake of that hospitality. The people whom we met raised some important questions about the strategy, and those questions were listened to quite carefully. They made some very valuable points; however, it was significant that they understood that this was a process of real consultation. Although broad framework decisions had been made, there was no intention that they would be sold a strategy that could not be altered to suit the circumstances. I have taken from that trip a number of recommendations to put to the Premier and the Ministers in respect of the implementation of a strategy.

It is important to note that the Government is genuinely interested in not only the region as a whole but also the plight of individuals. As I said, the task force met them

on our own terms. We sat down, we talked, we listened to their input and we had every intention of involving as many people as possible in the ongoing process of implementing the strategy. The positive indications that we have received from industry, local authorities, community groups and individuals indicate to us that the Government and the people in the region will be able to work together for a far better result. I might add that the Government is in it for the long haul, as are the people of south-west Queensland.

Given the broader picture of the drought in Queensland, I wish to detail some of the assistance measures. The Queensland Government has a long-term drought strategy, and if all of those programs are seen through to completion, it will spend more than \$100m over a decade on management to deal with drought-related factors. The key elements of direct long-term drought strategy include the establishment of 11 property management planning centres, a farm financial counselling service, the putting in place of climate prediction and decision-making methods, ongoing education, extension and training for people in the area, the all-important water management and, in the light of what we found out about this drought, a great deal of ongoing research.

Additional assistance has also been provided through the RAS, which was announced in April this year. That additional RAS assistance has been put in the pipeline for wool producers and other drought-affected producers. The special interest subsidy assistance has been increased to 100 per cent, and there has been an extension of drought subsidy arrangements. In addition, the Goss Government has introduced a number of assistance measures including the drought crop loans scheme to finance replanting by drought-affected growers. I believe that the recent rains have made for a more rosy prediction for the harvest this year, but it still will not get anywhere near the high levels of years gone by. The drought restocking loan schemes for the restocking of drought properties, once drought declarations are lifted, have also been put in place, and total loans have been made available for those two schemes that I have just mentioned to the value of \$15m, with an indirect cost to this State of \$1.5m.

The Government has also waived vehicle inspection fees. Payment by instalment of vehicle registration charges have been put in place. There is more flexibility in the movement of wide agricultural machinery and

the controlled grazing of stock in declared road reserves has been liberalised. The cost of those measures is approximately \$200,000. The Government has also reactivated the drought information line and the fodder register. There has been a general acceptance by the Government of exceptional circumstances, and a decision has been made to increase interest subsidies from 75 per cent to 100 per cent under the RAS. The \$15m in interest-free loans committed for the drought-declared local authorities, or local authorities with 40 per cent of properties declared in need of drought assistance, has also been gratefully received. I am not too sure that all the good work being done through that scheme is being passed on to landowners. One landowner I spoke to said that he has seen no reduction in his rates; in fact, he said that they have increased.

The sum of \$400,000 has been committed to counselling and social support for drought-affected families. The list goes on: shipment of molasses for stock feed to replace depleted stocks at the Bundaberg terminal; and fodder freight subsidies of 50 per cent for community donated fodder. Last weekend, a huge convoy of fodder was taken out west. I am sure that the people of that region greatly appreciate the work done by urban communities on their behalf. There is also a proposed change to the meat industry regulation to allow field-shot sheep to be processed for pet food. That will bring some much-needed income to those areas.

This Government is committed to the rural sector and communities of Queensland. We need to continue to pool our resources and battle through these harsh times. We need the support of Government, industry and the community as a whole. I am sure that we will face hardship again, but next time we will be better prepared. I congratulate the Treasurer and the Government on their capacity to make tough decisions in the best overall interests of this State. I am assured that, in the future, the strategy with which we have had the pleasant opportunity of acquainting members of the south-west Queensland community will be seen as an important feature of the Goss Government's commitment to rural Queensland.

Mr JOHNSON (Gregory) (5.47 p.m.): Last Friday was probably one of the saddest days in the history of Queensland, when the announcement was made that over 1 000 kilometres of Queensland Rail track would be closed mainly to western and northern centres and some centres on the Darling Downs. This represents the complete and utter demise of

Queensland Rail under this incompetent Goss Labor Government. The Minister for Transport should be ashamed of what happened in the past week. A couple of months ago, officers from the Department of Transport went to Winton and, within about five minutes, told the Winton Shire Council that the Midlander service from Longreach to Winton would be terminated as at November this year. The Minister did not have the guts or the intestinal fortitude to go out there and tell people in those western areas exactly what they were not going to have.

This Government believes that everything it does is good. As to transport—the Minister has lost the plot. With transportation, if we want the cream we must also take some of the sour milk with it. This Government does not want to do that. It is fair enough to say that the passenger service to Winton carried only five or six passengers a week, but it also carried frozen perishable goods and a couple of hundred tonnes of freight for that centre. Winton is probably one of the most profitable shires in Queensland. Per head of population, every man, woman and child in that shire contributes \$40,000 to the gross national product. How many city electorates provide that? Not too many!

The process that this Government is undertaking involved no consultation with local government, unions, industry or the board of Queensland Rail. I have spoken to the executive director of Queensland Rail. He told me that this was a Cabinet decision. This is a Government of stealth. It does not know which direction it is taking. At the same time, it does not have the guts to tell people face to face what decisions it will make tomorrow, next year or the year after. During my time in the bush, and in my life in general, if I was going to sack one of my ringers or reprimand him, I would not send out a cowboy to do it, I would do it myself.

This Government cannot come face to face with reality. Unfortunately, the reality is the total demise of Queensland Rail. This does not affect only Winton. We should consider the lines from Charleville to Cunnamulla and Quilpie. The Quilpie-Charleville line is another big bullock carrier. Last year, probably 50 000 to 60 000 head of cattle were carried on that line. In good times, I have seen 96 000 head of cattle trucked out of Quilpie in one year, thanks to fellows such as Darryl Smith who went out into the back country and got those cattle carried on Queensland Rail. But what happened to Darryl Smith? The Labor Government pushed him out. He has gone. His position has been

made redundant. If Queensland Rail had people such as him today, it would be in a better position. There must be consultation with the practical people. This Government cannot keep feeding figures into computers with the bottom line being that there will be dollars here but not there. It must talk to the people who know and understand.

Let me consider the people who are harmed and damaged as a result of this decision, that is, the railway employees—some 500 people from Hughenden to Winton, Blackall, Yaraka, Alpha, which was destroyed two years ago, Jericho, which is a dot on the map, Quilpie and Cunnamulla. Those 500-odd people are in complete and utter ruin. This Minister or representatives of this Cabinet should go out there, face those people and tell them exactly what they have done. We know what they have done, but they do not have the guts to tell those people. That is the sad part about it. Those people are human beings who are trying to do the right thing by themselves, their families and the communities in which they live. But, no—they have been treated with utter contempt. I feel sorry for those people, many of whom have been supporters of this Government, although I doubt that they will be any more.

There will be a snowballing effect across Queensland communities in western towns. I do not know what the future holds for Winton. This worries me greatly. Last year, a total of 55 000 head of cattle and 11 000 bales of wool were trucked out of Winton. Members can work out for themselves what the value-added benefits of that would be. Every year, some 200 000 head of cattle are transported by rail from that western area. I assure members that many of those cattle will go straight through on road transport. But that is another point that I will mention directly.

Let me talk about Diamantina Lakes, which used to truck off some 4 000 head of cattle each year before it became a national park, although it is still under private lease until that lease expires. Every 1 000 head of cattle creates employment for 700 men for one day. If honourable members examine those figures, they will realise that the value-added benefits are enormous. The west creates employment and generates revenue which contributes greatly to the gross domestic product of this State and this nation. The Government has not taken that into consideration.

I will inform the House of the cost that will be incurred by producers as a result of the Government's proposal for railway line

closures. To transport a bullock on road transport from Bedourie to Quilpie costs \$37 a head. To load 18 bullocks into a K wagon at Quilpie to be transported by rail to Toowoomba costs another \$490 to \$500—a total of just under \$70 a head. But, if the bullocks have to be transported right through by road, the cost will be in the vicinity of \$100 a head. That difference in cost will come off the profit margin not only of the State but also of the producers and the people who try to do the right thing by increasing productivity, employment and growth such as the State enjoyed under former Governments.

What is more, when the railway lines close, more heavy transport vehicles will be using the roads. In the west, we already have inferior roads. The Government seems to be intent on spending all the money in the south-east corner of the State where the great proportion of the population live.

Mr Budd: I would like to have some of your roads in my electorate.

Mr JOHNSON: I would like the honourable member to inform me of the roads to which he is referring. I have been to his electorate and noted that the roads are not too bad. However, I will deal with that matter later.

I wish to refer now to the demise of the railways in Rockhampton, Townsville and Toowoomba. With the introduction very shortly of the new state-of-the-art diesel locomotives, we may see the complete transfer of the diesel locomotive shed at Rockhampton to Townsville. That may result in some sackings or redundancies. The Minister has stated that there will not be any sackings in Townsville, but I will remind him of what he said in this House in April 1989 when he was in Opposition. At that time, in a debate on the Railways Act Amendment Bill, he stated—

“ . . . it is the policy of Queensland Railways, under the National Party's political leadership, to serve the needs of the public or to act like any private-sector corporation and make profitability paramount.”

He went on to state—

“When the Commissioner for Railways can appear on television and state that members of the Queensland public have to get it through their heads that the railway is not there to provide a service, but rather must be a commercially viable undertaking, then I suggest that the railways, under this Government, are on the wrong track.”

Those words should haunt the Minister forever. However, because he has no conscience, I doubt that they will haunt him at all.

Everybody likes to make a profit, but those railway lines were built 126 years ago as an essential service so that commodities from the inland—from the Darling Downs, from central Queensland and the far north—could be transported to markets on the eastern seaboard at Townsville, Rockhampton, Gladstone and Brisbane. Government members cannot see the value-added benefits. I am sad to say that the people of Queensland have been treated with contempt by the Government. The local authorities, the producers, and the railway employees and their families have all been treated with contempt. The Government has sold them out. It has sold its soul and sold theirs as well.

Western towns will suffer from railway closures. When cattle come to the spelling areas in places such as Winton and Quilpie, they generate another \$3 or \$4 a head for the local community by way of hay sales, tailing out and trucking dues. Those towns will miss out on that revenue. Stock and station agents will be a thing of the past. They have provided an important part of the infrastructure of the west, but they will have to move on. Transport operators will have to move on or wind down their operations.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr JOHNSON: Prior to the dinner adjournment, I had made reference to transport operations in the western areas. I will not elaborate on that too much more; however, the Government's ploy will put more heavy transport on our already overtaxed bitumen surfaces. As honourable members would appreciate, every day we fight for extra funding to enable our western and rural local authorities to upgrade the road network throughout this great State.

Before I conclude with the railways, I want to make one point: this exercise of closing the western lines will result in the total sell-out of an export live-sheep operation that was to get off the ground in December. Thanks to the “foresight” of this Government, that operation could be nipped in the bud. The company is based in Blackall and is operated by a very successful businessman. He and other partners have in hand an operation that would export from the port of Townsville approximately 10 000 to 26 000 sheep a week to Indonesia.

At this point, I urge the Government to take a very close look at what it is doing with

these railways. We are looking at a multimillion-dollar business that could be sent to the scrap heap before it gets off the ground. Those people have spent thousands of dollars of their own money to get this venture up and running, and this is the thanks that they receive for having a go—a kick in the guts. This venture in Blackall, if it does get off the ground—and it will get off the ground if the railway remains—will bring in sugar by-products that will be used to feed the sheep, so it is a two-way operation—

Mr Bennett: Bagasse.

Mr JOHNSON: The honourable member for Gladstone just mentioned the name of the by-product. It will be a two-way operation from which Queensland Rail will benefit. The venture will be in jeopardy if the railways from the central west are closed.

I turn now to road funding. The alleged \$115m shortfall in Queensland's allocation at the recent Premiers Conference, which Mr Goss and the Treasurer have been bleating about for days, is just a myth. The State's allocation has actually been increased handsomely by over \$300m, or 5.3 per cent, to an all-time record sum of \$5.731 billion. The State Government has not received \$115m less. This is just another myth of the Government's while it tries to paint a false picture to the people of this State. The only genuine loss that Queensland has suffered is approximately \$40m in Medicare funding, for which the Premier could blame nobody but himself because he had naively signed the Medicare agreement before the other States did and before the outcome of the deal was certain. So who must pay? The people in the bush have to pay; they have to have their rail services taken away. They will probably have to face road funding cuts, and this is something that—

Mr Springborg: Schools will close.

Mr JOHNSON: As the honourable member for Warwick said, schools will close. Country people have been losing services since this Government came to power. The problems that those people are facing now will be compounded because those services will no longer be a part of those communities. What is happening in the country is something that cannot be forgiven.

The other point that I want to make refers to the south-eastern corridor. It is about time the Government made a decision about the south-eastern corridor. We have heard about it for a long time. The Government does not want to upset the electors in the south-east corner. I notice that the honourable member

for Redlands is not in the Chamber at the moment, but he was very vocal before dinner. I would be interested to hear what his attitude is to this south-eastern freeway. That corridor must go through, it has to happen, and it is about time that this Government surprised somebody and did something constructive, not destructive.

Mr Szczerbanik interjected.

Mr JOHNSON: Does the honourable member for Albert say that closing the railways is constructive? He would know all about that. He is a very progressive person! He never ceases to amaze me. I turn now to the Yandina bypass. No doubt the honourable member for Maroochydore will make reference to it, but that bypass has been an ongoing concern for nearly three years. It is about time the Transport Minister made a decision on that and let the people in the region know exactly what will happen. It is a very important part of the road link, and it is something that the people of that area want to see completed.

On the topic of roads, I turn now to the reef to the rock concept—the road from Cairns to Boulia. It is a very important road. It is situated within the electorates of the honourable members for Mount Isa, Charters Towers and Cook, and also my electorate. It is a road which, when it is upgraded to the current Northern Territory road standards, will be able to handle 60 000 head of cattle a year from the Territory through to our markets in Queensland. That would have a value-added effect for the economy of Queensland.

These roads need to be upgraded. Priority needs to be given to them. Government members might think that the populated areas deserve good roads. Well, the people in the isolated and remote areas who are generating the dollars for this State deserve roads of a good quality—the same quality as the roads in the south-east corridor or along the eastern seaboard.

In conclusion, this Labor Party Government in Queensland has totally lost the plot. The Labor Party came to Government three and a half years ago, making out that it represented the workers of this State. It has sold out the workers of this State. It has also sold out their assets, their future and anything else that they ever stood for. Because of what is happening throughout the whole State, they do not have a hope in hell of redeeming their position or that of their families. This Government should be totally ashamed of what has happened in Queensland in the last week. I urge Labor members to try to have the

decision to close the rail lines reversed before it takes effect.

Mr PEARCE (Fitzroy) (7.38 p.m.): In rising to support the Appropriation Bill that is before the House, I will direct my comments to the roads system that operates in Queensland and, in particular, in central Queensland. I wish to follow up some of the comments made by the honourable member for Gregory who, in common with me I am sure, gets around Queensland a great deal. I have to say quite honestly that I am very surprised at the extent of roadworks that are taking place in this State. It does not matter whether one travels to the Gold Coast or to the western areas of the State, as I did last week when I was speaking face to face with rural people, roadworks are taking place wherever one goes. I am very pleased in particular with the roadworks that are being carried out in central Queensland. As I proceed with my speech, I hope to be able to show that a large amount of money is being spent on roads and that good roads are important not only to the people of central Queensland but also to visitors, tourists and the economy in general.

Roads are vital arteries of the transportation industry and are the most common mode of travel. People who are tourists or central Queenslanders and who are moving between towns use Queensland's roads. The rapid expansion of Queensland's coal industry has resulted in the development of new roads and the upgrading of existing roads in central Queensland. People expect roads to be of a high standard and the people of central Queensland, as I have explained to the Minister for Transport on a number of occasions previously, have a different attitude to the progress of roadworks from those who live in other parts of Australia. If rural people can see roadworks being carried out and some progress being made, they will be satisfied. They accept that it cannot be done overnight because of the costs involved. It is only when no work is being done and the roads continue to deteriorate that they become concerned and begin to agitate.

I turn now to discuss a couple of important roads in my electorate, namely, the Fitzroy developmental road and the Capricorn Highway. The Fitzroy developmental road actually starts at Taroom and heads in a northerly direction to the Capricorn Highway via the Aboriginal township of Woorabinda. At this stage, Woorabinda has about 13 kilometres of unsealed road. If and when the road is completely sealed, it will provide residents of the Woorabinda community with an all-weather road to the Capricorn Highway

as well as access to towns such as Blackwater and Rockhampton during the wet season. At this time, the people of Woorabinda are lobbying very strongly to have the road sealed. As their local representative, I assure those people tonight that I am working to help to get the road upgraded. This is important because those people are isolated. Therefore, they need the support of their representatives not only at the State level but also at the local government level. The achievement of sealing the road completely is all about working together, and not about taking on each other in the media. I am sure it is possible to achieve common goals if people work together on this issue.

The Fitzroy developmental road route follows the Capricorn Highway in a westerly direction to Dingo and then heads in a north-westerly direction to meet the Peak Downs highway near Mount Flora. Because of that connection between Dingo and Mount Flora, the people who live in the area refer to the Fitzroy developmental road as the Dingo-Mount Flora road, which is the road's frequently used common name in the area. I am told that the road was originally designed as a grain road just after World War II. Some of the older members of the Opposition may care to assist me if they think that I am on the wrong track but, as I said, my understanding is that it was a road used to transport grain and to assist in moving farming equipment and plant from the Darling Downs. It was also built partly because the British Ford Corporation was being set up in the Peak Downs area.

As the road was developed, it opened up land that was suitable for primary industries. The introduction of the Lands Department's bragalow scheme and coal exploration meant that the road came to be recognised as an important future link road in the region. In the 1960s, a double lane bitumen seal was laid to a point approximately 24 kilometres north of Dingo. From that point, the road was sealed progressively as a single-lane road. Anyone who has used that narrow, single-lane section of road would realise how dangerous and frightening it is, particularly for women who may be driving alone or who have young kids in their car. I am pleased to say that, slowly but surely, we are moving towards the development of that road to a double-lane standard.

By 1972, there was a single-lane bitumen seal on the road to the Mackenzie River. By 1974, the road was sealed along its entire length between Dingo and Mount Flora. I reiterate that only 24 kilometres of that road was a double-lane road. While I am keen to

see the full length of the Dingo-Mount Flora road become a sealed, double-lane road, at this time I am committed to having the stretch of road between Dingo and the Middlemount turn-off brought up to a sealed, double-lane standard. This is an important step because during flood periods, heavy transport vehicles travel along that road as they come inland from Mackay, close to Moranbah, down to Dysart/Middlemount and then on to the Dingo-Mount Flora road. When that road becomes a double-lane bitumen sealed road, it will not only assist the transporters during those difficult times but will also make travelling for people involved in rural industries and in the coalmining industries a lot safer.

The road falls into two districts of the Department of Transport. One is the Mackay district, which is the northern side of the Mackenzie River, and the other one is the Emerald district, which is the southern side of the Mackenzie River. While I am on the subject of the department, I pay tribute to Transport Department officers in Mackay, Emerald and Rockhampton who go out of their way to assist me and to listen to the concerns being expressed in those areas. They are good listeners and are very quick to move into areas that are badly affected by rain or traffic use.

Unlike previous members who have represented that area, it is not my intention to claim credit for Federal funding used for the upgrade of the Dingo-Mount Flora road. On that road, Federal funds have been used extensively, and they have been allocated in the past few years under the National Arterial Road Funding Program. In the past, those funds were allocated for specific projects. They are administered by the State Government and the Department of Transport, which also do the survey and design work. The State Government and the department play a very important role. Expenditure over the 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993 financial years on the Dingo-Mount Flora road has amounted to millions of dollars, which has been allocated under the National Arterial Road Funding Program.

The sum of \$3.292m was allocated to reconstruction work on a 15-kilometre section 65 kilometres north of Dingo. Reconstruction and widening work is currently under way on a 14-kilometre section, which is linking that 24-kilometre double bitumen seal about which I spoke earlier. That will be a further extension of the double bitumen seal to the north. I am well aware of those works, because last weekend I travelled to that area and, unfortunately, owing to the wet conditions, I

slid off the road. At least it was a pleasure to see some rain in that area, particularly around Dingo, which, as members would be aware, is very badly drought affected. The sum of \$2.524m has been allocated and we expect another \$962,000 to be allocated in the current year to complete the work on that particular section.

The rural producers serviced by the Dingo-Mount Flora road appreciate the ongoing upgrade, which has been consistent over the past decade. The work has been going on for a long time, but there has certainly been a pick-up in recent years. There is no doubt that the residents of the coal towns, particularly Middlemount, Dysart and Moranbah to the north, Tieri, Capella, which has people from the coal industry as well as being a rural town, and Clermont, also benefit from being able to use that road. The work is of benefit not only to people in the coal industry itself but also to the rural producers in that area who grow cattle and grain.

Another important road in my electorate and for the central Queensland population is the Capricorn Highway. As members would be aware, the Capricorn Highway is the western highway from Rockhampton which heads out through Emerald. Work on that road in the electorate of Fitzroy has progressed at an astonishing rate in recent months, with projects completed and currently under way in nine different locations. More than \$15.5m of funding has come from the Provincial Cities and Rural Highways Funding Program. The sum of \$500,000 has been allocated for black spot projects, and an additional \$3.5m has been allocated from State funds.

For the benefit of the people who live along the Capricorn Highway—the users of the Capricorn Highway—I point out some of the work that has been done, which I know they appreciate and certainly, as the member for that area, I appreciate. The sum of \$5.728m has been spent on the Gogango Range in the Fitzroy Shire. Also, on the western side of the Gogango Range, which is in the Daringa Shire, \$4.531m was spent. In Daringa West, almost \$3m has been spent. For a further extension of that work at Daringa West for another six kilometres, a further \$2.39m has been allocated. For further widening of the Gogango Range in the Fitzroy Shire, \$600,000 is being spent.

The small township of Westwood, which has had to put up with a very narrow, dangerous section of road for 10 kilometres to the east of the town, has been allocated \$1.69m and work has now commenced. Also,

a section east of the Dawson River has been slowly breaking up and disintegrating. The sum of \$1.29m has been allocated there, with a further \$2.25m to be allocated from the next Budget.

Mr Nunn: They must have a hell of a good member.

Mr PEARCE: I take the interjection. It is not a matter of having a good representative; it is a matter of people working together, and particularly people within the department having the commonsense to appreciate what roadworks are needed and doing something about it.

I refer to some of the black spot projects that have been important to people who live in those small communities, who have to turn on to busy highways and compete with heavy transporters and other fast-moving vehicles. There has been a need to widen the intersections of some of those turn-offs so that people can move on to the highway in safety. One of those was at the small township of Gogango. Only a few people live there. The township is at the end of a long straight. The traffic moves along at great speed and accidents have occurred there in the past. That road has now been widened and people can move on to the highway in some safety.

There was also a bad curve on the Gogango Range, which has been corrected under some black spot project funding. Overtaking lanes have been constructed on the road to Gracemere. Anyone who knows the road west of the Yeppen roundabout towards Gracemere would realise that, with the rapid growth of Gracemere, the traffic in recent months has become almost unbearable for those who want to get to or from work. Funding has been allocated; the work has been completed; and we now have passing lanes both east and west, which has helped to speed up the traffic and has made it a lot safer for those people who get caught behind slow vehicles and attempt to overtake. The widening of the road certainly makes the whole thing a lot safer and a lot more acceptable.

The Capricorn Highway is a vital link to the cattle and grain-growing areas of my electorate, as well as the coal towns. The massive upgrade of the highway will have significant benefits for the cattle industry. We must give credit to the department for lobbying on behalf of the cattle industry. Road trains, which are important and cost-saving for cattle producers, will be able to travel from Duaringa into Gracemere. That will be a terrific benefit to the industry. It will mean that,

because the roads have been upgraded, other road users can pass those road trains with safety. I compliment the department on the work that it has put in and the effort that it has made in getting the dollars to ensure that this work is completed as quickly as possible. Rural producers have commented to me how it will benefit them.

Some comments have been made by a number of people about road trains that are using that road at the moment. I accept those comments. However, again to its credit, the department made a decision to assist the graziers in difficult times and in drought times and it allowed the road trains to travel on that road during daylight hours.

Mr Nunn: I will bet the rural producers are pleased they have somebody that they can talk to.

Mr PEARCE: I will take the honourable member's interjection. I have found—and I know that members on the other side will agree with me—that people in country areas are decent and hard working, and they do appreciate having the opportunity to be able to sit down and talk face to face with their members of Parliament. It has taken me a long time to break into some of those areas. In recent months, I have attended a number of meetings with people in the cattle industry and they appreciate that I am prepared to go out and sit down and talk to them.

I turn now to the funding that is allocated under the Local Authority Road Subsidy Scheme. In my electorate, a benefit has been achieved through the good work of the department and my being able to sit down with officers of the department, have a cup of coffee with them and talk these problems through. We often talk about the need for road funding.

Mr Bennett: Those officers tell me what a fine member you are.

Mr PEARCE: Do they? I appreciate their comments. The funding is made under the Local Authority Road Subsidy Scheme, which is known as LARS, as most members in this place would appreciate. The Statewide \$13m scheme provides road funding grants to councils for projects of local economic significance. The \$280,000 which was allocated to three local authorities in my electorate will go to projects that the local authorities would find difficult to undertake themselves. Therefore, they are given assistance from the Government to undertake the project, and that also helps to keep the staff of the local authority employed.

The LARS scheme recognises that local authority roads play important social and economic roles and that some councils need assistance to undertake works on those roads. A number of the smaller councils in particular have trouble. I refer to the Mount Morgan Shire Council, which has a very small rate base and is unable to raise the funds to carry out some of the projects. I was pleased to see that that council was allocated \$50,000 for a \$100,000 project to upgrade the Baree/Walterhall Street intersection with the Burnett Highway. This is very important to the people of Mount Morgan who, during heavy rains and floods, are isolated on the western side. They cannot get to the hospital and they cannot get to the services or goods that they need, such as groceries.

Under the same program, Woorabinda was allocated \$130,000 towards the cost of paving the town's internal streets and access road. What has been done in that town is a credit to the council in Woorabinda. About two weeks before that work was due to be finished, I was in Woorabinda and I saw the preparation work that had been done. I was able to see for myself how it would finish up. That work means that the people of Woorabinda can now live without having to worry about the dust that is generated by the movement of traffic around the town. I think they appreciate that. It is certainly going to be beneficial to the town.

Another council in my electorate, the Fitzroy Shire Council, was allocated \$100,000 towards the upgrading of the South Ulam Road. That is an important road for cattle producers in the area. I know that they lobbied pretty hard to get that. That money has been allocated, and those people will benefit. The Fitzroy Shire Council was also asked to undertake \$205,000 worth of work on State Government roads. That amount of funding was double the amount of funding that was approved to the council in the previous financial year. In total, the State Government provided more than \$300,000 worth of work for the Fitzroy Shire Council's work force in the last financial year. That has to be a benefit to the council. It assists the council in keeping its work force together. By keeping that work force together, we ensure that families, businesses and people are able to stay in the area in which they have been used to living for the last few years.

Time expired.

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly)
(7.58 p.m.): I wish to spend a few minutes raising the case of Mr Stephen Roger Mack,

who appeared in the Magistrates Court, Brisbane, on 11 November 1991. Mr Mack was charged under a section of the Criminal Code that provides that if he was found guilty he would have been liable to imprisonment for five years. It should be said that Mr Mack was employed on a part-time casual basis by the South Brisbane TAFE College. I understand that he was employed to lecture six weekend classes per year. In other words, he was employed to lecture on a similar basis to so many other lecturers at TAFE colleges around Queensland.

Mr Mack was charged on or about 17 July 1991 with 20 counts of what might conveniently be described as "fraud" under section 427 (1) of the Criminal Code. In general terms, the cases against him were that he induced the complainants, of whom there were 20 to start with, to purchase hydroponic growing systems and equipment through a combination of wilfully false promises and false pretences as follows: the quantity of specified produce types they could expect to grow; the markets that existed for the various types of produce concerned; the income they could expect to derive from the sales of such produce; and, in a few instances, that greenhouses supplied with the systems would be built so as to comply with relevant local authority requirements.

The charges arose out of events occurring in or about the period from August 1986 to December 1989. During and subsequent to that period, his wife, Mrs Mack, had conducted a business, the Australian Hydroponic Supply Centre, through a company she controlled called Reapmore Pty Ltd. Mr Mack was retained by the company as a consultant. His role was to sell the hydroponic systems and equipment supplied by the company and to provide advice to the company's clients and customers.

Mr Mack professed to have some expertise in the hydroponic production of plants. Both he and Mrs Mack were founding members of the Gold Coast-based Australian Society of Hydroponic Growers Inc., operated their own commercial hydroponic system at Mount Tamborine on the Gold Coast and, over a period of several years, Mr Mack had conducted weekend courses in hydroponics through the South Brisbane TAFE College. Many of the complainants were introduced to Mr Mack through attending these TAFE classes. Others were introduced by TAFE students, attended the private classes conducted by Mr Mack from the Australian Hydroponic Supply Centre's business premises in Southport, and still others were

simply off-the-street customers or those who had actively sought out a hydroponics supplier. A common element linking each of the complainants was that none of them professed any prior knowledge or expertise in hydroponics.

Evidence given at the committal hearing indicates that the activities of Mr Mack and the Australian Hydroponics Supply Centre were first brought to the attention of the authorities through a complaint made to the State Ombudsman by one Stephen Leslie Reimer. Mr Reimer had at one time entertained negotiations with the Australian Hydroponics Supply Centre for the purchase of hydroponic equipment, although no sale was ultimately concluded. Mr Reimer's complaint was referred by the Ombudsman to the Criminal Justice Commission. Only one of the 20 remaining complainants, one David John Parker, ever made or pursued a formal complaint of any type. It seems that Parker's complaint was also made to the Ombudsman in circumstances which led the presiding magistrate to conclude that he, Parker, may have been prompted by Reimer. Reimer's complaint, which formed the basis for one of the original 20 charges, did not proceed and no evidence was called in relation to it.

Reimer's initial complaint led to what appears to be a substantial investigation by the Criminal Justice Commission. In May 1991, the Criminal Justice Commission, using records compiled by the South Brisbane TAFE College, distributed a circular questionnaire to every person who had ever attended a TAFE class on hydroponics conducted by Mr Mack. Mr and Mrs Mack became aware of the questionnaire through a number of Reapmore's customers—one of their companies—who contacted them seeking an explanation. The Macks were unable to provide an explanation because they had not been informed of the questionnaire or been contacted previously by the Criminal Justice Commission.

On 14 May 1991, Mrs Mack telephoned the commission in order to find out something of the commission's interest in their affairs. She was referred ultimately to Inspector A. G. Dyer, then the officer having the conduct of the investigation, who refused to discuss the matter with her in any detail. The questionnaire was, according to evidence taken at the committal hearing, circulated to almost 400 individuals. I table a copy for the interest of members.

The effect on Reapmore's business was devastating to say the least. Sales came

almost to a complete standstill, and the company has never recovered. The nature of the questionnaire was such as to imply, to any reasonably intelligent person, that the Macks and/or Reapmore were at least of questionable business reputation. For instance, I call on members to note that one of the questionnaires which had been completed and returned by one of the recipients is noted with a question in these terms—

“Am I correct in assuming that I should have no further dealings with the abovementioned person?”

I table the returned forms that were completed from those questionnaires.

The questionnaire was in fact a fishing expedition—a witch-hunt—carried out in this case by the Criminal Justice Commission. It was not apparent from the conduct of the committal hearing whether or not the commission obtained any benefit from the administration of the questionnaire. It is apparent, however, from a perusal of a number of returned questionnaires that many positive aspects of the information obtained was ignored. I ask members to consider just two examples of the written responses obtained. These are among the documents which I have tabled. The first one stated—

“The hydroponics course was well presented and very educational. Mr Mack did promote his business in hydroponics—to construct and consult. This was an offer but was not ‘pushed’ or ‘hard sell’.”

A second response stated—

“The TAFE course I attended was very informative and interesting and very well presented by Mr Mack. There was no inducement of a business enterprise by him that I was aware of.”

I do not have time to go through the evidence—the investigations for which, I might say, are very highly questionable indeed, particularly those carried out by an Inspector Dyer for the Criminal Justice Commission. This hearing was conducted in a manner that was extremely prejudicial to the defendant. In particular, the committal hearing commenced on 11 November 1991, yet details and particulars of the charges were supplied to the defendant only as the hearing progressed.

To demonstrate the type of case that was being conducted, I will spend a moment on an exchange between the bench and the prosecutor. It highlights exactly the type of case that was being waged. The cross-

examination of the first complainant produced by the Crown, a Mr McKenzie, was completed on 13 November. At that stage, this exchange took place between the prosecutor and the presiding magistrate—

“BENCH: Well, I believe I should make a statement in the interests of justice. I personally believe there is no case against the defendant in relation to the McKenzie case.

PROSECUTOR: Yes, your Worship. Perhaps . . .

BENCH: And I believe that the other complainants, their cases should be looked at. If the allegations there are similar, well, consideration should be given to pulling them out.

PROSECUTOR: Yes, your Worship. Perhaps . . .

BENCH: I am just saying that in the interests of justice because I do not want to see this man here any longer than he has to be here.

PROSECUTOR: I see what you are saying, your Worship. Perhaps we could have could have a short adjournment . . .

BENCH: Yes, OK.

PROSECUTOR: . . . and I will try to make some arrangements.”

Although all of the cases differed in matters of detail, Mr McKenzie’s complaint was fairly typical. The Crown should have abandoned the matter then and there. Regrettably, it did not. Instead, the police prosecutor attempted to obtain some further instructions from the Criminal Justice Commission. He was unable to do so because, as I understand it, the relevant officers from the commission were attending some type of police games. An adjournment until the following day was sought and obtained after the following further exchange between the bench and the prosecutor—

“BENCH: And, Mr Prosecutor, I will place on record that in relation to the matter of McKenzie at the very best it is a matter which should be before a Civil Court and I even have my doubt whether or not he would succeed there.

PROSECUTOR: Yes, your Worship.

BENCH: And you can convey to your superiors. Also if the evidence which is to be presented in relation to the other matters is the same as that or very much the same as that presented in the McKenzie case, the authorities may be

on the receiving end of some adverse criticism.

PROSECUTOR: Yes, your Worship. Just in respect to the meetings that I have had with the Criminal Justice Commission, I was asked by Mr Marshall Irwin who is the person who appeared to be in charge of the conference that was held to convey his thanks for your Worship’s submission in that regard and to simply convey his wish for the adjournment to Monday and his appreciation for your Worship’s comments and patience.

BENCH: Anyway, I believe as I said if you are in a situation say before the District or the Supreme Court and you ask for an adjournment until the following week, I am afraid that such a request would be greeted with some scorn from the Bench.

PROSECUTOR: Yes, your Worship.

BENCH: I believe that we are being generous in granting an adjournment until tomorrow morning.

PROSECUTOR: The unfortunate position that we are in is that nobody in the Commission knew anything about the case.”

Despite His Worship’s comments, after discussion between the parties, the matter did not come on again until 18 November, by which time the Criminal Justice Commission had resumed the conduct of the matter. It had taken it back from the police prosecutor’s office, and it had retained Mr O’Sullivan. The matter then proceeded and was not concluded until after a total of 19 days before the court. The last evidence was taken on 23 July 1992. I can only speculate as to the commission’s decision to continue with the proceedings, but I suggest the possibility that the entire exercise was pursued by the commission to justify the apparently enormous expenditure that it had to that point invested in the investigation. It is very difficult to come to the conclusion that, in the light of all the developments to that point, the commission proceeded in the interests of the public and in the interests of justice.

By the end of the hearing, the Crown had abandoned eight of the original 20 charges. Of those, no evidence was called at all in relation to six complainants. Following the court’s comments, which I have mentioned, the McKenzie complaint was not pursued, and a complaint by Christopher Mark Sugden was abandoned part-way through Mr Sugden’s evidence. Nevertheless, Mr Mack was put to

considerable time and expense in preparing his case in relation to all of the complaints. Had the matter been considered properly in the first place, much of this wasted time and expense may have been avoided. In fact, the whole unpleasant event may have been avoided.

During his final address, Mr O'Sullivan for the Crown called upon the court to commit Mr Mack for trial upon 40 separate charges extracted from the particulars that he had tendered in relation to the 12 remaining complaints. On 10 August 1992, the presiding magistrate dismissed all of the charges. I table the transcript of the proceedings that gives the presiding magistrate's dismissal of the charges.

As a result of the Criminal Justice Commission investigation and subsequent committal proceedings—

- (a) the hydroponics business carried on by Reapmore Pty Ltd has failed;
- (b) the Macks have lost their home, which was seized and sold by the mortgagee on default of their mortgage;
- (c) the Macks have also lost their motor vehicles through repossession by financiers—naturally, this has caused enormous hardship;
- (d) the Macks have incurred substantial legal and related expenses and default interest costs that would have been avoided had the authorities paid sufficient attention to their inquiries and the merits of the matter; and
- (e) Mr and Mrs Mack's personal health has been seriously affected through stress-related conditions.

I understand that Mr and Mrs Mack's solicitors have now sought an amount by way of ex gratia compensation in excess of \$1.9m from the Government of Queensland through the Attorney-General. That figure is a preliminary calculation of the actual cost to Reapmore and Mr and Mrs Mack of the Criminal Justice Commission investigation and subsequent proceedings. It includes lost business income, lost business goodwill, legal fees, some default interest costs, car hire, accommodation costs, house removal costs—they lost their home—refinancing costs and lost income from Mr Mack's TAFE classes—small as they might be. Other costs, such as further default interest charges, have been incurred. The Macks are yet to obtain full particulars of them.

Mr and Mrs Mack are not out to profit from their situation; far from it. They simply wish for their lives to be restored to the standard that they enjoyed before the CJC commenced its investigation, so far as money can do so. It would appear that they have been victims of a substantial miscarriage of justice. In this particular case, the operation of the CJC organisation has been to the extreme detriment, without proper justification or cause, to a private citizen and his family. I believe that the State has a moral obligation to do what it can to correct this situation.

In conclusion, I want to make a few points about this case. The original complaint by Mr Reimer was dropped by February 1992. It was a complaint that involved a commercial transaction. The defendant was a part-time lecturer, a business person, pursued by the Criminal Justice Commission for what are clearly commercial transactions which, I would have thought, were outside the jurisdiction of the CJC. As I say, the only relationship to the Crown and to the public service that can be gained was the fact that he was a part-time lecturer on a casual basis for a TAFE college. I caution people who are in a similar situation. This is supported by the presiding magistrate's own comments from the bench. For what reasons and justification was the CJC pursuing commercial issues? Certainly, it has ruined the Macks' business, their health and their life.

What was the cost of this disgusting and disgraceful exercise to the taxpayers of Queensland? I am now calling on this Labor Government, particularly the Attorney-General, who is the relevant Minister, to dispense justice in this issue. The least that the Government can do is to compensate the Macks. I understand that Mr and Mrs Mack's solicitors wrote to the Attorney-General on 2 March this year, to which he gave a very limp reply on 13 May, refusing their application for compensation and justice. I ask the Attorney-General to reconsider this whole issue. The issues that I have raised must be answered fully by this Government to the people of Queensland, or is this Government going to sweep it under the carpet and allow other innocent Queenslanders going about their business to be treated in a similar manner?

I think that it is a very serious issue. Clearly, I am talking about someone who worked on a part-time basis. Thousands of people, whether they are lecturers or whatever they might be doing, work on a very casual, part-time basis for the State of Queensland and they could be put in a very similar situation. I do not think that that is good enough. I do not believe that this is good

enough when it is clearly a commercial transaction. It should have been clear by a mile to the investigating officers of the CJC right at the outset.

In the time remaining to me, I shall touch briefly upon the slashing of and cutbacks in rail services in this State. This is the slash and burn Government. I know that some other members have covered this matter, but I wish to refer particularly to those aspects that relate to my electorate and neighbouring suburbs. In the western suburbs of Brisbane, including the stations of Sherwood, Chelmer, Graceville, Taringa, Toowong and Aucherflower, peak-hour services have been cut by more than half.

At the outset, letters from the Minister and statements in the newspapers said that there had been consultation on this issue. In a letter dated 16 April, the Minister said—

“This initiative, which has been developed on the basis of extensive customer and market research, represents the first effort by Queensland Rail to develop a schedule of services . . .”

There has been no consultation whatsoever with my constituents. I have talked to literally thousands of rail commuters at railway stations, and I am yet to find one who has been consulted by the Government or public servants from the railways department.

Mr Johnson: They don't know the meaning of the word.

Mr BEANLAND: They do not know the meaning of the word “consultation”. Nobody has been surveyed. As a matter of fact, in many instances, the first that people knew about what has been going on was when I told them or they read an article in a local paper about the cutbacks and their major effects. Of course, the cutbacks will force hundreds and thousands of people back into their motor cars and onto the streets of Brisbane. So much for town planning and public transport! This Government talks a great deal about public transport and getting people off the roads system. This makes a mockery of this Government which says that it is trying to get people into the public transport system, and a mockery of the rhetoric from the Labor council of this city.

In an article in the *Courier-Mail* on 17 June, a senior bureaucrat said words to the effect, “Of course, we have had extensive consultation and public comment.” That is untrue. More Labor lies! Rail commuters have not been surveyed. The trains are packed day

after day. People who have utilised those services will be forced to use their motor cars. The situation is so farcical that after the first time those gentlemen from the railways department came to see me, I said, “Obviously, you have not done your surveys. Go out and do another one.”

Time expired.

Mr NUTTALL (Sandgate) (8.18 p.m.): I strongly believe that since the election of this Government, the Sandgate electorate has been given a better and fairer deal. The past 12 months have certainly been no different. There can be no doubt that my constituency has the right to be satisfied with the major gains that it has enjoyed. In speaking to this Appropriation Bill this evening, my hope is to outline in part the specific initiatives which relate directly to the people of that region. Of course, these new projects should be viewed in the light of my ongoing commitment to the Sandgate electorate to work towards improving the quality of life for my constituents.

It should be noted that the community itself has provided the guidelines for much of this spending. Certainly, each region is different. However, only by listening to the demands of community groups and by taking notice can moneys be allocated effectively. Thus I have welcomed public feedback on specific schemes in the Sandgate electorate in the desire to constantly improve the delivery of service to locals where it is most needed.

One such issue has been the provision of public housing, which has been a perennial issue in the Sandgate electorate. I am pleased to announce that, over the year just passed, in excess of \$8m has been spent on land acquisition and development in the Sandgate electorate. Much of this allocation was spent on acquiring approximately 114 hectares in the suburb of Fitzgibbon. That parcel of land has been earmarked to be the basis of future public and private housing needs in my electorate.

Such projects represent substantial increases in funding by the Government in the housing sector, which, of course, we all know is at the heart of Labor Party policy. Also, efforts have been made to provide a new direction in the design of public housing. Our aim is not to return to the bad old days of Queensland public housing. Instead, new housing designs will more closely reflect community attitudes and actually enhance the neighbourhood. The Department of Housing is pursuing more innovative styles of housing. Such new developments not only are more

suited to the needs of tenants but also blend into the surrounding streetscape. As a result, those projects have received a positive response from the wider community.

An outstanding example of this commitment is the recent development of 22 units on the Sandgate foreshore. That development has been designed for the special needs of senior citizens. I am proud to say that the project has been greatly successful in fostering the tenants' feeling of community and mutual support. Their prime location has placed them not only on the Sandgate beachfront but also minutes from shops and public transport. More modern facilities have also added to the residents' quality of life. Increased security screening and external lights on pathways and stairs have certainly made a difference for those people. Furthermore, creative designs have allowed those residents to participate in outdoor living with privatised rear yards and larger balconies.

Another very welcome area of improvement has been in the provision of transport services that are enjoyed locally. Several Government initiatives have aimed at encouraging the people of Sandgate to make better use of the public transport that is available. To date, the most obvious has been the refurbishment of the Sandgate Railway Station. In all, \$574,000 was invested under Operation Facelift in late 1992. Such expenditure embodies the Government's ongoing commitment to improve rail services in that electorate.

Encouraging the use of public transport also demands that we build up commuter confidence in the CityTrain network. This task has been met by upgrading security at both the Sandgate and Deagon stations. This applies particularly to those people who wish to leave cars at the stations whilst commuting. Early bird patrons can now have their cars secured in a fenced compound while they are at work. Such measures have considerably reduced the risks of car theft or vandalism. I am also pleased to announce that this system will be updated towards the end of the year. Video surveillance and computerised identification tags will provide 24-hour security for patrons' property. Secondly, steps have been taken to promote commuters' personal safety. A strengthened Railway Police Squad is working with private security guards to ensure passenger security throughout the CityTrain network. In addition, Queensland Rail has improved lighting and placed "Help" phones on platforms. Overall, I believe that Sandgate residents now enjoy one of the

most modern and safe train services in the State.

Still on further improvements to local transport—residents of Sandgate and Bracken Ridge would welcome the completion of work on the Gateway Arterial road and the Deagon Deviation. In the past, some constituents have been concerned about traffic hold-ups in this heavily utilised area. These developments, I am pleased to say, have greatly alleviated traffic congestion.

Such major construction work and refurbishments are easily recognisable. It would be misleading, however, to use these projects alone to measure the Government's commitment to the Sandgate region. Many other forms of essential community expenditure are not so obvious. One such example has been my personal commitment to promote sporting participation at the grassroots level.

I have backed up this commitment by ensuring that local sporting organisations maintain the funding that they need to operate successfully. I hope that, through greater real support, more local residents will have the opportunity to become involved in these activities. The key to greater community participation is to allocate resources to diverse activities which benefit the young and the old alike. Overall, grants and subsidies in the last 12 months totalled around \$16,000. More specifically, over \$13,000 has been allocated to swimming clubs, \$1,400 to cricket coaching, \$850 to bowls equipment and \$400 to judo training.

This Government fully recognises the importance of young Queenslanders. Such assistance to sporting clubs will undoubtedly benefit many younger members of the Sandgate electorate. However, it should be noted that this is by no means the limit of youth initiatives. A total of \$11,500 in grants has been made to other youth projects. By funding certain essential activities, it has been my aim to show the youth of this region that we are also committed to meeting their particular needs.

Under the Community Jobs Plan, direct assistance has been provided to boost the employment prospects of local job seekers. A full-time youth worker has been employed to provide structured programs and individual support to youths in the Bracken Ridge and Sandgate area. This youth worker conducts two-week personal development programs throughout the year and job-search training on a bi-monthly basis. In particular, emphasis is placed on assistance to the individual. It is

estimated that this project assists around 300 young people.

Education has also proved an essential part in the development of the State's youth. In recognition of this fact, expenditure to improve education in the Sandgate electorate has received high priority. Already the region supports nine primary schools, two high schools and five private schools, together with the North Point TAFE College. These institutions successfully service not only Sandgate proper but also Bracken Ridge, Brighton, Shorncliffe, Deagon, Taigum and adjoining suburbs in other electorates.

Overall, in excess of a million dollars has been committed to maintaining a high education standard in my electorate. This amount includes new capital works, schools refurbishment and maintenance works. In particular, the Schools Refurbishment Program has been designed to improve available school facilities. Over the year just passed, local expenditure has totalled over \$116,000 in meeting these objectives. I am also happy to note that the positive by-product of this project has been the generation of many local jobs.

I have also been pleased to note the success of the Back to School funding project. Under this scheme, a total of \$784,000 has been allocated to provide new equipment and resources directly to students and teachers. With funding going to both State and non-Government schools, my hope is that pressure will be removed from parent associations to provide the basics. For example, teaching aids, curriculum material, resource books, and sporting and art supplies can now be provided through the grants. P. and c. associations can now direct their valuable fund-raising efforts to providing extras rather than the necessities.

For parents, the most welcome item in this package must be the extended textbook allowances. The provision of textbooks is often the most expensive component of any schooling. It has been the Government's hope to alleviate these costs, thus ensuring that each child has access to sufficient resources. In the last year, over \$93,000 has been paid to parents or a school textbook hire scheme. These programs, of course, have ensured that both students and parents have been the big winners from Government funding in the Sandgate electorate. I particularly welcome the most recent increases in funding for primary school students. In meeting the pre-election promise to close the funding gap between primary and secondary schools, per

capita payments have increased from \$3.60 to \$29 for Years 1 to 3 and from \$9.70 to \$34 for Years 4 to 7. Once again, this clearly proves the commitment to a fair go for parents and school communities.

The demands of the Sandgate electorate for quality education, however, do not stop at primary and secondary education. Vocational education and training has proved increasingly popular not just for residents of the Sandgate electorate but also for people from outside the electorate. North Point TAFE has been at the forefront of measures to meet these community demands. As a result, this institution has become one of the largest colleges in Queensland, with a budget of \$18m last year. Time has shown that extensions to this college have been a great investment. Participation rates in training schemes have constantly risen in the Sandgate electorate. In response to demands for more places, \$414,000 was allocated last year to employ an extra 34 tutors. In addition, a job placement officer has recently been appointed to assist graduates to find work. It has been my personal belief that the value to the community of such an institution cannot be overestimated. I will continue to actively support any similar education and training schemes in my electorate, with the understanding that the electorate also shares this belief.

In summary, all money spent in the Sandgate electorate should be seen as a direct investment in its people. I have made reference to a number of projects which, over the past year, have marked major achievements for this community. Those benefits have been both tangible and not so obvious. It has been my hope to outline the items of expenditure which are of significance to the Sandgate and Bracken Ridge communities. Those communities, after all, are made up of people with diverse needs. It has been my hope to provide for those needs where possible since becoming their elected member in September of last year.

Mr QUINN (Merrimac) (8.32 p.m.): In rising to speak to the Appropriation Bill, I note that, for the past week or so, the Government has continually been whingeing about the raw deal that it has received from Canberra, and how it would mean a reduction in the spending and services in the coming State Budget. As the Leader of the Coalition has already pointed out, the truth is that the so-called \$115m shortfall is simply the difference between what the State Government asked for and what it actually received. Overall, there has been a net increase in Commonwealth

moneys, not a decrease as claimed by this Government. Of course, if the Premier had not rushed in to sign the Medicare agreement to support Keating in the run-up to the last Federal election, the State's finances would be approximately \$42m better off. His rush to support his Labor colleague has cost Queensland dearly, and it clearly illustrates that the Premier will always put the interests of the Labor Party before the interests of Queensland.

It is instructive to see what happened the last time the Commonwealth cut moneys to the State. It has not happened in the life of this Government, which has received favourable treatment from the Commonwealth for the last three years. In 1987, the Government had its grants and loan moneys cut by approximately \$400m, in real terms over four times the shortfall claimed by this Government for this financial year. Some rather telling comments were made by members of the Labor Party. I will refer to the 1987 Budget because it is instructive to see what happened. At the time, the member for Archerfield was at the forefront in criticising the State Government. I remind honourable members that this was \$400m that had not been delivered via the Hawke/ Commonwealth Government. At the time, the member for Archerfield said—

“State Government education funding cuts had lowered schooling standards and robbed a generation of Inala children of an opportunity to learn to swim . . .”

He stated further—

“It's about time the State Government stood on its own two feet, and started treating education as a State issue not a Federal one . . .”

That was a Labor member whingeing about the State cutting back on funding. It was not the Commonwealth Government's fault; it was all someone else's fault. Yet, in 1993 when the same thing happened, the shoe was on the other foot.

In 1988, the State was still feeling the results of this cutback in Commonwealth funding. The Opposition spokesman on Education, Mr Braddy, who was to become Minister for Education several years later, said—

“This Government has continually tried to blame the Commonwealth Government for its own failure to give sufficient priority to education in Queensland.”

Again, it is a case of hypocrisy; money coming in—blame someone else. In 1987-88, the situation was much worse and the Labor Party in Opposition felt it politically astute to blame the State Government. This demonstrates how hypocritical the Government has been on the issue to date.

Honourable members do not have to take my word for it. They can hear what the parliamentary secretary to the Federal Treasurer had to say. Honourable members might have seen him on the news tonight. I have his press release, which is dated 13 July 1993.

Mr FitzGerald: Mr Johns is his name.

Mr QUINN: He is Mr Gary Johns, the parliamentary secretary—a Queenslander, one might add—living just up the road.

Mr Grice: A good Labor man!

Mr QUINN: Yes, a good Labor man. The heading states “Queensland Government must face its own music”. I will read it out for members because it is instructive. It states—

“The Queensland Government must face up to its own budget responsibilities and stop Canberra bashing, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer and Federal Member for Petrie, Gary Johns said today.

Mr Johns was responding to comments by the Queensland Government that the announced budget cuts were the fault of Canberra.

‘The Queensland Government must take the responsibility for its own budget,’ Mr Johns said.

The Commonwealth Government this year will give the Queensland Government more than \$5.7 billion.

On a per person basis, Queensland receives \$879 per head of population. This is more than \$320 than NSW and \$318 more than Victoria receives in Financial Assistance Grants.”

Yet, we have a great whingeing Government. The press release continues—

“These figures show the very favourable treatment Queensland receives in the distribution of Commonwealth funds.

Mr Johns questioned the timing of the release yesterday of the Queensland budget details.

‘The release yesterday by the Queensland Government of budget details was no more than a political

attempt to blame the Federal Government for its own budget decisions,' Mr Johns said."

This from the Government's own mates! It continues—

"It is somewhat unusual—"

and I will agree here with Mr Johns—

"for the Queensland Government to release details of the budget more than a month before it is handed down."

How unusual! Put the blame early and often, and it will stick. The Government's own colleague in Canberra rebutted its own arguments. He stated that it was somewhat unusual. It is somewhat unusual! It has not happened in the history of this State that a month out from the Budget, details come out because the Government wants to attribute the blame to someone other than itself, which is where the blame properly lies. He continued—

"Queensland has a low level of State taxation which the present Queensland Government has decided to continue. However, it cannot continue to shift the responsibility for revenue-raising to the Commonwealth Government and keep depending on it to make up Queensland's revenue shortfall."

From this Government's own people in Canberra, out comes the truth at last! Those statements clearly rebut what the Treasurer and all other members on the other side of the House have been saying.

Mr Ardill: And you support it, do you?

Mr QUINN: I may not agree with everything in those statements, but he has got the general drift of the situation right. Labor members are trying to shift the blame for their own financial mismanagement. That is the gist of his argument, and he is on the nail. What we have here is a Government that has increased spending by more than 20 per cent during the last three years but has provided no increase in service levels to taxpayers. In the run-up to the 1993-94 State Budget, the Government is being forced to confront its own financial ineptitude over which it has presided for the past three years. In the worst Labor tradition, this Government has become a high-taxing administration which is unable and unwilling to spend public money efficiently.

While commenting on this subject, I pay particular attention to the Education portfolio, which has received one of the largest increases in funding in the last three years.

When one examines Budget papers for the past three years, it can be seen that it is true, as the Government claims, that there has been a \$350m increase in Education spending over that period. However, if one goes into any school and speaks to any teacher or any parent—as the Education Minister who is presently in the Speaker's Gallery well knows—one will be told that there has been no increase in service delivery at the school level—none whatsoever!

Mr Bennett interjected.

Mr QUINN: The honourable member should go and see for himself. In the schools, there has been no increase in service delivery whatsoever. The honourable member will also find the lowest teacher morale ever in the history of this State. Teachers complain continually about high levels of stress and say that more decisions are being forced onto the schools while less funding is available. There is also more non-teaching time being put into administrative tasks, resulting in high levels of stress and low morale. Members of this Labor Government such as the member for Gladstone are the authors of that combination.

A paper has been published by a university that clearly illustrates the problem in education, and the Government is the problem. It is not the amount of money that is important, but how it is being spent and how the Minister is handling the Education portfolio. Most of the money is being soaked up in restructuring, endless committees and poor management. On previous occasions, these facts have been hotly denied by the Government; but now, very strangely, they are admitted in the Government's own document which was released yesterday. When one looks at the document to see what the Government proposes to do with the Education budget this year, it can be seen that the Government admits these facts. Suddenly, a saving of \$34.6m can be found in the Education budget with, as the Government claims, very little serious effect on students.

In the part of the document that was released on Monday dealing with education, the Minister referred to rationalisation of non-teaching staff, a flatter management structure, downsizing of head office, and the redeployment of staff back to the classroom. One might well ask: what has been happening over the last three to four years? What have these people been doing? Over the past three years, every time a member on this side of the House pointed out that a larger bureaucracy

was being created, the Government denied it. Suddenly, in a flash of light and after miracle upon miracle, the Government has seen the real truth and has come up with \$34m in savings without anyone at the classroom level being affected. What brilliance!

Members of the Opposition have been telling that to the Government for three years, but I suppose it has taken a while to sink in. Suddenly, in head office and in regional offices, the Government can now find a hundred teachers holding non-teaching positions who are doing not very much at all and who can now be put back into the classroom. It has taken the Government three years to find them, but it has finally done so after the Opposition has been telling the Government about these people for three years.

Mr Turner: John Cain revisited!

Mr QUINN: Certainly. The financial facts are that there has been a \$350m increase in Education funding over the past three years. We do not deny it; it is in the Budget. This represents an increase of 18 per cent in spending over those three years. Presumably, the Government is now saying that it will be cut back by \$34m, but we will not know until we see the Budget details. The question that must be asked is: will the cutback be a real decrease in dollar terms? On the odd chance that it is, it will represent approximately 1.5 per cent of the total Education budget, yet the Ministers are running around squealing and saying that schools will have to be closed down and that there will be reductions in transport services, among other dire consequences. This Government has a 1.5 per cent decrease in its Budget and it hits the wall. It is calling Chicken Little—"The sky is falling in"—because it is being asked to introduce some financial efficiencies! This action will force some much-needed financial discipline on a Government which is used to squandering public money, and that is the truth of the matter.

Let me refer to what was said by David Shand, a retired PSMC commissioner who has put this matter in its true light. In a recent speech he made on the Labor Government, he said—

"They were desperate to get their expenditure up to national levels, particularly in health and education. They weren't necessarily clear what they wanted to spend the money on, the important thing was to spend up to the national level."

An Opposition member: Big spenders!

Mr QUINN: They were big spenders. They had no idea at all what they wanted to do with the funding. When this Government came to power, it had no education policy. All that members of this Government wanted to do was hike up the taxes, get the revenue up, and then spend it without worrying. This Government had no education policy—it just has a policy of spend!

The level of mismanagement in the Education Department is amply demonstrated by the recent funding crisis and cost-cutting measures which are in the order of \$18m. They had to be implemented in the last part of the financial year to ensure that the Education budget came in on target. I suppose it is pure coincidence that by doubling that \$18m cutback over the last half of the financial year, it comes pretty close to \$34.6m. The Government is putting into place again the same strategy as the one it applied in the last part of the financial year. If the budget had been allowed to run over the full financial year, one might say that the Education budget might have been \$36m in the red. The Government has come up with a cost saving of \$34m for this financial year, which is pretty close to the mark.

In the last part of last financial year, the Government failed to employ 200 teachers for whom it had allocated funds in its Budget. Assets were sold. The Government dredged through the Education Department, came up with the assets and sold them off for recurrent funding. It sounds familiar. The Government did that in Victoria, did it not? The selling of assets for recurrent funding sounds familiar to me. Because of a ceiling placed on illness leave, school administration staff have been forced to cover for absent teachers. In some instances, class sizes have already risen. That is another move that is foreshadowed in the Treasurer's document. There is nothing new in that document. It all happened in the last part of the financial year.

One of the main aspects of concern in Brisbane is the resource centre at Bardon. The Bardon Professional Development Centre is being sold to pour cash into the Education budget this year, ostensibly on the basis of a PSMC report that it is losing money, yet the Education Department is the poorest user of its own facility. If senior departmental officers were to use that facility instead of more costly locations in Brisbane and on the north and south coasts, the need for the disposal of the facility would not arise.

Although the centre lost approximately \$250,000 last year, the Minister is apparently unperturbed by the two-year \$400,000 loss by the Queensland Education Services Unit, which is a commercial facility that was set up expressly to market Queensland education to the rest of the world. We have a commercial facility within the department losing \$400,000, but the Treasurer is not too worried about that. However, there is a centre on a prime piece of real estate worth \$6m to \$8m, and the Treasurer has a gleam in his eye. That is the way to go. Flog off another asset when the Government is short. The Treasurer is flogging it off.

Other cost-saving measures foreshadowed by the Treasurer include changes to the selection and transfer system. They are in the document. The strange thing about that is that, at the beginning of this year, 57 principals had not been appointed to schools because of the way in which the system had been clogged up. The Minister's change is a bit too late. It has come about three years too late. That appalling situation was entirely due to the cumbersome selection process that the Government put in place. It is not just for principals; it goes right across-the-board. Did honourable members know that, in trying to appoint a cleaner, one has to go through a more in-depth selective process than that which the Government employed when selecting a CJC commissioner?

Conforming to PSMC guidelines, one school has an eight-page application document. What did the Attorney-General do when calling applications for the position of CJC commissioner? He put one ad in the paper. He did not even worry about a detailed interview and a person got the job. All schools have similar application documents for people seeking non-teaching positions. In selecting the successful applicant, principals are now required to spend five to six times longer on the task than they did before those changes were introduced. The same process applies whether the job is for a 40-hour a week position or a position for only a fraction of that time.

Each appointment for a non-teaching position such as a cleaner or a teacher aide in every State school is now consuming a disproportionate amount of time, energy and money that would be better spent on students, and yet the Government says that it is not wasting money. Despite a larger Education budget, very little money has gone to the schools and classrooms because it has been soaked up by organisational changes of dubious value. There is hardly any value at all

in spending five to six times the required amount of time selecting a teacher aide or a cleaner in a school.

A worse situation confronts special schools. The Government has not increased funding levels for those schools. It is transferring children with special needs back into ordinary classrooms. An adequate amount of support is not being given. One has only to talk to teachers in the classroom to realise what a mess that is causing for teachers and students at the classroom level. In summary, in 1990, EPAC listed Queensland as the most efficient provider of educational services of all the Australian States. The extra \$350m that the Government has pumped into education over the past three years has largely been squandered, with very little finding its way into the classrooms to provide a higher standard of education for students. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that Queensland has moved from the premier position as the most efficient provider of educational services to a position near the bottom of the pack. It is all due to three years under this Government.

Mr ARDILL (Archerfield) (8.51 p.m.): I have just heard the most spirited address by the member for Merrimac since he came into the Chamber. Although I would give him a pass, a meagre pass, for the spirit of his speech; for the content of his speech, he deserves a very dismal failure rate.

Mr Lingard: You didn't even listen. You were standing up before.

Mr ARDILL: I sat here and listened——

Mr Lingard: You were standing up.

Mr ARDILL: I sat here and listened to his address with a great deal of interest to find out how many untruths could be told in 20 minutes. If anything, he exceeded the record of his own leader in the House tonight.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: (Mr Bredhauer): Order! If the member for Beaudesert wishes to interject, he should do so from his own seat.

Mr ARDILL: The Leader of the Opposition certainly ran a close second to the member for Merrimac in the number of untruths that can be told in the course of a speech in this House. The nonsense that those members have peddled here today will be ever to their discredit. The nonsense that they peddled about a high-spending, high-taxing Government is just so much rubbish, and they know it.

Mr Bennett: They get up every day in this place and whinge that not enough is being spent.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition should interject from his own seat.

Mr ARDILL: We hear the nonsense that this is a high-taxing Government. Of course, everyone knows that it is untrue. The business community knows that it is untrue. The public sector knows that it is untrue, and everybody in Queensland knows that it is untrue. Members opposite are wasting their time talking such nonsense. As for the member for Merrimac's saying that there has been no extra spending in our school system since this Government came to power, I point out that the education—

Mr QUINN: I rise to a point of order. In fact, I did not say that. I find that to be untrue and I ask that it be withdrawn.

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

Mr ARDILL: As for his saying that there has been no additional spending at the coal face in the education system, I point out that everyone in the education system knows that that is untrue. The p. and c. members know that it is untrue. The teachers know that it is untrue.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members of the Opposition should not interject from other than their own seats. I will warn the next member who interjects from other than his correct place.

Mr ARDILL: I make sure that the p. and c. members in my area know that that is untrue. I have relatives in the education system. They know it is untrue. This Government has put into schools funds that they have never received before. Schools do not have to obtain funds from the parents to buy soap and toilet paper or the bare essentials that were never provided under 32 years of National Party and Liberal Party Government.

Mr Stephan: When did you go to school last?

Mr ARDILL: I went to school last night. I should make it quite clear that I am not the member for Archerfield who was quoted in the statements made by the merry member for Merrimac. He looked at me but did not mention that it was not me.

During their contributions to the debate on this Bill, members of the Opposition have wavered from total untruths in the case of the merry member for Merrimac and the suffering member for Surfers Paradise to a very high

degree of exaggeration in the case of the member for Indooroopilly and the member for Clayfield when they were talking about the suburban railway system and to sound commonsense from some of the other members. I agree totally with some of the statements that have been made by the Opposition tonight regarding the railways.

I would feel a great deal more confident if I had heard those members talking about introducing a fuel tax in Queensland as a means of financing some of the propositions that they have put forward here tonight. I would feel much more confident if they had shown some degree of support for a fuel tax that every other State in Australia and the Northern Territory have introduced to pay for the work that is going on in those States and that Territory. Queensland has not done that. I would certainly support a fuel tax at this point in time. I believe that it is essential to do something about the state of public transport and the state of roads in Australia.

The member for Clayfield talked at great length about the situation of the little branch line in his area which draws very poor support from the public. He was talking about 200 people attending a protest meeting in his area. In point of fact, 200 people get on an individual train at some of the stations in my area and in surrounding electorates. His argument for that rail service to continue—

Mr Johnson interjected.

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

Mr ARDILL: The honourable member's claim is totally spurious. In point of fact, instead of there being an hourly train service, which attracts very meagre support and patronage, the member for Clayfield will have a half-hourly bus connection to the Ipswich train service which will have connections all over Brisbane. He did not acknowledge that.

The member for Indooroopilly talked about a shocking cut in services. Nothing is further from the truth. In point of fact, the new timetable which is being promoted means that some of the inner suburbs, including my own, will suffer a reduction of two train services in what is at present a 15-minute service in the peak hour. Two trains inbound will no longer stop at suburban stations such as those in Indooroopilly and those in Archerfield, and two trains outbound in the afternoon will disappear, one of which in every case is now an old diesel and carriages set-up. Those honourable members are exaggerating.

Mr Johnson: We haven't got any trains. What are you on about?

Mr ARDILL: I am sorry to hear the member for Gregory exaggerating, because he made a good speech in the House. He has got a rail service. He has got the Midlander twice a week going as far as Winton at present, but it will be truncated to Longreach simply because the patronage is not there. Nobody can claim that I am not a firm supporter and user of rail transport. The argument cannot be sustained that airconditioned train services involving a huge outlay have to be run to convey 10 or 15 people to the end of the line. In the case of Cunnamulla and Winton, as much as I hate to have to admit it, that service can be carried out by feeder bus services on good bitumen roads. I am concerned about the closure of these lines. I totally oppose the closure of these lines. I have said so.

Mr Johnson: What about Quilpie?

Mr ARDILL: Quilpie should stay open. Hughenden to Longreach should stay open. Blackall and Yarka should stay open. They are an integral part of our drought relief system in Queensland to shift stock from one side of the State to another. They are needed, as pointed out, to shift stock, even in good times. A rail line that is shifting a thousand head of stock a week on average certainly should be sustained. I oppose the closure of those lines. I have offered the solution, that is, the imposition of a fuel tax to cover all of the transport needs of the State.

I have spent so much time answering interjections that I do not have time to cover many of the aspects that I would have liked to cover. However, I do want to refer to the condition of this country's roads when I came to this Parliament. In 1986, what was the condition of the roads in Queensland and in Australia in general? In 1986, after 30 years of National Party Government, this comment was made—

"Australia's road system is ageing, deteriorating.

Unless the position is improved, our roads will become a stumbling block to future economic growth.

The message is clear: our road system is in decline.

It is crucial that we take action before it is too late.

...

Funds spent on construction and maintenance of roads boosts our

economy. Our wealth supporting and creating industries, rely on roads.

Tourism for example, 83% of domestic tourists travel by road within Australia."

I emphasise that—most domestic tourists travel by road, not by air. The comment continued—

"A good road system delivers benefits two or three times the economic cost involved.

It is time to take stock.

...

55% of roads are aged over 20 years, beyond normal life span. 60% of maintenance funding goes on upkeep of existing roads, not replacement and improvement."

Forty-one per cent of roads need replacement, not improvement. The comment went further—

"On present funding, less than 3% of pavement is being replaced, which means that roads are wearing out at a greater rate than we are reconstructing. At that rate we will never catch up.

Funding has fallen by 25% . . . in real terms.

...

The Nation's roads are in decline. This will adversely affect Australia's economic performance."

The person making the comment stated that 5c of the petrol tax goes towards roads and the rest is absorbed. He concluded by stating—

"Funds for upkeep must increase."

Do members opposite know who I am quoting? Those were the words of their own party member, the then Minister for Roads—an honourable man who knew what he was talking about.

We have to do something about this. We have not grasped the nettle. In other States, and particularly in the Northern Territory and Canberra, funds have been made available to build the roads that this country needs.

Mr Johnson: And good roads.

Mr ARDILL: They are excellent roads. However, by no means do they cover the sort of network that Queensland has. They cover the major traffic roads. They cover the areas which are used by the majority of traffic. In Queensland, that is not the case. Funds must be devoted to our transport system urgently,

particularly our highway system. If we close some of these branch lines, we will be putting more road trains onto the already inadequate—and uniquely inadequate—road system. We cannot afford to do that.

In the Northern Territory, which I recently visited, small vehicle traffic, including cars and utilities, is not restricted to the 100 kilometre per hour limit to which road trains are restricted. Road trains and other heavy transport stick to that 100 kilometre per hour speed limit uniformly. One has no trouble passing on the roads in the Northern Territory. Certainly the roads there are long and straight, as they are in western Queensland. With adequate roads and reasonable speed limits, the same circumstances would apply in this State as apply in the Northern Territory. However, we do not have adequate roads. Instead, we have narrow strips of bitumen all over the place.

Since this Government came to power, it has undertaken much badly needed road reconstruction around this State. I have here a note of some of the roads that I have seen recently. On the road from Mount Isa to Camooweal, 40 kilometres has already been reconstructed, and reconstruction of a further 10 kilometres is being undertaken. That is great work. That was one of the most ridiculous roads in Australia.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr ARDILL: I know it is, but it was more like driving on a choppy sea. Sections of the Bruce Highway, particularly between Bowen and Home Hill, have been reconstructed totally. Other work includes the Gogango section of the Capricorn Highway and the Balfes Creek section of the Flinders Highway. All of those reconstruction projects have been carried out under this Government. It should be proud of its achievements to date, but a heck of a lot still has to be done.

Mr Johnson: Federal funds.

Mr ARDILL: Gogango is not Federal funds and the Flinders Highway is not Federal funds.

Mr Johnson: The Bruce Highway is Federal funds.

Mr ARDILL: For the information of the honourable member, the Bruce Highway and the Western Highway from Morven through to Mount Isa are certainly provided for by Federal funds, but the other projects that I mentioned are not. The South Coast road and other roads around Brisbane have been reconstructed. As I said, great work has been done thus far—work of which this Government

should be proud—but much more remains to be done.

Mention was made this morning of the work done by Jack Duggan to reconstruct the railways. That was great work. I can remember it, even if members opposite cannot. I can remember the circumstances that prevailed in the days after the war. The locos were totally worn out—the whole system was worn out—and inadequate facilities were in use which had to be overcome. Jack Duggan did it. He restored not only the railways but also the morale of railway workers. They were absolutely worn out. At that stage, unless they were lucky enough to be part of the senior echelon in a particular area, railway workers lived in tents or bondwood huts if they were lucky. They worked in leaking buildings. The whole thing was a shambles. Since this Government has come to power, the first improvements to be made since Jack Duggan's day were undertaken by the present Minister for Transport.

When we came to power, I was concerned that some truncations occurred. Many of those problems have been overcome. Until now, morale in the railway service has been pretty good. However, I believe that any truncation of important links such as Winton-Hughenden, Longreach-Winton-Hughenden and the others that I have mentioned will cause another decline in morale. David Hamill has built up in morale in the railway service—something that the Opposition fails to appreciate.

Mr Johnson: You've got to be joking!

Mr ARDILL: I am not joking. Under David Hamill, the railway service has carried out much of the work which 32 years of National Party and Liberal Party Government failed to carry out. What passenger rolling stock was purchased during the Opposition's time in Government? Except for the electric passenger cars, all of the cars were purchased under Jack Duggan. It is a fact. Opposition members do not know it, and may deny it, but the passenger stock was purchased, or ordered, by Jack Duggan. The first new rolling stock that the Opposition initiated when it was in Government were the electric cars. There are very few of them, but that was Jack Duggan's scheme. Opposition members cannot deny it. It was Jack Duggan's scheme, and it took the Opposition almost 30 years of Government to bring it to fruition.

This Government has done a lot. Queensland has the best passenger rail system in Australia. Do not let anyone say that the Indian Pacific, or the Ghan, is a better

service than the Queenslander or the Sunlander, because they are not. I have travelled on them all, and I can say that we have the best passenger rail system in Australia. I want to see us continue those services, and the tourist services, and for the reasons that I have outlined, I want to see the lines kept open to service Queensland during times of drought as well as during good seasons.

We have to grasp the nettle. We cannot go on with this economic rationalism theory that has been forced on us by the Federal Government. Despite what the Opposition has said, Queensland has suffered a cutback. The Federal Government has ignored Queensland's huge increase in population, and it has taken no cognisance of Queensland's particular development problems. Queensland does need further funds, and if the Federal Government is not going to give it to us, we have to grasp the nettle and do something about it. We cannot afford to see this State slip back to where it was prior to 1989.

Mr PERRETT (Barambah) (9.11 p.m.): Labor's new-age management style has just about destroyed the Department of Primary Industries, which is what I want to concentrate on tonight. As a result, the department can no longer meet its responsibilities to a vital sector of the State's economy and a substantial part of the State's population. The department provides a classic example of what the academics, whom Labor loves so much, call goal displacement. That happens when managers and decision makers forget all about the ends that they are meant to achieve and substitute their own. In this case, production-orientated services have given way to the form of the organisation and to the bureaucratic empire building.

Under the stewardship of Labor and the current Minister, the DPI has become its own best client. I am sorry that the Minister is not here tonight, but I know that he has an appointment with the Queensland dairy farmers, who are holding a conference in Brisbane. This morning, I attended the opening of that conference by the Minister and talked to many dairy farmers. I congratulate the members of the dairy industry on the way in which they have coped with changing times.

The Department of Primary Industries has become very inward looking and self-serving. It no longer concentrates on services to industry but on building up and servicing layer upon layer of management. The remaining

service delivery people in the department should be excused for their fury. They know that their department has fallen into the hands of the management theorists and that it has become a sandpit for the bureaucratic meddlers.

Agricultural research and extension, water supply, timber and fisheries management are now secondary to a muscle-bound management structure. The Minister for Primary Industries presides over an organisation which has disposed of competence and which has lost its sense of mission. The Minister must bear the blame for the situation in the DPI. He sat mute in Cabinet while the trendy departments grabbed all the funding. He sat mute while the PSMC ran amok through his department. He failed to back his senior officers when they warned that the cuts were going too deep. He agreed when the trendies moved in and turned a service department into one long talkfest.

The Department of Primary Industries was an efficient vehicle for the delivery of vital services to vital industries. Labor has forced it to match a new description. Words such as "incompetence" and "unreliability" now apply. The dwindling number of long-term staffers in the DPI are bitter about this Labor Government and the Minister who has been imposed upon them. They used to be proud of the services that they delivered to farmers and everyone else involved in the efficient production of food and fibres in this State. They knew their research helped primary industry and the people of Queensland. They were proud of the results of that research and the practical knowledge that they kept building on, because it was getting to the right people through proper extension and advisory programs.

The people in the field knew their jobs and did them well. They understood intuitively what to do in given situations. Now, the research base is shrinking every day. Extension has gone out the window. "Management" is the buzz word in the DPI. Meetings are the order of the day, because nobody understands anything any more. The people with the expertise have been sacked. Hundreds upon hundreds of people have been pushed out until there are just not enough experienced people left to go around. When anything unusual comes up, they have to call in people with expertise. Those who are called in are generally the very people who were discarded recently.

The drought hotlines are not manned by the new management crew. The people

whom Labor could not find a place for have to do that job. It seems that the new-age scrap heap contains most of the best people. Staff wonder if there is a deliberate policy of untraining for the future. Of course, the Minister and his cronies reckon that that is just the old core of the National Party stooges talking.

Laurie Gillespie has never been a friend of the National Party, but he recently had plenty to say about the new DPI. In the May edition of the *Public Sector Voice*, he repeated the Opposition's concerns about the gutting of the DPI under Labor's management. He criticised the massive, budget-driven cutbacks to the services that DPI officers try to provide. Laurie Gillespie said—

“To deprive those who work the land of the research and extension services that they desperately need when they already suffer the cruel ravages of drought borders on the sadistic.”

As the union paper pointed out, the most recent cuts have been in the areas of research and extension. Along with other cuts, they have reduced the services of the Agricultural Production Branch to almost zero. Until the past few years, the DPI provided the sort of service that many staff still want to give if they get the chance.

At this point I pay tribute to Dr John Leslie, who has recently retired. Dr Leslie worked hard not only in the interests of the DPI and the Governments that he represented but also in the interests of the primary producers of this State. On retiring, Dr Leslie said—

“. . . a wave of neoclassical economic theory sweeping governments throughout the western world is largely to blame for budget cutbacks to the DPI and the resulting low morale amongst many country-based staff.”

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr PERRETT: Dr Leslie went on to say—

“Major research problems still existing were building soil fertility and harnessing the emerging power for genetic manipulation of plants and animals.”

He said also—

“While funds to the DPI have not been cutback in dollar terms, in real terms the DPI has lost 11pc of its funding during the last four years”—

since the Goss Labor Government came to power—

“through no budgetary increases.

The Department has an annual budget of around \$500 million.

While personally philosophically opposed to State governments winding back their support for agricultural services provided by State departments . . . it is up to rural industry to ensure that these services are adequately resourced and carried out.”

It is interesting that the Minister, Mr Casey, has 19 people on his personal staff, including his electorate secretary. So he really has 18 people on his personal staff. I wonder: would he consider forgoing his electorate research officer for a horticultural adviser, say a pig adviser, in my home town of Kingaroy? Those jobs have now become vacant or have been abolished. Once, a phone call was all it took to get real on-farm assistance. Now, Labor has brought about the ridiculous situation in which a call about an animal health problem will probably be dealt with by a forester or a water engineer, and a vet might take a call about an irrigation matter. No matter how hard they try, DPI officers are rarely permitted to give the old-style, on-farm advisory or diagnostic services. In the new-age DPI, that is replaced by one-stop shops where a receptionist decides which pamphlet to hand out. Farmers and the old DPI hands know a pamphlet will not solve a real problem, but that is all that Labor will allow.

Mr Livingstone: Are you opposed to one-stop shops?

Mr PERRETT: I certainly would not swap one-stop shops—with pamphlets and a girl who does not really know about the problems—for the people who used to provide advisory services on-farm when talking about a particular problem.

Mr Livingstone: A one-stop shop with qualified people, surely?

Mr PERRETT: The problem is that we do not have many qualified people in the DPI any more. That is the problem.

Mr Livingstone: A lot of people would disagree with you on that.

Mr PERRETT: Recently, I received a phone call from a constituent of mine who wanted some advice on horticulture. We lost our horticultural adviser in Kingaroy about three years ago in the first round of redundancies, but there was a person in the regional headquarters of the DPI in Nambour

who could provide horticultural advice. That person has also gone. That constituent was irate. She said, "At least I could get advice on the telephone. But I cannot even get that any more. What am I to do?" I gave her the answer. But she knew what this Government's agenda is. One-stop shops are not the answer, because by the time you get that pamphlet in the mail, what happens if it is the wrong one? The crop has probably been lost.

As I said, farmers and old DPI hands know that a pamphlet will not solve a real problem. But that is all that Labor will allow. The alternative is group therapy, where numbers of producers go to town to discuss a problem with a visiting expert. But there is no on-farm inspection or attention to problems that are specific to that particular farm; just a lecture and a discussion session. Why? Because most research and extension staff have vanished by decree of the Labor Government. There are not enough to go around. That situation came about because Labor combined the old DPI, the Water Resources Commission and the Forestry Department into one super-department, and then set about axing 1 000 jobs. In most cases, the wrong jobs were eliminated.

The State Public Services Federation confirms that the number of senior executives and managers—the crowd who call meetings on everything—has more than doubled. At the same time, one in 10 other jobs has vanished. Those were the people who provided the actual services—the stock inspectors, veterinary officers, researchers, agronomists, horticulturalists and so on. Last month, the *Public Sector Voice* reported that the salary cost of adding those senior people and eliminating services is a cool \$8m a year. We pay more, but we get less for our money. Of course, the union is concerned about the effect of cuts on its members, who paid a high price for Labor's so-called reforms—for its managerial revolution.

Mr Gillespie and his union also deserve congratulations for the concern they expressed about farmers and consumers. Laurie Gillespie told his members that primary industry deserved a better deal from Labor, including a budget boost. He said that primary industry is about basic subsistence not only for those who work the land but also for the population generally; that it deserves priority over the more glamorous of Government pursuits. Labor's management policy of replacing doers with talkers has done plenty of damage.

I would like to ask the Minister about the next round of redundancies in the DPI. I would also like to ask him how much he has taken the staff into his confidence on this next round. Is that one of the reasons that the departing head of the Agricultural Production Group finally threw his hands in the air? How many people who have been trying to keep the ship afloat will now give up and leave? DPI was always a production-oriented service to the people of the State. The new organisation is nothing of the kind. In the Minister's own area of Mackay, the need is for expertise in sugar and beef production. But what do they get? More managers!

The new-style administration in DPI has been so smart that it has managed to get a big mention from the Auditor-General on the total shambles of its accounts. The Auditor-General was amazed at some of the practices that the Minister has condoned by the way in which he has dealt with his department. He must have been really impressed when he found that someone thought that a cheque for more than a million dollars had so little value that it could lie around on a desk for better than a year. I wonder what the Auditor-General will say when he gets to the bottom of the use of Government cars by DPI officers in their own time. I wonder what he will say when he is confronted by the so-called conferences held in Gold Coast motels at taxpayers' expense.

No doubt a lot of the rubbish has been forced on the Minister by the style of the Goss Government, which so closely mimics that of the Cain and Kirner Governments in Victoria. How many people opposite have stopped to wonder about that—about all the touchy-feely nonsense that goes on with human resource management? That was big in Victoria. That saw the real service providers put out to pasture and the meeting set brought in to replace them. Do the people opposite wonder about what happens when feel-good runs out and terminal decline takes over? The DPI is showing the worst effects of Labor's new age management style. If the Minister was up to the job, he would recognise the signs and do something to arrest the fall. He would set the lead—forget the rubbish; sack the committees; ban the meetings; deal with people who can actually do the job—not the ones who can only have meetings to talk about how to do it.

I would like now to say something about the rail cuts, particularly on the South Burnett branch line to Kingaroy. This morning, the people of the South Burnett were horrified to read in the newspapers that the Kingaroy line

would be closed. It is inexcusable for this Government to close such a line. The South Burnett is a very productive area of this State, producing many agricultural commodities. It amazes me, too, that during the last three years the Government and the Railway Department have spent untold amounts of money to maintain and upgrade that line, and then suddenly they decide to close it down.

As I said, the South Burnett is a big producer of agricultural commodities. PMB Australia, the handlers of peanuts, truck all their peanuts—about 7 000 tonnes a year—down from the Atherton Tableland. The Government has closed not only the Kingaroy branch line but also the Tolga line in north Queensland. The member for Tablelands will no doubt say more about that. That move will cost that select group of peanut farmers on the Atherton Tableland an extra \$100,000 a year in road freight to transport their peanuts to Kingaroy for processing.

Of course, our friends Mr Ardill and Mr Beattie want to add a fuel tax to that impost. That would increase even more the cost of transporting those peanuts. It is a pity that Mr Beattie is not in the Chamber at present. Not long ago he was boasting about the \$1.5m spent on bike tracks in his electorate. Many of the people of South Burnett and in the Barambah electorate would not be too sympathetic about that, because they have just had their rail line closed.

Mr ARDILL: I rise to a point of order. The member for Barambah is misrepresenting what I said.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! The member for Archerfield is claiming to be misrepresented.

Mr ARDILL: I am saying that the honourable member misrepresented what I said, and I seek a withdrawal of it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Barambah to withdraw that statement in relation to the member for Archerfield.

Mr PERRETT: I really do not know what I am withdrawing; however, I will withdraw whatever offended the member for Archerfield.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I accept the withdrawal.

Mr ARDILL: I seek a withdrawal of those words.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Archerfield will resume his seat. The withdrawal has been accepted.

Mr PERRETT: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. It is an obvious attempt by the member for Archerfield to waste time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the member for Barambah not prosecute the argument any further.

Mr PERRETT: I accept your ruling, Mr Deputy Speaker. The point is that the South Burnett produces an untold tonnage of grain, and obviously this Government has based its decision on the usage of that line on recent drought years in the area. Grainco has built two receival depots in the area; one at Kingaroy and one at Byee right beside the railway line. I can remember the days when we could not get enough rail wagons to shift the grain out of the South Burnett when we had good seasons and big harvests of peanuts, beans, maize and sorghum. Of course, in the wintertime we had wheat and barley. What is the Government going to do? It is going to put endless numbers of road transports on the roads, not only wearing out the roads but also creating hazards for other motorists—bearing in mind that Pozzolanics brings huge amounts of fly-ash from the Tarong Power Station to Brisbane daily. There will be many more heavy transport vehicles on our roads.

The other people to be considered are the workers who have lost their jobs. Since the Goss Government came into power, we have seen closures of stations right along that branch line. Trains have been virtually going through the towns to the terminus at Kingaroy with the goods then being transported back to the towns by road. Many people have already left the South Burnett because they lost their jobs in QR, and there will be another lot now. One can understand why people are angry and why morale is low. In other centres, there will be rail cuts which will affect primary industry. I am amazed that the Primary Industries Minister goes out and says that his Labor Government is supporting farmers and primary industry, because his Government is taking away in many areas vital support such as that provided by Queensland Rail.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask honourable members to please desist with the audible conversation in the Chamber.

Dr CLARK (Barron River) (9.31 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I rise to participate in this debate on the Appropriation Bill because, despite all of the predictable rhetoric that we have heard tonight and the doom and gloom from the Opposition, in fact the Queensland economy, as most reliable, informed observers recognise, is in very good shape.

Firstly, I want to look at the Statewide picture. There appears to be a consistent message from a variety of sources that Queensland will, in fact, become the California of Australia during the twenty-first century. That is, it will be the State with the largest population and the largest economy.

I want to refer to a number of recent surveys, reports and data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics to substantiate that claim. The first one I want to mention is the recent Kelly recruitment survey, which confirmed that Queensland has had six consecutive quarters of growth in business confidence and jobs, and is still leading Australia out of the recession. Analyst Graham Higgins said that the migration from the rust belt States had also created an inordinately high consumer demand which sheltered Queensland from the effects of the recession. He stated that—

“Queensland is showing an extremely promising trend”—

this is still the Kelly survey—and it continues—

“The oil, mining, service and hospitality sectors all indicated they would continue to hire over the next quarter.

‘I would say Queensland and Western Australia have been leading the way for the last six to nine months and that will continue,’ Mr Higgins said.

‘I think it’s because they (Qld and WA) have not had as much idle capacity as the more robust manufacturing economies in the south.

As a result of not having that idle capacity, there has not been as much restructuring to do.’”

This business confidence is entirely justified as demonstrated by the State Treasury March quarter economic review which showed that Queensland’s contribution to the growth was disproportionately higher than its population in many key areas. In that particular review we had the State then accounting for almost 20 per cent of national exports, compared with its population of 17.4 per cent of Australia. Queensland housing approvals represented 27.1 per cent of the national total, while engineering construction was at 20.5 per cent. In addition, vehicle registrations were at 19.5 per cent.

Mr Ardill: You had better repeat it; they are not listening. They are not getting the message.

Dr CLARK: It is very difficult to get the message to Opposition members. Unfortunately, it is a message that they do not

really want to hear, which is partly the problem. This Treasury analysis was based on data from a variety of sources, including the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which released its first quarterly estimates of gross product in May of this year. The ABS figures indicated that in the year to December 1992, Queensland’s income-based gross State product grew by 6.5 per cent, which was up from the 4.6 per cent growth rate in the year to June 1992. That was the highest growth rate in Australia, proving that Queensland is, indeed, the engine driving Australia’s economic recovery.

The superiority of Queensland’s position has been confirmed even by our rival, New South Wales. In that State a recent survey was carried out by the University of New South Wales and Price Waterhouse. That survey found that Queensland is the most prosperous State in Australia. The survey was attempting to judge the economic management of each State Government and the success and failure of their respective policies as judged by the business community. It used a panel of 33 economists from a range of major Australian companies, Government bodies and academia. The panel of experts confirmed that Queensland is expected to outperform the other States in overall economic performance over at least a five-year period with a mean gross domestic product growth of 3.9 per cent—well above the national average, of course.

On a 100-point rating system, this panel found that Queensland’s economic prospects for 1993 rated some 86.7 points, while the average for the next five years was rated to be some 96.4 points. Honourable members would have to admit that it cannot get much better than that. It is quite clear how Queensland does outperform the other States. This performance has earned us the prize AAA rating from Moody’s. This has not just happened out of luck; it is not something that has materialised; it is something that we are responsible for because it has been four years now since we, rather than the National Party, have been managing the Queensland economy. In that time, we have reduced State debt to a per capita level of a mere \$1,293 per person, compared to over \$8,000 per person in Tasmania; \$7,000 per person in Victoria; and \$4,000 per person even in New South Wales.

Net debt in Queensland is less than 5 per cent of the gross State product, and it is still falling. The Government’s response to the shortfall of \$115m from Canberra—which is painful and no-one can avoid that—is

economically responsible. I think that all honourable members need to recognise that, because the alternatives were increased taxes or borrowings. Neither of those alternatives is more palatable than the spending cuts that we are actually engaged in.

I turn now to far-north Queensland, which is in a particularly fast-growing area of the State, and which is fuelled by the booming tourism industry there. Again, there is an independent source on which to rely—we do not just have to imagine what is happening—in the form of the James Cook University, Cairns Economic Research Unit. We have an established academic institution that is able to provide us with creditable statistics. That was established last year in recognition of the need for such independent, authoritative and regular information regarding our regional economy.

Investors, in particular, find the quality reports that come from that unit on a quarterly basis invaluable as a guide to the health of the economy. The vast array of statistical data which is collected together in their reports is also vital to both Government and local business because it paints a very clear picture of what is happening in far-north Queensland. The unit's overall assessment is that the economic growth in far-north Queensland over the last three years has been exemplary by national standards, and that far-north Queensland has played a very important role in the nationwide economic recovery.

The period between June 1990 and June 1992 was one of exceptional economic growth for far-north Queensland. New labour force data which has just been released by DEET indicates that an additional 13 469 people joined the work force during that time, which is an astonishing 25 per cent increase and which placed the region fifth among 216 natural labour markets or labour regions in Australia. Not surprisingly, however, that level of growth could not be sustained and there has been a levelling-off or a plateauing over the last 12 months. However, leading indicators such as job vacancies appear to be holding firm, and the unemployment situation actually appears to be improving currently.

In the economic research unit's latest June quarterly report, the unit concluded that, despite recent plateauing, the economy of far-north Queensland remains fundamentally sound and that strong economic growth is poised to become re-established when investment and development activity pick up. There are in fact signs of that activity picking up right now. As part of the unit's quarterly

reports, it provides information on both private and Government investment and development activities. I wish to draw the attention of members to certain activities that are reported in the unit's survey.

The following activities are just from the last six months. A new \$400,000 Hertz car maintenance and rental facility has been established at the Cairns airport; a \$6m Pacific Sands holiday apartment complex was established at Holloways Beach, which is just north of Cairns; an \$800,000 extension of the Northern Building Society was prompted by the steady increase in the north's assets base and increased staffing; there is a new seafood and tropical fast food processing industry called Trepang, which has been exporting beche-de-mer to Asia and which is an industry with multimillion-dollar potential; there was the launch of an \$8m catamaran, bringing Daikyo's Great Adventures fleet to seven vessels; the Cairns Harbourside Hotel opened its \$7m extension with a 73-room extension; there was the reopening of the Rodeway Granada Reef Plaza Hotel, which will create 60 jobs; and the film industry in far-north Queensland is expanding. A movie titled *The Penal Colony* is about to be filmed on Lake Tinaroo in addition to the production of children's films which will be carried out at Port Douglas.

A large number of projects have been approved, and many of them are expected to go ahead in the near future. The most well known ones are the skyrail proposal, which is a \$30m cableway project extending from Smithfield to Kuranda, and there is the \$500m Rainbow Harbour proposal whose proponent is quite confident of obtaining finance from America to get the project off the ground. There is also the Cairns casino, about which we will be hearing more shortly.

Apart from these initiatives of the private sector, the Government also has been very active and has not just been sitting back and allowing the private sector to do all the work Statewide and in far-north Queensland. The Government's initiatives include its multimillion-dollar Capital Works Program and also its \$150m Jobs Plan. In Cairns, the benefits of those initiatives are to be clearly seen. For example, \$40m has been spent on the Cairns Court House/Police Station complex and a new building has been constructed for the Administrative Services Department. New schools such as a school for distance education have been constructed and others are planned at places such as Redlynch, which is an area of rapid growth in the Cairns region. In addition, a number of infrastructure

upgradings have taken place in rail, road and the port of Cairns. All those projects have been advanced by the State Government.

In respect of the Government's \$150m Jobs Plan, I refer to a report presented to Cabinet in Cairns yesterday by the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations. This very comprehensive information paper indicates how the Jobs Plan projects are developing in far-north Queensland. The paper states that \$2.2m has been spent on 310 school refurbishment projects, creating 1 700 weekly paypackets for previously unemployed people. I recognise this achievement and extend my appreciation to the Minister also for the \$324,000 that is being spent in my electorate on school refurbishments. Just about every school in the Barron River electorate is benefiting from that particular program. In addition, \$1.425m has been spent on approximately 26 kilometres of bikeways, which has provided work for 55 long-term unemployed people. In my electorate, there are three projects valued at \$255,000.

The sum of \$74,000 has been provided to the Cairns Career Training Inc and Cassowary Coast Development Bureau at Innisfail to run training and job placement projects for more than 60 jobseekers. The amount of \$180,000 has been provided to place 36 long-term unemployed young people into traineeships and apprenticeships in State Government departments and local authorities. In addition, \$68,650 in interest-free loans plus business planning advice has been provided to allow 18 unemployed people to start 10 new self-employment ventures in the far north. There will be 25 extra tutors at the Cairns TAFE college and five extra tutors at the Johnstone TAFE college, which will create an extra 150 full-time equivalent student positions at Cairns and six full-time and 25 part-time extra places at Johnstone colleges. Job placement officers at each of the Cairns and Johnstone colleges have already helped 45 students in Cairns and 26 students in Johnstone to find work.

The projects also include an extra State Government youth employment consultant to help young job seekers. Positions have been created for 56 trainees in the Youth Conservation Corps, improving existing facilities and developing walking tracks at four national parks, one of which is Mount Whitfield in my electorate. That, of course, is a wonderful program because it not only creates employment but also does very positive things for our environment. It creates those green

jobs that are so important. Another \$359,000 has been allocated for 15 other environmentally friendly projects, including revegetation and visitor facilities, providing work for 41 people, including 29 trainees.

That is the sort of record that this Government is producing in the far north. The \$150m Jobs Plan is creating wonderful results throughout the State and we are particularly grateful for the results in far-north Queensland. Other Government spending that has benefited my electorate is the multimillion-dollar double laning of the Captain Cook Highway, which at the present time is occurring right outside my electorate office. I certainly had a keen appreciation of the need for that particular work, which is certainly improving traffic flow in the area.

The Stanton Road and Captain Cook Highway intersection, which I negotiate with great difficulty every day, has been of particular concern to residents in the area and to me. I will be continuing my representations to have traffic lights installed at that particularly busy intersection so that it will benefit not only the local residents but also the ambulance station, which is located on the corner and which, of course, needs very rapid access out onto the highway.

However, as all members are aware, social services are just as important as roads in fast-growing electorates such as mine. Last month, I was pleased to attend the opening of a respite care centre for the frail aged on the Marlin Coast, which is being funded under the Home and Community Care Program. That program has been very much needed in the Marlin Coast area which has a growing population of elderly people, many of whom retire to that area without family support and then find themselves quite socially isolated and without a network to support them.

Many people are socially isolated in my electorate because it has a number of small scattered townships along the coast and, quite honestly, public transport cannot provide an adequate service for those townships. So we are finding creative and innovative ways to link the elderly so that they do not suffer from that social isolation. A particular pilot project is being funded by the Health Department called Link-a-Friend, which has been introduced to meet the needs of those residents. I will address the House on that later. I am currently seeking to provide for the future health needs of people in my area also by looking at how we might construct a community health centre on land that is currently owned by the Mulgrave Shire Council.

As members know, since I was elected to Parliament I have always been committed to improving tertiary education facilities, so I was particularly pleased with the State and Federal Governments' commitment to funding the Cairns campus of the James Cook University at the Smithfield site, which is in my electorate. At yesterday's lunch in Cairns for the members of Cabinet, I was particularly pleased that we were able to present the Vice-Chancellor of James Cook University, Professor Ray Golding, with the titles to that land at Smithfield. Construction should begin early next year. There will be two buildings initially, and more to come as courses and student numbers grow. We are anticipating that there will be some 2 000 students by the year 2000. That is a very realistic goal and one that I am sure we will achieve.

That expansion of tertiary facilities will be of enormous value to the people in the Cairns area, to families who currently cannot afford to send their children away to study and to women who want to study and cannot move because of family commitments. All of those sorts of benefits will be achieved when we have an expansion of our tertiary education facilities. Also on that land at Smithfield, there will be located the Commonwealth Cooperative Research Centre for rainforest ecology and management. That cooperative research centre involves not only James Cook University but also Griffith University, Queensland University, the CSIRO and the Atherton Forest Research Centre. It will create results that will lead the world in the management of that particular ecosystem. That is a product that we can export.

The knowledge-based industries are the way to go. We must look at how we can be that real clever country and export that sort of knowledge that we are gaining on the management of our natural resources, both the rainforest and the reef. Those are very valuable commodities that are much sought after in Asia, where unfortunately the management of those sorts of systems is not as well developed as it is in Australia.

In conclusion, I commend the Treasurer for the work that he did on his Budget last year and for the way in which the Budget has improved both the quality of life and the facilities in my electorate. I look forward to another very positive Budget this year.

Mr CONNOR (Nerang) (9.51 p.m.): Without doubt, the most dangerous announcement that this Treasurer made in his interim Budget statement was his announcement to have an additional \$25m

performance dividend from the QTC. Those performance dividends from a Government corporation, authority or whatever need to have the highest level of scrutiny, because that is where the Government can and has moved funds from the balance sheet into consolidated funds that are simply shonky.

The thing to remember about performance dividends is this: the \$25m that the Treasurer is moving from the Queensland Treasury Corporation into Consolidated Revenue is \$25m that he does not have to raise in taxes or reduce his expenditure by. One must ask where the \$25m has come from. Is the Government really increasing the performance of the Queensland Treasury Corporation? Interest rates are much lower now than they were two or three years ago. So where is the extra money coming from? The Queensland Labor Government is using the high standard of creditworthiness that has been built up over the last generation or so to relend the money at a higher rate of interest and make an incremental profit on the relending of that money. That is the only way that one can construe what the Treasurer has had to say. I might add that the practice of relending the money and taking advantage of the State's high credit rating and then relending it is part of the reason that the South Australian Government lost three and a quarter billion dollars.

The Queensland Treasury Corporation is the borrowing authority for the Government. Instead of the various agencies raising their own money, the Queensland Treasury Corporation borrows it for them. It would borrow large amounts of money and on-lend it to the different Government agencies and, on its way through, charge a service fee to cover its risk and administration and, now with this performance dividend, an additional profit to the Government. The financial advantage occurs largely as a result of the economies of scale, because obviously it borrows more money than each of the individual agencies would. It also has the benefits of a full Government guarantee. The Treasurer would not disagree with anything I have said.

Initially, it looks quite good on the surface. But what it really does is create a difference in perceptions. What it means is that the different Government agencies and local councils are not on budget and are paying more for their money, more in interest rates than they should. This means that the Government agencies will be operating more expensively and delivering services to the community at a higher price. What we are quite clearly seeing is a grab for profits

anywhere that the Government can make the Budget papers look better than they really are. These performance dividends are nothing at all. They are not performance dividends; they are purely additional moneys that Government agencies are paying over and above the interest that they should be paying.

I turn now to the Treasurer's Interim Budget Statement, which states—

"In order to obtain further benefits from consolidated borrowing arrangements, it is proposed that all statutory and local authority borrowers will be required to utilise the QTC in the future."

So quite obviously the Government is forcing these agencies to take advantage of it. If it was cheaper and if it was better for them, they would not have to be forced. Quite obviously, it would be more expensive or not as good a deal.

The Interim Budget Statement goes on further to state—

"There will be no cash flow budget impact on authorities as QTC borrowers will be able to restructure their loan facilities to extend the repayment term . . ."

So when they are required to pay higher interest, what the Government is kindly going to do is extend the term so they can pay it over a longer period of time. I might add that the Local Government Association has had a few words to say about that. I will quote a media release that was put out by that association and signed by Mr Greg Hallam, the executive director. It states—

"Yet only some months ago the State Government advised a north Queensland council who had asked them to assess the relative merits of borrowing proposals from a private bank and the Queensland Treasury Corporation that they should accept the private bank's offer, and if the Queensland Treasury scheme is so darned good, why did they provide that advice?"

That was a quote from Councillor Pennell.

What is quite clear is that these Government agencies and local councils are going to be forced into paying for higher interest rates. If one looks at it fairly closely, a lot of these loans may have been initiated many years ago at much lower interest rates and they will be forced to refinance, in many cases, at a much higher interest rate. As I said, each year this dividend is going to be added to the Budget, increasing the

perception of good financial management and offsetting the potential for a Government deficit. But in turn all they are doing is increasing the cost of running Government agencies and local councils. It is quite simply robbing Peter to pay Paul. What is more, this practice was highly criticised by the South Australian royal commission, because this is exactly the practice that South Australia used—the Bannon Government used—to make its Government financial dealings look better than what they really were.

The South Australian Finance Authority—the SAFA—has a striking similarity to the Queensland Treasury Corporation. I might again remind the House that South Australia lost over \$3 billion in its financial transactions. But one thing that is not widely known is that the principal economic adviser of the Premier is Paul Woodland, and he is one of the architects of much of the practice of the Queensland Treasury Corporation. He started with the Goss Government at about the same time in 1991 as the Government redefined the activities of the Queensland Treasury Corporation and set up the Queensland Investment Corporation. But we need to know who Paul Woodland really is.

Mr Elder: Come on, own up. Who's Paul Woodland?

Mr CONNOR: Who is he? He is really Mr Bannon's bagman, as per the South Australian royal commission. This fellow is the fellow who delivered the pay-off to the State Bank of South Australia for keeping interest rates down in the run-up to the 1989 election in South Australia. I would like to quote from page 292 of the royal commission's report. It states—

"Mr Woodland however did recall the issue of compensation arising at this time prior to the Reserve Bank's announcement of a subsidy for the nationally operating banks, made on the 28th September 1989 and described the meeting as being an argument about whether the bank should put up rates at that time."

So this is the man who is presently working for Mr Goss, the \$2m "brown paper bag" man. He was the one who paid off the \$2.2m to keep the interest rates down for the 1989 election in South Australia. Paul Woodland was the one who the royal commission found was the bagman. According to the royal commission, David Simmons, the chairman of the board of the State Bank of South Australia, said to Paul Woodland—

"We have fixed it at the Board meeting as promised."

The commission was told that the bank had held its interest rates down until after the 1989 election, when it was given a controversial payment of \$2.2m by the South Australian Government to compensate for the loss of income. Mr Woodland was Mr Bannon's bagman to make the offer to the State Bank through its chairman of the board, David Simmons. And that is the same person who is Mr Goss' economic guru and who was behind the South Australian Finance Authority setting up a deal very similar to the one we have with the Queensland Treasury Corporation paying these performance dividends by borrowing money for the Government.

The main purpose of this new direction, this performance dividend, is to obscure Budget data. It is a carpet under which things can be hidden. Initially, the furore from local councils having to pay will be the big issue. But it should be remembered that, over the next few years—as in all of the other Labor States—more Government operations will be corporatised and each of their operations will be off balance sheet and subject to commercial confidentiality.

Honourable members should picture a few years into the future under this scenario. All major Government enterprises will be corporatised—that is what Mr De Lacy has already stated will occur. Most will be in a monopoly situation. Each will be subject to commercial confidentiality. Each will be paying a larger and larger interest premium because they must finance through the QTC. Each will have to impose higher and higher charges on their consumers, the taxpayers of Queensland, because of the cost of operation increases brought about by higher interest. The Queensland Treasury Corporation will be raking in higher and higher profits for operations. The Government will be raking in higher and higher performance dividends and balancing the Budget in that way.

Each southern Labor State has done it—Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia—forcing these corporations to get involved in tricks to cover up, to attempt to rake in the funds that are being raked off into consolidated revenue. Some of the tricks that they got up to are really quite novel. One of them is a lease-back deal. In other words, a Government corporation may decide to sell some of its rolling stock. This was done in Victoria by Vicrail. What occurs is that the corporation can sell its rolling stock to a third

party—a Treasury corporation or whatever—and then lease it back. On the surface, nothing changes. The Treasury corporation in turn borrows the money for the lease-back arrangement. That money is then siphoned back into the consolidated funds, usually as performance dividends, and used as recurrent expenditure. It is the equivalent of selling the family silver. In Victoria, the end result was that the whole of the rolling stock was owned by third parties and all of the money was eventually spent. The Victorian Government was then up for the repayments to lease back all of the rolling stock that the Victorian taxpayer had accumulated over a number of generations.

Another trick is juggling funds in bringing forward incomes and delaying expenditures. This is a beauty, and this is where the Treasury corporation will be in its element. For a number of years in Victoria, interest payments were delayed. They were moved from being paid at the end of a half year to the start of the following half year. That simple little action of delaying a half-yearly interest payment to the start of the next month meant that half the year's interest payments for the whole of Government sector were moved into the following year, which showed up on the Budget papers as a major windfall.

At the time, the Oppositions in the different southern States were not sitting on their backsides not paying attention to these tricks—quite the contrary. But once the Opposition got close to unravelling the money trails, the Government would claim commercial confidentiality. These GOCs—Government owned corporations—could operate effectively without the scrutiny and accountability that is necessary when dealing with taxpayers' money.

For instance, some of the ventures for which the Western Australian Government used the funding are really quite amazing. The Government, through its investments, effectively took control of the fourth estate—the media. Through the State Government Insurance Commission of Western Australia, the Government purchased the only State daily newspaper, the *West Australian*. Through the State Government Insurance Commission, the Government gained control of the Channel 9 television station. Through the Totalisator Board, the Government gained control of the only talkback radio station other than the ABC—radio station 6PR.

At the same time, many of the senior executives of those different Government owned corporations and Government

departments were cronies, to say the least. They were required to tithe. Prior to gaining their appointments, they were required to sign contracts to donate 10 per cent of their salaries to the Labor Party. If that is not a conflict of interests when one is determining who is appointed to a job, I do not know what is!

I turn to the Gold Coast Indy car race. The parallels between that event and what went on in Western Australia are really quite staggering. Three years ago, the Queensland Government was potentially committed to staging the race, but the joint venture partners felt that it was no longer a viable financial enterprise. Shortly before the first race was held, the private-enterprise operators extracted a guarantee from the Government for their equity and interests. The race was held. Money was no object. Almost \$27m was lost by the Government in staging the first race. That was the price that the Queensland taxpayer paid to ensure that the Goss Labor Government's political future was not dented by a failed race. Soon after, when the full ramifications of the losses were understood by the joint venture partners, they very quickly eased themselves out of the venture and it became a totally Government owned race and corporation.

Two further races were then staged—equally as disastrous financially—to the stage at which this Government was forced to bail out the debt of the Gold Coast Indy Grand Prix Company to the tune of more than \$60m. It cost the Queensland taxpayers about \$20m per race. That is the danger of moving down a path of corporatisation that does not have sufficient safeguards.

One of the debt traps in which Western Australia and Victoria were ensnared was to borrow totally the necessary capital for investment in the assets backing the corporations. Let us paint the scenario. Queensland has a general downturn in its economy. The Government is raking off in the vicinity of \$2 billion or \$3 billion per annum from the GOCs.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr CONNOR: That is something that the Treasurer himself has stated. He is expecting to rake off \$2 billion to \$3 billion from his GOCs. It is an integral part of the overall—

Mr Beattie: You don't believe that?

Mr CONNOR: That is what the Treasurer said. That \$2.5 billion to \$3 billion will amount to probably a quarter of the overall Budget of the State. That is quite normal and it is

expected to come in, but the corporations have a dramatic shift in their profitability on a year-to-year basis. At a time when the Government will need more receipts because its other revenue will be down, it will be relying on the performance dividends from those corporations to boost the coffers of the Treasury. That is the predicament in which Victoria found itself as a result of relying on the profits of the corporations to balance its Budget ledger. That Government took all the profits but then expected those corporations to borrow, off Budget balance sheet, its requirements for capital. Those borrowings will not be within the loan council limit. Effectively, that allows the Queensland State Government to get around Federal Loan Council rules.

Government enterprises involved in commercial operations, such as Queensland Rail when it is privatised, or the QIDC, or the Queensland Investment Corporation—any Government owned commercial operation—will be able to borrow outside limits set by the Federal Loan Council. This Government will have an opportunity to move down the road taken by Victoria—by increasing dramatically its expenditure and its borrowings without having the scrutiny of the Federal Loan Council limits. It can increase dramatically the size of those corporations by borrowing, then sucking in all the profits, and it will be able to siphon off those profits to undertake its social agenda.

In his second-reading speech on the Government Owned Corporations Bill, the Treasurer stated—

“The Government will be able to require GOCs to undertake community service obligations . . . with funding provided direct from the Budget or, in some cases, by reducing the GOC's targeted rate of return.”

What we have is a Government that is able to suck every last dollar of profit out of Government corporations, and use those profits to advance its social agenda. It can also force the enterprise to fully fund its capital outside Federal Loan Council limits. It can also require those commercial enterprises to involve themselves directly in the Government's social agenda. So we have the potential for an almost identical situation to occur as what occurred in Victoria—the Government, using Government instrumentalities to fund its social agenda, can move its borrowings off the balance sheets and away from the scrutiny of the Loan Council.

In considering accountability, one only needs to look at the West Australian situation and what happened from an accountability point of view in the Government owned corporations in that State. I will relate one of the findings of the royal commission. A level of accountability was recommended specifically in the West Australian Inc royal commission to deal with the matters involved with a conflict of interest of the board members of Government owned corporations. That accountability is not contained in the Government's corporatisation legislation. Recommendation 16, Part B, states—

“A public servant should not be appointed to the Board of a statutory authority or State owned company while retaining a position in the public service, in a department within any portfolio of the Minister responsible for that body.”

One only has to look at Mr Smerdon to see that.

Mr GILMORE (Tablelands) (10.11 p.m.): Every quarter the Parliamentary Library provides members with a rather good little volume titled *Quarterly Bulletin of Queensland Statistics*, which covers changes in the statistical data relating to the Queensland economy over that period. It is presented in tabulated form as well as in graphic form. I find that a very interesting and very useful tool to which to refer when I am investigating matters that are of importance to me in my job as a member of Parliament, and certainly in respect of my portfolio responsibilities.

It has been mentioned tonight by some of my colleagues that over the last four years, the income of this Government has increased in increments. Interestingly enough, the amount expended by the Government has increased in increments also, in that the Government has spent every dollar that it has had. When the Premier and his Treasurer received from the Premiers Conference in Canberra somewhat less than what they had begged for, because they had factored into their high-spending Budget the \$115m that they did not receive, all of a sudden there was considerable panic in the Government, which culminated in the announcement by the Premier and the Treasurer at the Cabinet meeting in Cairns of some quite severe cuts to rural services and other services.

I would like to quote from this *Quarterly Bulletin of Queensland Statistics*, because I took the trouble of asking an officer of the Parliamentary Library to break down a section of those statistics relating to Queensland licences and permits, which was not given in

detail. The document does not outline what is involved in that area, so I asked an officer of the Parliamentary Library to break down that section, because I wanted to know. Queensland licences and permits are listed under “art unions”, “auctioneers and agents”, “liquor”, “motor vehicle registrations”, “machine gaming fees”, “State transport”, “tobacco”, “traffic” and “other”. I might point out that over the last four years, “other” has risen by \$24m. I am not quite sure what “other” entails, but I suspect that it might be Lotto, because Lotto is not included in that breakdown. The point that I am making is that that section, including vehicle registrations and “other”, has increased in real terms by almost \$300m in the nearly four years of this Labor Government. It indicates that the continual piety of the Treasurer, when he says, “We are not going to increase taxes beyond a certain limit”, is just arrant nonsense. That has been demonstrated in the documents, and it is demonstrated most certainly in the statistical data, if anybody is prepared to actually analyse it properly. It is against that background that we find ourselves now confronted with severe Budget cuts to road and rail services, particularly in rural areas.

That is the background to some of the issues that I want to talk about. I will begin with the electricity industry, and the way in which I perceive this Government has treated it, and the way in which I believe it is going to go. When this Government came to power four years ago, the Queensland Electricity Commission was undoubtedly without peer in this nation. It was regarded highly by the electricity industries around the nation. In fact, it was regarded as having the world's best practice, or Australia's best practice in respect of the electricity industry. It was revered and used by people at conferences and in other places as the hallmark of the way to run an electricity industry. Sadly, I have to inform the House that that was four years ago.

Much has happened since then which has caused the QEC to fall somewhat into disrepute, and it is quickly losing that competitive edge that it had in the past. It will continue to lose that competitive edge because of a number of factors, including political interference in the planning processes and these kinds of things. These are matters that I have touched upon in the past in this Parliament, and I will keep touching on them because it is important that the people of Queensland are aware of them and understand them and their ramifications.

This Government is aiming towards taxation dividends on the QEC. Some time

ago, we were debating GOE legislation in this Parliament, and I had a slanging match with the Treasurer. I bet him that, this year, he would extract between \$60m and \$100m from the QEC as a dividend simply to balance his Budget. I do not believe that I was wrong then, and I do not think that I am wrong now. He took \$15m last year in a situation in which he had a surplus Budget—or at least that was the story he told us. A considerable amount of money went into debt retirement in last year's Budget. I commend the Government for that. I think it is excellent. But I doubt very much that it will continue this year. If it does, most of that debt retirement will come out of the coffers of the QEC simply because the Treasurer can no longer keep his hand out of the till.

That is the kind of thing that we are facing with the QEC. We are going downstream with poor planning. We failed to decide on Tully Millstream. So now we have some alternatives to consider. As Queenslanders, what are we going to do to fill the gap in the power system that has been left by this poor-planning Government? The alternatives include thermal power, being a coal-fired power station somewhere in Queensland. Tenders have been called, but that cannot come on-stream in time. We have gas turbines—whether they be gas-fired or liquid fuelled. We also have the interstate grid. I shall touch on each of those.

In respect of gas turbines—it is my view and that of the QEC and others that gas turbines—particularly the liquid-fuelled gas turbines—are the worst possible option for Queensland for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that we have limited access to liquid hydrocarbons, which would have to be shipped into ports at Bulimba, Cairns or Townsville. We would have to burn diesel fuel, jet A1, or whatever the Minister decides on at the time. That is highly expensive, and the power that is generated is very non-competitive indeed when compared with other options. It will also provide to this city, Townsville or Cairns another source of pollution, which we are all trying to avoid—both gaseous emissions and noise. This State should never be forced into a position of having to take that option.

I believe that the interstate grid is a two-edged sword, and on both edges we lose. I am a great believer in Queensland and the options that are available to us because of the planning and the kind of work that was done in the past to enable Queensland industry and domestic users to be offered a special deal because we were in the pre-eminent position

of being the most efficient producer of electricity in mainland Australia. That pre-eminent position could be lost and mortgaged forever if this State chooses to go to the interstate electricity grid, firstly because we must fill the gap for 1998; because we will be importing electricity from New South Wales at its cost, not at our charge. Therefore, we will be importing expensive electricity. That is not a guess, it is reality. Secondly, if we reach the stage at which we are exporting power, once again we will be exporting power at our value, that is, the cheap power that can be generated in Queensland, to the rust bucket States, which I think one member mentioned a few minutes ago, and we will be offering the benefits of our wonderful planning processes of the past 25 years to interstate industry. I am a parochial Queenslander and I am proud of that. We should offer to our industry and our households every possible benefit that can be gained from the good planning that has been undertaken for many years.

In recent times, in a political panic, the Queensland Government announced that it was going to spend \$5m introducing alternative power into two areas of Queensland, one being at Boulia in the Minister's electorate and the other one north of the Daintree. This deserves some scrutiny. First of all, I am aware that nobody in the industry has any idea what form or kind of machine or mechanism will be applied to provide that alternative power source to those people. In Boulia, there are open plains, miles of sun and all that kind of stuff, so it is possible that there will be some benefit from solar collection, whether it be solar cells or simply thermal collection.

However, north of the Daintree it is another game altogether. It is dense rainforest. That is the reason for this exercise. Therefore, wind generation is limited by the fact that there will be an obscene forest of windmills rising above the forests or we will have to clear half the forest so that we can get sufficient wind to turn the windmills. We are going to have to put in solar cells. For six to eight months of the year, that area is covered by probably the most dense cloud cover that this nation experiences. This limits the potential of solar collection. There is the possibility of low-head hydro turbines, which are certainly available. But they would not provide sufficient light for a torch so that I could walk around my house in the dark with it. Therefore, what we are proposing is a very expensive experiment in something that will provide very low-quality, unreliable power for

those people who happen to live north of the Daintree River.

Interestingly enough, on Sunday, prior to the Cabinet meeting, the Premier announced that there will be a moratorium on the extension of mains power north of the Daintree. Even those persons who are north of the Daintree but not involved in that rainforest area are limited forever. They are the only people in Queensland who may not have mains power. Others do not have it because of distance, economy, topography or other reasons. But those people have been singled out as the only people whom the Premier and this Government have told, "You may not have mains power." They are now limited in their homes and in their industries to a very poor quality kind of power which will be extraordinarily expensive.

We need to question the Minister and his department. First of all, if they are going to supply power to anywhere else in Queensland, there are contributions to be paid and guarantees to be made. What will we charge these people for the use of our assets north of the Daintree when we know that the quality of the power and the reliability of the power are going to be Australia's worst possible option, next of course to gas turbines?

I will return to gas turbines for a moment. The other day, the Minister said a quite extraordinary thing. I am pleased that he is in the Chamber, because I would like to take him to task for it. A recent article by John Stubbs in the *Sydney Sun-Herald* under the headline "Power station uproar" stated—

"Energy Minister Tony McGrady told *The Sun-Herald* yesterday no firm decision had been made about building gas-fired power stations but the QEC had told him they were 'big in the Middle East' . . ."

I hope that the Minister is proud of that statement that they are big in the Middle East. Let me tell him why they are big in the Middle East—because there is nothing inherently wrong with gas-fired turbines. The Middle East is floating on a sea of oil and gas. It does not have a high quality steaming coal alternative; oil and gas is its only alternative. If that is the only power source, of course gas-fired turbines are big in the Middle East. Because the Minister declares that they are big in the Middle East, that does not justify the installation of gas-fired turbines in Queensland—which is the worst possible option for Queensland power.

I turn briefly to rail services in my electorate. On Monday, following the Cabinet meeting, the Premier announced that rail services would terminate at Mareeba, so that the service from Mareeba to Atherton would be closed and the service from Mareeba to Almaden and Forsayth was going to be closed. Only five weeks ago—it may even be less than that—the Minister for Transport, having been prompted somewhat by articles that I had published in the press about the likelihood of his closing exactly the same services, came to Mareeba, claimed that I was a mischievous person saying all these dreadful things—

Mr T. B. Sullivan: You are.

Mr GILMORE: The honourable member is in the wrong seat. The Minister stood on the platform of the Mareeba Railway Station and said, "Me! Would I close down the services to the tablelands? Of course I won't close down the services to the tablelands." Four or five weeks later, the Premier closed the services to the tablelands.

I might say something at this juncture about the freedom of information legislation that the Government has brought in. Recently, I made a quite considerable application for freedom of information on statistical information about that rail service. I received a letter back saying, "Yes, we have identified some letters that you can have, or some documents that you can have. There are some that you cannot have, and there is some statistical data that we do not collect, but we will collect it for you provided you pay us \$625 per man week for the collection of the data. There are about six or seven weeks that you will have to pay for and, at the end of the time when we have collected the data, there is no guarantee that we are going to give it to you." If that is freedom of information, then the Government has some pretty twisted ideas about what freedom of information might be.

Mr Bredhauer interjected.

Mr GILMORE: Nonetheless, I would like to go on in respect of the close of these services. The member for Cook should be proud of himself, because all the rail services to his electorate are now closed except for one little railmotor that runs from Croydon to Normanton. God only knows why it survived—probably because of its heritage value.

Mr Bredhauer: A very popular rail service.

Mr GILMORE: But what about the people at Forsayth whom he rang yesterday and to whom he said, "Oh, it's dreadful. We are going

to close your railway line. Ha, ha, ha!"? Big joke! It is not funny.

Mr BREDHAUER: I rise to a point of order. I did not ring John Smith and say that it was a joke that the Government was closing down his railway line. I find the insinuation by the member for Tablelands most offensive and I ask for it to be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Briskey): Order! The honourable member has asked for that comment to be withdrawn.

Mr GILMORE: Let me say that the people of Forsyth find it offensive, too; but I withdraw it. I would like to say that the boundary of our electorates is 200 or 300 kilometres of the Almaden to Forsyth line. I am unhappy that it closed, because it provided a service to very few people in my electorate, but people at Bullock Creek and other places depended on that line. Now the Government has moved to close it for no good reason other than the fact that it will save a few bucks. What has happened to the Labor Party in this State? What has happened to its service to the people of Queensland? It has gone. There are no more service obligations whatsoever. But what about the service obligation to the peanut industry—7 000 tonnes of peanuts? Why could not the line have continued at least to Tolga? Why did it have to stop at Mareeba?

Mr De Lacy: You have been talking about this every fortnight.

Mr GILMORE: I certainly have, and I was right. The Treasurer said, "Oh, no. Gilmore is wrong. He is a liar. He does not know what he is talking about." I was right every time and the Treasurer was wrong, as was demonstrated by the Premier. He could not even allow the line to continue an extra 20 kilometres to pick up 7 000 tonnes of peanuts. Now it will cost the peanut farmers of the Atherton Tableland at least \$100,000 and it will put that industry at risk. On the very same day, we read the headline "New strategy will boost Tableland". The Minister said that we were going to have a new strategy to exploit the potential of the Atherton Tableland as a key growth area for agriculture. The day that the Treasurer closed the railway line, half closed down the peanut industry and bugged up everything that he turned his hand to was the day that he announced that he was going to take advantage of the potential of the Atherton Tableland. I have never known such crass hypocrisy. It is the kind of thing that we expect from the Treasurer.

What about the potential of the cane industry? This year, the Mossman Central mill

is transporting 180 000 tonnes of cane by road down the Rex Highway. I have no problem with that. However, South Johnstone mill and Mulgrave mill are both looking at the prospect of growing cane on the red soil south of Mareeba. All of those considerations were predicated on the view that they would use the 3ft 6in gauge to get that cane to the coast as cheaply, efficiently and effectively as possible. What does the Government do? Right at the outset of those negotiations, it closed the railway line. So what can they do? If Mulgrave wants to continue with the project, it will have to take cane down the Gillies Highway. Can honourable members imagine such a lunatic proposal? Only the Treasurer would think of such a thing. The Palmerston Highway is already overloaded. I have not had time to talk about the cows on the Palmerston Highway. Imagine if we were hauling half a million tonnes of cane down that highway and running over cows with it!

I condemn this Government for the mismanagement of the electricity industry, the mismanagement of the mining industry and the mismanagement of far-north Queensland. It will continue because this Government is absolutely incompetent, and I am disgusted with the entire operation.

Debate, on motion of Mr Barton, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns— Treasurer) (10.31 p.m.): I move—

"That the House do now adjourn."

Drought Relief

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Western Downs) (10.32 p.m.): Tonight, I want to praise those people in the metropolitan and coastal areas who have seen fit to help the people in the drought-affected areas of south-west Queensland. As a representative of the people of Western Downs, and being aware of neighbouring electorates, I truly understand the plight of those people. More than anything else, I understand just how much they appreciate that the people in the city have raised money for fodder in an effort to provide some sort of relief.

Various bodies, some of them associated with churches, some of them from service clubs—I am aware of an RSL club—and other less formal groups have organised themselves to raise money because they feel compassion for their fellow Queenslanders. There has

been a common thought that there is a "them" and an "us", that the people in the city do not really understand the people in the bush and that city people tend to concentrate on their own problems and aspirations while ignoring others. Those types of feelings have been dispelled in recent weeks because the hard-pressed people of the rural areas have suddenly realised that there are people in the city who have helped them out.

I want to mention a couple of instances that have come to my attention. A group of people—I believe they are associated with an RSL club in one of the southern suburbs of Brisbane—decided that they would take a trip out to the Yuleba/Wallumbilla area in the Bendemere Shire. Although it is only a small area of two small towns, they decided that they would take hay to them in addition to organising a barbecue. The group issued an invitation to all the people of the Bendemere Shire to go along to the showgrounds at Wallumbilla for the distribution of the hay and to attend the barbecue and have a good night out.

To obtain an appreciation of the problem with feeding stock, I spoke with the shire president who told me that in just one division, an area north of Wallumbilla—probably about a quarter of the shire—there are still about 18 000 head of cattle being fed. One could imagine how far a few semitrailers of hay would go towards feeding those cattle; but the gesture was very much appreciated. Those people have been so preoccupied with feeding stock from day to day, and they are so strapped for cash and feeling a bit depressed that they have not been socialising at all and have had little contact with one another. They go to town to buy the necessities, and the rest of the time they stick to themselves. As it turned out, they responded to the invitation from this group from the southern suburbs of Brisbane, and 300 people turned up. The group provided all the meat, salad and a few beers, and everyone found it was just like a good drench—using country terminology—and a real therapy. They got together, talked about their problems, had a good laugh with the people from Brisbane and profusely thanked them for their efforts.

The other instance that I want to talk about happened just the other day. A total of 258 vehicles left Brisbane for the Tara Shire—it is not in my electorate, but it is near where I live—with an enormous amount of hay. They visited three different centres between 100 kilometres and 150 kilometres apart in that shire. After that, they were keen enough to

say that they would do it again in six weeks' time. It is that sort of effort that we really appreciate.

It is also being realised that it has been the compassion of these people—the ordinary citizens of Brisbane—that has forced the hand of this Government. It is their compassion and determination to help their fellow Queenslanders that has forced the hand of the Government because, all of a sudden, we see a majority of Queenslanders wanting to help those in need, and the Government of Queensland has been forced to take some action. We are a little suspicious that the action taken by the Government would not have been as great if those people had not gone out there and said, "These people need help and we're going to start helping them out."

Those people have expressed a certain degree of anger because they have worked hard raising money to buy fodder for the people in the bush only to learn that, at the same time, the Government is raising Crown rentals. They find it very unfair that they are raising private funds, working hard on a voluntary basis on the weekend, going out to help those people while the Government grabs money off them through Crown rentals. Worse still, the Deputy Premier postures across the shires of western Queensland handing out the money that was donated by the people through the Channel 9 appeal and the Fourx appeal.

Time expired.

Queensland Justices Association

Mr HOLLIS (Redcliffe) (10.37 p.m.): At a meeting held last night at the Redcliffe division of justices of the peace, the following resolution was carried—

"This meeting notes decision of state council to 'dissolve' the Redcliffe divisional committee.

This meeting believes that such decision was, among other things, unlawful and/or lacking in natural justice.

This meeting endorses the continued existence of the Redcliffe divisional committee, notwithstanding the decision of state council. Further, this meeting authorises its chairman, Mr Wickson to respond to state council's solicitors advising them of same."

The background for this motion was that on 30 June 1993, solicitors Macfie Poole for the Queensland Justices Association issued a letter to the Redcliffe division of the QJA on

behalf of the state council advising that the division had been dissolved. The events which led to this are as follows: after changes to the Act regarding justices of the peace, I arranged a seminar for the justices in my electorate. I wanted to afford them the opportunity to hear first-hand specific information on the Government's reform agenda. Subsequent to this, the Redcliffe division of the QJA was formed. It encouraged local justices to participate and to consider membership of the QJA and to participate in the Statewide reform agenda. This division set up a subcommittee to organise guest speakers for their divisional meetings. The QJA State council supported this initiative and the subcommittee approached the Attorney-General to check his availability as a speaker. He agreed to speak at a divisional meeting, but for this, of course, he required a formal invitation, and this is where the conflict began to emerge.

The State council of the QJA objected to this invitation. It was obviously worried that the Attorney would give a true account of the reform program. In fact, the State council was so paranoid about the division's initiative that it took the unusual step of calling a special joint meeting of the State council and the Redcliffe division to discuss the matter. The council even selected whom it would invite to this meeting, and the meeting was held on 10 May 1993.

Ms Clancy, State President of the QJA, chaired the meeting and instructed two divisional observers to leave the meeting. In spite of substantial protests from the other members present, the two persons did leave the meeting to avoid further conflict. Peter MacDonald, former registrar and now consultant to the QJA, who was recently prosecuted for breaches of Commonwealth law in relation to offences of dishonesty and to which he pleaded guilty, told the local convener, Mr Graham Wickson, that he should refrain from issuing any invitation to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General to address any divisional meeting. He said that there was to be no meeting under any circumstances with the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General and that the division was to have all future correspondence censored by the State council. In response to that, the Redcliffe division called a meeting on 28 June 1993 and successfully moved a vote of confidence in the Redcliffe convener, Mr Graham Wickson.

What did the QJA do? Its members ran to their lawyers, and two days later all members of the Redcliffe division received a letter from Macfie Poole, solicitors for the QJA.

This letter said, "You don't exist any more." It was brutally short and contained no explanation, no detail, no dates or times and no record of events. It was a cowardly attack by council members from behind their lawyers. The action was not only unlawful and unwarranted but also absolutely astounding. It is unfair and unjust, and I am personally disgusted by the behaviour of the State council of the QJA. I am horrified that this heavy-handed and costly action has been taken to dissolve an effective division of the QJA.

I am upset about the personal vilification directed towards justices in my electorate, particularly towards the committee convener, Mr Graham Wickson, and other members. These persons, with the support of their division, had not breached their constitution or broken the law. They had attempted to invite the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—the very Minister responsible for justice of the peace reforms—to be a guest speaker at a divisional meeting. As the local member, I am acutely aware of the history of this dispute and will not accept that the dissolution of the Redcliffe division was made for any reason other than political point-scoring and to punish the division for refusing to act as the puppets of the State council.

I have read the constitution and I am of the view that this decision is totally invalid. I call upon the QJA to immediately permit the division to extend its invitation to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General. I also urge all members of the QJA to have a good look at the executive of the QJA, with a view to establishing whether or not they are satisfied with its performance. I will not stand by and watch such standover tactics from the very association that was established to represent the interests of justices of the peace.

Time expired.

Rail Service Cutbacks

Mr J. N. GOSS (Aspley) (10.42 p.m.): According to the mission statement of Queensland Rail, the organisation will "excel in meeting customer needs by providing safe, competitive and efficient transport services". I ask that this statement be considered in the light of the following information. Commencing on 27 September, the Queensland Government will cut back peak hour CityTrain services along all major Brisbane lines, yet earlier this year commuters were hit with a 20 per cent rail fare increase. Most of the cutbacks will occur at peak hour, which is the time when the rail service is required most by

commuters. Cutbacks at this time will severely inconvenience workers, particularly those who work in the city, and school children who rely on trains for transport to and from their schools.

Presumably, with the same number of commuters using fewer services, the safety of rail commuters will obviously be at risk, particularly on the platforms and while boarding and alighting from trains. Already a problem exists with some services, particularly at peak hour, as large numbers of students with bags fill the foyer of carriages. I have received a number of complaints from passengers who have not been able to alight quickly from a train and have sometimes been carried on to the next station. No doubt, the reduction in rail services will turn some people away from using the trains. This will do wonders for the revenue of CityTrain!

The Pinkenba line, to which my colleague from Clayfield has referred, will lose all its CityTrain services. According to senior Transport sources, the reason for the cutbacks is the removal of uneconomical services and their replacement with buses. This is supposed to offer a cost saving, because of the requirement of fewer staff. However, there will be 50 services and 35 stops and a bus service that has a sideways route instead of one straight towards the city. The new scheme is sure to be a failure. The source of this information is the same as the source who came to me complaining about the Pinkenba line some months ago. It is believed that buses are being considered for the Northgate to Shorncliffe part of the Shorncliffe line and for the Bowen Hills to Ferny Grove part of the Ferny Grove line for after hours and some weekend services. Precedents in other States and overseas show that, given a choice, people prefer rail transport.

The proposed cutbacks are entirely contrary to the Government's stated objectives. For how long will Brisbane hold the title of Australia's most livable city? The Zillmere rail line will experience severe cutbacks in peak hour services at many stations, including Zillmere, Geebung, Bald Hills and Carseldine. The present service is already unreliable. I have been contacted a number of times by people complaining that, for example, the 4.51 p.m. train from Roma Street is cancelled on average on two and sometimes three days a week. The proposed new timetable will further downgrade the services to one train every 20 minutes in peak hours. There has been no consultation with rail users over the cutbacks.

Mrs Woodgate: That is not right. You know that is not true. There are notices at the station.

Mr J. N. GOSS: The first time that many commuters found out about it was when they noticed the sign at the station. Many commuters, depending on where they catch the train, had not even been able to see the sign. The only time that many of the commuters knew about the cutbacks was when I stood at the railway station and handed out information. That is typical of the Government consultation. The Government relies on the State members of Parliament to go out and do it. It is not the Government or Queensland Rail that is doing it; members have to go out and do it.

One of the interesting little things produced by QR is a fly swatter. It says, "No flies on our freight rates or services". It is from QR. It is a very nice pink and black fly swatter. They are very pertinent words because soon there will be no freight services, not even for the flies. If the swatters are to use on city rail services, the trains will probably be so crowded that the flies, let alone someone swinging a fly swatter, will not be able to get on board the train. I find it very interesting that Queensland Rail can start producing pink and black fly swats. It is a great waste of money. It is probably very cost effective. In addition, the Government has imposed on the pensioners of Queensland a \$5 fee—

Time expired.

Queensland Justices Association

Mrs WOODGATE (Kurwongbah) (10.47 p.m.): Having heard the member for Redcliffe speak tonight, I feel that I also must place on record my own disquiet about the State Council of the Queensland Justices Association. It has come to my attention that the QJA State council is altering its power bases and that there is a mounting degree of instability within that council. Comments made by the member for Redcliffe have sadly confirmed my worst fears—that the former QJA Registrar, one Peter MacDonald, is up to his old tricks. When the Australian Securities Commission charged him with offences of dishonesty under Commonwealth law, he was stripped of his title of registrar. I took heart in this and hoped that eventually this would culminate in proper representation for all QJA members throughout the State. Unfortunately, he merely re-emerged back on the JP payroll as a consultant.

For far too long, the executive of the QJA has been presided over by a man who ironically was unable himself to become a justice of the peace. This is because people with criminal records cannot become justices of the peace. I hope that this latest shift in power will result in members of the State Council of the QJA finally seeing this plotting political character for what he really is. It would appear that the majority of JPs in Queensland certainly know what he is about. Apparently, QJA membership has declined to a ratio of one in five JPs. Single-handedly, Peter MacDonald, as an employee of the QJA without the status of holding an official position, has been responsible for interfering in the relationship between the QJA members, the Government and the people whom they serve. He alone, financed from the pockets of justices, has pursued individuals all over the State who have dared to challenge his authority and who have dared to question his knowledge and wrongdoings.

I believe that the Redcliffe division has felt the MacDonald sting. I also believe that it is not alone. MacDonald has exploited the very persons he has been well paid to represent and has been claiming ownership of an association which in reality is owned by thousands of justices of the peace throughout Queensland. For years, he has dipped into QJA finances to contract solicitors as his sniffer dogs to seek out, intimidate and destroy any JP who pursued his or her membership rights and challenged his authority under their constitution. He uses shonky solicitors to exploit the processes of the defamation laws to silence anyone who dares to stand up to him. Members of the QJA who get these threatening solicitors' letters cannot afford to hire solicitors themselves. MacDonald can because he takes the money out of the QJA funds.

The honest justices of the peace in this State who scrape up the \$45 membership of the QJA are entitled to know where their money goes. Their money goes straight to MacDonald so that he can hire solicitors to intimidate and silence the very people whom it came from. No wonder the QJA executive did not table the association's books of account at the QJA general meeting last December.

Further, JPs have approached me, very, very angrily about Peter MacDonald's code of practice for justices. MacDonald's code challenges the very concept of freedom of speech and strips justices of an acceptable level of membership rights. MacDonald is single-handedly responsible for instituting QJA articles of association in a form which creates

an imbalance in the power and relationship between the State council and its membership. What is the result? The result is that the State council is all powerful and the justices—paying members—are completely insignificant.

I have personally been advised in my office by a number of justices of the peace of instances in which the man has totally lost control in the face of any criticism or adversity. This man must be a great disappointment to the thousands of justices in Queensland who have paid him well to represent their best interests. MacDonald, while on salary to the QJA, was virtually double-dipping in billing the association for additional consultancy work. What a greedy character! He in fact pleaded guilty in November last year to a charge that between September 1989 and August 1990 he failed to act honestly in the exercise of his powers and the discharge of the duties of his position as registrar for the association. The ASC brought the charge against him under Commonwealth law. From that moment, the vendetta against this Government has been enduring and highly defamatory.

My advice to any justices is that they deserve much better than that. If the rumours about changes to the executive of the QJA are true, let us all fervently hope that their motivation is not sinister and let us also hope fervently that the State council has acknowledged finally that this State's JPs deserve better representation from the association in which they have previously placed their faith.

Mabo

Mr PERRETT (Barambah) (10.52 p.m.): The Mabo High Court decision has been followed by a rash of outlandish claims by a variety of Aboriginal groups. Most have absolutely no foundation in the reasons for judgment given by the justices of the High Court. Most appear to be based on little more than unrealistic hopes and expectations raised by the reckless statements of Labor people from the Prime Minister and the Premier down. One of those claims covers an area stretching from Woodgate to the Sunshine Coast and west past Murgon. The claim was also for offshore islands, including Fraser Island. It was lodged on 1 July by the Gubbi Land and Cultural Association of Palm Avenue at Kingston. The association claimed to represent the Gubbi Gubbi nation and sought to occupy the land and sustain cultural and economic viability through management of the land.

The response that claim drew from the Premier was interesting given his history of talking up land claims based on the Mabo decision. The Premier told the *Courier-Mail* that Aborigines and lawyers who made ambit and irresponsible land claims would be vigorously opposed by the Government. He has since said that he would pursue the claimants for costs. How hypocritical can this Government be? It raised expectations and then backed off when claims started getting out of hand. More importantly, I have information that people within the Government itself are encouraging claims that could be called speculative at best. In the case of the Gubbi Gubbi claim to the Fraser coast, the Sunshine Coast and Burnett areas, I have clear evidence to back up that information.

I table a signed statement by Mr Bert Button, who is the son of Mr Joe Button, an elder of the Wakka Wakka tribe. I can confirm that both are well-respected members of the Cherbourg community and of the Murgon district. Mr Button states that encouragement for the Gubbi Gubbi claim was provided by Helena Gulash, a public servant in the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs. Helena Gulash is employed as a resources officer in the Rights, Law and Justice Section of the Aboriginal and Islander Affairs Division of the department.

Mr Button states that Helena Gulash is the daughter of Lois Gulash, chairperson of the Gubbi Gubbi or Kabi Kabi tribe. He states that Helena Gulash is using her personal position as a public servant in the department to breach traditional protocol in the pursuit of a Mabo-style claim for designated South Burnett land. He states that she has not consulted with the appropriate Wakka Wakka people and that the land under claim includes traditional Wakka Wakka territory. Mr Button states that Helena Gulash is rumoured to be receiving State and Federal funding for the claim.

As I said, there have been bits and pieces of information coming to us about departmental people encouraging claims such as the one submitted by the Gubbi Gubbi. Such information also relates to claims in the north of the State. If the claims prove to be true, the Government and the Minister have some fancy footwork to do. They cannot go around threatening to recover costs on land claims while their own people are encouraging those claims. No doubt one answer will be that Helena Gulash is acting in a private capacity with respect to the Gubbi Gubbi claim. That will not wash, Mr Speaker.

Helena Gulash holds a position in a department with a great deal of influence in Aboriginal and Islander communities. Her duties bring her into official contact with those communities. If she wants to be involved in land rights claims, she is in a serious conflict of interest situation. It is the responsibility of the Minister and the Government to ensure that such conflicts of interest do not exist. She must be moved to another department, away from potential official contact with people who might be involved in land claims.

It is easy to see why Mr Button would be hearing about Federal and State funding for the Gubbi Gubbi claim. Aboriginal legal services are taxpayer funded and have already backed highly speculative land claims. Governments must show that they are serious about cutting off shonky claims. They could start by making sure that public servants are not involved in encouraging claims, and should make sure that public funding for the legal services is used properly.

Aged Services Forum; Marlin Coast Community Services

Dr CLARK (Barron River) (10.56 p.m.): Last year, I initiated an aged services forum, the goal of which was to identify needs of seniors living on the Marlin Coast and how best to meet those needs. I initiated that forum at the request of two very special, remarkable women in my electorate who were themselves involved in voluntary service with the aged. Tonight, I would like to put on the record in this place my appreciation for the efforts of those particular women and mention some of their achievements.

The first is a Mrs Billie Cruickshank from Holloways Beach. She is a lady in her seventies who has more energy and drive than many people half her age. The achievements of this lady are quite remarkable. She was in fact the person who initiated the Meals on Wheels service that we have on the Marlin Coast. As I think I have indicated to members in the House before, this particular area in my electorate is one that is growing very quickly with, I would think it true to say, not yet sufficient community services to fully meet its needs. One need that was identified by Billie was the need for Meals on Wheels. She began that service in coordination with the service based in Cairns. After a period of some two years and much persuasion and support of the Mulgrave Shire Council, she has now established a separate kitchen on the Marlin Coast and is involved in

providing Meals on Wheels to a very large number of elderly residents there.

The other person is a Mrs Peggy Wilson, who started a club called the Sunshiners Club. It is well named, because this club brought sunshine into the lives of elderly people who were very lonely. As a volunteer working from the Marlin Coast Neighbourhood Centre, she single-handedly started this organisation to bring together elderly people to enjoy their company and activities together, and she fought against many difficulties. One of the problems we have on the Marlin Coast is lack of public transport. She was able, with the support of, in particular, the Stratford Hotel, to get a small courtesy coach to go around and collect the elderly people to bring them to that centre. It was a very difficult task. In fact, after a certain period, that courtesy coach was no longer available so she could not provide that service.

Both Billie and Peggy came to me and said, "Look, we really need to look at the services that we have on the Marlin Coast presently, which ones we need and how we can provide them." That is how this aged services forum came to be held. One of the things that came out of that forum was a clear need for a respite care service on the Marlin Coast. At that time, the Blue Nursing Service was actually providing a service for just one day a week, but it was clearly inadequate. After it became clear that there was a real need, I approached a Catholic community service organisation known as Centre Care with a view to it applying to the State Government for funds to have the Home and Community Care Program actually provide a respite care service.

I am pleased to say that that submission—prepared at very short notice by Sister Rita Hayes of that organisation—was successful. I was at the opening of that respite care service, which was established under the Holy Cross Church at Trinity Park. That service is now in operation two days a week, and will probably be extended to three days a week. It caters for up to 40 senior citizens. That service is meeting a very great need in that community.

We did not stop there, though. We have also examined other ways in which the needs of the elderly in that area can be met. I am pleased to report that the Health Department has provided funds for what is titled "Link-a-Friend". It is similar to the old party-line system, by which people can be linked up to talk together. Up to 10 people can get together on a phone line and chat with one

another without having to ever leave their homes, which, as I have said, can be a problem. That service will be coordinated by an individual based at the Marlin Coast Neighbourhood Centre—another organisation in my electorate that is staffed entirely by volunteers who do a wonderful job. Last week, I was very pleased to present that centre with a cheque which was the first of a quarterly payment of \$5,000 a year that it will be receiving from the State Government as a maintenance grant. Those funds will assist that organisation greatly.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.02 p.m.