

THURSDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 1996

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. N. J. Turner, Nicklin) read prayers and took the chair at 9.30 a.m.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Police Staffing, Mackay

From **Mr Cooper** (154 signatories) requesting the House to significantly increase the number of police officers in the City of Mackay.

Gun Control Laws

From **Mr Littleproud** (12 signatories) requesting the House to explain why it considers that the nation's law-makers have a clear and urgent duty to legislate against the lawful owners of firearms in Queensland in order to fulfil an obligation to the Federal Government instead of pursuing a royal commission into the Port Arthur incident.

Karawatha Forest

From **Mr Robertson** (287 signatories) requesting the House to select an alternative route so that no rail line is constructed through Karawatha Forest, thus protecting an area listed on the Register of National Estate, avoiding irreparable damage to land purchased by the Queensland Government and Brisbane City Council specifically to preserve its environmental values and also preserving the habitat of two rare frog species which will otherwise be destroyed.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table—

- (a) Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for the Arts (Mrs Sheldon)—
Queensland Art Gallery—Annual Report for 1995-96
Financial Statements for 1995-96—
Q Invest Limited
Q Invest Retirement Fund
- (b) Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care (Mr Lingard)—

Annual Reports for 1995-96—

Department of Families, Youth and Community Care

Intellectually Disabled Citizens Council of Queensland

Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council

- (c) Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (Mr Cooper)—

Department of Police—Annual Report for 1995-96

Queensland Police Service—Statistical Review 1995-96

- (d) Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier (Mr Slack)—

The State of Queensland and Sun Metals Corporation Pty Ltd—Townsville Refinery Agreement

- (e) Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry (Mr Davidson)—

Annual Reports for 1995-96—

Department of Tourism, Small Business and Industry

Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation

- (f) Minister for Environment (Mr Littleproud)—

Annual Reports for 1995-96—

Department of Environment

National Trust of Queensland

- (g) Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry (Mr Perrett)—

Annual Reports for 1995-96—

36th Report of the Brisbane Market Authority

Timber Research and Development Advisory Council of Queensland

- (h) Minister for Local Government and Planning (Mrs McCauley)—

Annual Reports for 1995-96—

Department of Local Government and Planning

Local Government Grants Commission on Financial Assistance for Local Government

Office of the Local Government Commissioner

Trustees of the Local Government Debt Redemption Fund—Operating Statement for 1995-96

- (i) Minister for Natural Resources (Mr Hobbs)—

Mt Isa Water Board—Annual Report for 1995-96

- (j) Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Johnson)—

Annual Reports for 1995-96—

Logan Motorway Company Limited
 Queensland Motorways Limited and
 its Controlled Entities
 Sunshine Motorway Company
 Limited
 The Gateway Bridge Company
 Limited
 Department of Transport

- (k) Minister for Public Works and Housing (Mr Connor)—

Queensland Building Service Authority—
 Annual Report for 1995-96.

Mr LINGARD: I will table the annual report of the Island Co-ordinating Council for 1995-96 immediately the financial statements associated with that report have been certified by the Auditor-General.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Heiner Documents

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Premier) (9.36 a.m.), by leave: Honourable members will recall that on 10 October 1996, I tabled copies of a report of an investigation by Mr Morris, QC, and Mr Howard into allegations by Mr Kevin Lindeberg, Mr Gordon Harris and Mr John Reynolds. These allegations related to some of the most notorious and controversial whistleblower cases in recent Australian history. They were the subject of ongoing debate both within this State and federally, and led to the establishment of a Senate inquiry.

They were matters that attracted considerable community and professional interest, and warranted appropriate investigation. It was for that reason that the two senior barristers were briefed to advise. The report they presented, and which I tabled, raised many important issues. So far as the Lindeberg allegations are concerned, the barristers found that it was open to be concluded that certain criminal offences may have been committed by various public servants and possibly by a previous Cabinet Minister. The potential liability of the first Goss Cabinet in authorising the shredding of the Heiner documents was also considered.

The barristers recommended that the consequences of the shredding of the Heiner documents and subsequent actions by relevant people were so serious that there was a need to hold a full public inquiry. The

barristers outlined at some length the reasons they believed warranted this course of action.

Mr Fouras: When are you going to start governing?

Mr BORBIDGE: What is the Labor Party covering up—"Shreddergate". They should be ashamed of themselves.

I informed this House when I tabled the report that a submission would be taken to Cabinet to determine what further action would be taken. It was mistakenly assumed by some, including honourable members opposite, that this Government would automatically establish a public inquiry. However, as I indicated on 10 October, this question would be carefully considered and I now wish to inform the House what developments have occurred since that time. Opposition members should listen; they may learn something.

Both the Attorney-General and I were concerned that, before any public inquiry was established, certain critical threshold questions had to be determined. We are cognisant of the importance of ensuring that due process is respected and that rights of all people, both whistleblowers and those about whom the whistle has been blown, are protected. For that reason, I can now inform the House that the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General has written to the Director of Public Prosecutions seeking his advice on the following issues—

1. The proper interpretation of section 129 of the Criminal Code, which deals with the destruction of evidence required in a judicial proceeding;
2. whether the material disclosed to date would justify the bringing of any charges as suggested by the barristers;
3. if the material disclosed to date would not enable the director to form a firm opinion, what investigations now should be held, and how should they be conducted, to enable the director to form such an opinion; and
4. whether an inquiry established under the Commissions of Inquiry Act would prejudice the commencement of appropriate proceedings and, if not, the director's advice on the proper terms of reference of that inquiry.

In short, this Government is absolutely committed to ensuring that all proper matters are considered and that the rights of all people affected by this sorry chapter in our State's

history are given due weight. There will not be any knee-jerk reaction to set up an inquiry and every effort is being made to ensure that this matter is handled in a professional, apolitical and proper manner.

This Government will not engage in the type of political victimisation that the Goss Government became notorious for. But although the director has been given all material which this Government has access to, he still will not have access to the Cabinet documents that the Leader of the Opposition refused to allow Mr Morris and Mr Howard to view.

I again point out to the House what the barristers said in their report about this refusal by the Leader of the Opposition to cooperate. They said—

"Mr Beattie's decision has had the consequence that we are unable to resolve the question whether members of State Cabinet may have committed criminal offences, or may have committed 'official misconduct' within the meaning of the Criminal Justice Act by their participation in the decision to destroy the Heiner documents."

Mr Fouras: Are you a desperado? How desperate can you get?

Mr BORBIDGE: The Opposition can solve this problem today. The report continues—

"As matters stand that issue can only be resolved by a public inquiry which has access to relevant Cabinet documents and which can take testimony from members of State Cabinet who participated in that decision on 5 March 1990."

If the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues are genuine in stating that there is no need for a public inquiry into the "Shreddergate" fiasco, now is their opportunity to put into action what they have so loudly proclaimed. Once again, I ask the Leader of the Opposition: are you prepared to allow access to the relevant Cabinet documents, this time by the Director of Public Prosecutions, to enable him to carry out his duties? If the Labor Party is genuine about this matter, and has nothing to hide or fear, then allow this independent law officer to do his duty fully and properly by giving him free access to this material. This issue has been shrouded in secrecy and counterclaims since the beginning. Let us lift the curtain on this chapter of our history and allow an independent law officer who is beholden to no-

one to provide the advice that he has been asked to give.

Members opposite were loud in their praise of this office during the debate on the Public Service Bill. They pointed out the central and independent role of this office. The Government agrees with this analysis of the role of the Director of Public Prosecutions, and that is why he has been briefed in the manner I have outlined. All I say is that, in carrying out his task, he should receive full cooperation from all interested parties, and that includes the Australian Labor Party.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Suncorp/Metway/QIDC Merger

Hon. J. M. SHELDON (Caloundra—Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts) (9.42 a.m.), by leave: The final major milestone in the merger of Suncorp, the QIDC and Metway Bank was successfully completed yesterday with the extraordinary general meeting of Metway shareholders. That meeting unanimously endorsed the merger proposal. That result adds to the weight of opinion that the merger will produce a solid new financial services group with strong earnings and growth prospects. The merger has been endorsed by two sets of independent experts: by the market, and now formally by Metway shareholders. It is the most significant development in the State's financial services sector since the formation of the State Government Insurance Office itself in 1916. There can be no denying that it is the most innovative strategy adopted by any State Government in divesting itself of banking and insurance businesses.

Labor State Governments elsewhere waited until a financial crisis forced a fire sale, the prime objective of which was to cut the huge losses borne by the taxpayers in those States. By contrast, Suncorp and the QIDC, like the Commonwealth Bank, are healthy financial institutions. The introduction of private equity and the exit of the Government from direct ownership and control maximises the value of these businesses and gives them much stronger growth prospects. The merger is the best result all round—for Metway shareholders, for Queensland taxpayers and for the staff and customers of all three organisations.

The vote by Metway shareholders clears the way for the merger to proceed on 1 December and marks the beginning of a new era as the Government steps back and the independent board takes over the reins of

Queensland's largest listed company. The merged group will be the major player in the Queensland financial market and is likely to have a major influence on the development of the State's economy. The merged group has a promising and exciting future, and it is incumbent upon us all to put aside partisan views and to wish every success to this important new Queensland enterprise.

I am privileged to have carried responsibility for this merger. Its success is a showcase for the coalition Government and our capacity to deliver initiatives vital to the future of this State. In eight months, the future of the Queensland banking, insurance and finance sectors, which were under grave threat as a result of the proposed St George Bank takeover of Metway, has been restored. More than this, we have created a market leader—an entity with strong interests in both banking and insurance sectors. This is the way of the future in Australian finance and, as a result of this merger, Queensland has stolen the march on every other State. The combined Metway/Suncorp entity will be blazing a financial trail.

Because of the synergies created in pursuing its unique allfinanz strategy, and because of the critical mass achieved by combining Metway, Suncorp and the QIDC, this new entity has huge potential. In the short time afforded the market to assess the potential of the combined group, we have seen a spectacular endorsement from share buyers. My feeling is that we have only just scratched the surface. As the value of the potential synergies becomes apparent, and as the new entity begins to realise its potential through growth and a very strong competitive position, the price of shares in the new entity will continue to advance.

Because of its unique structure, this regional-based entity will be in a position to outperform the big four, and I congratulate all those who have contributed so much to its birth. In particular, I would like to mention the efforts of the Under Treasurer, Doug McTaggart, Deputy Under Treasurer, Mark Gray, and the members of the Treasury task force, Jon Grayson, Tony Bellas, Vanessa Fernandes and Therese Bennetts. I would also like to mention the contribution of the legal advisers, Allen Allen and Hemsley, tax advisers Arthur Andersen, financial advisers SBC Warburg, and communications consultants Turnbull Fox Phillips.

In the broking field, the project has had excellent support from its broking lead managers, Morgans, Wilson HTM and

JB Were and Son. The boards and senior management of all institutions have worked hard and demonstrated their capacity to work together. I thank the CEOs, Bernard Rowley, Stephen Van Der Mye and Greg Moynihan. In closing, I thank Frank Haly and the board of Metway, Norm Fussell and the board of QIDC, and Martin Kriewaldt and the board of Suncorp.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Treasury Corporation; Queensland Economy; Ms P. Hanson

Hon. J. M. SHELDON (Caloundra—Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts) (9.47 a.m.), by leave: I have just returned from an intensive delegation on behalf of the Queensland Treasury Corporation throughout South East Asia. During the tour, I met with almost 30 different major investment houses, ranging from the Asia Development Bank in Manilla to the United Overseas Bank in Singapore, and the Japanese Nikko Securities Co. and the Hong Kong Monetary Authority in Hong Kong.

The purpose of the delegation, which included Under Treasurer Doug McTaggart, QTC Chairman Sir Leo Hielscher and QTC chief executive Stephen Rochester, was to inform these major international investors that Queensland's economy was going from strength to strength. Each of our delegations stressed the underlying strength of the Queensland economy, the net asset position of the State at \$51 billion, and the constructive and far-reaching economic policies of the new coalition Government. We received an extremely positive response from all private investors, institutions and securities dealers. QTC borrowings on behalf of the State Government, its Government owned enterprises and local authorities for the current year are expected to be about \$4.1 billion—similar to last year. The delegation visited Singapore, Hong Kong and Manilla. Those I met with are all pursuing opportunities to invest in Queensland.

My discussions with investors in Asia have indicated a strong demand for investment opportunities in Queensland because of the State's strong fiscal position and history of favourable economic growth. The trip has proved a major vote of confidence in the coalition Government's commitment to the responsible financial management of the State's finances, the cornerstone of which is the coalition's first State Budget.

It may surprise those opposite, but those we met with in Asia were also keenly interested in the State Government's decision to merge Metway, Suncorp and the QIDC. Asian investors and financial intermediaries have endorsed the Queensland Government's decision to withdraw from the direct ownership and control of financial services businesses. They view this as a positive factor for the State's financial position. In addition, they believe that the creation of a major financial institution in Queensland is a demonstration of the maturing of the State's economy, which has consistently outperformed the rest of Australia. The coalition's commitment to retaining the State's AAA credit rating was also generating millions of dollars for essential services by cutting interest payment costs on the Government's annual loan program.

Our delegation in Asia was also lobbied by major financial institutions offering a range of loan opportunities at favourable interest rates. This is where the State's AAA credit rating translates into real savings for Queensland taxpayers. For example, \$1 billion raised at savings achieved on Queensland's latest issues would mean savings in interest of \$3m for each year of the three-year loan. That money goes back into the Queensland economy. The delegation followed a similar trip to Japan in June in which the QTC was very well received.

All this is very positive news for Queensland, and Queenslanders should be proud of how highly regarded the State as a whole, and the QTC in particular, is in Asian investment circles. However, there was only one disturbing element of the trip. That element was the so-called Pauline Hanson factor. I am extremely sorry to report that, on several occasions, particularly in Singapore, concerns were raised about Pauline Hanson's comments and support for her within Australia. Singaporean investors stated that they had heard disturbing reports from Queensland of racial vilification of Singaporean residents over the last few months. In particular, Singaporean students studying in Queensland had been the victims of racial abuse since Ms Hanson raised her ugly and divisive views. Thankfully, on behalf of the Queensland Government, I was able to put to rest the fears of those I met about the Queensland people. I stated, in no uncertain terms, that Pauline Hanson did not represent the majority, or close to the majority, of Queenslanders. I stated that her views were vehemently opposed and rejected by the Queensland Government and Queenslanders in general. I stated strongly that Queenslanders were not racists, and that the

Queensland people welcomed tourists, immigrants and investors from all over the world.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mrs SHELDON: I have not heard either Mr Hamill or Mr Beattie in any way speaking out against Ms Hanson.

It is all too easy for a person in Ms Hanson's position to push the populist buttons—to prey on emotive issues without any responsibility. It is all too easy to make wild, headline-grabbing claims and then walk away without justifying your position. And, unfortunately, it is all too easy to portray a national and international image of Queensland and Australia which is at odds with reality. Pauline Hanson has pushed the emotive, headline-grabbing issues without any thought of the short and long-term damage that her thoughtless grandstanding can, and will, cause. What is vital is that we ensure that our Asian neighbours also understand that her views in no way represent the mainstream of Australia. I am happy to say that those I met with in Asia now understand that, but there is still much work to do to ensure that Queensland's great reputation as a tourism, business and investment centre for Asia is not irrevocably destroyed.

Finally, it must be pointed out that Queensland had 12,000 overseas students in 1995—15 per cent of the Australian total. A huge percentage of these were Asian. These students brought in a total of \$267m for Queensland in 1995, and that is expected to rise to \$325m this year. Queensland is Australia's gateway to Asia. We stand to benefit greatly through tourism and investment from Asia. I can only endorse previous comments by the Premier following his return from China and state that the Queensland coalition Government totally and unreservedly rejects Ms Hanson's destructive views and welcomes continued close ties with our Asian neighbours.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Police Statistical Review

Hon. T. R. COOPER (Crows Nest—Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing) (9.53 a.m.), by leave: I have today tabled the Police Statistical Review for 1995-96. The review provides statistical data of higher quality and therefore of greater use to policy makers and social researchers than ever before because of the advances made by the Queensland Police Service in

recent years in improving their technological strength. The service has come into the computer age in a big way with the Statewide Crime Recording Information System—CRISP—in December 1994, and the implementation of a powerful statistical system earlier this year. This new technology tells us far, far more—through the statistics in this report—about crime and policing in our State, regions, towns and cities than we ever knew before.

The technology has allowed us to amass more information in a far more accurate, relevant and timely way. For the first time, it contains detailed profiling of both victims and offenders as well as a breakdown of crime locations—the site where a criminal offence occurred. It gives us the opportunity for meaningful analysis of law and order problems that should help make us smarter at finding the solutions to those problems. It also allows us to see more clearly and accurately—and, most of all, irrefutably—just how hopelessly mismanaged the Queensland Police Service was through the days of incompetent, negligent administration by the Goss regime.

Throughout the six-year reign of those people on the other side of the House, Queensland taxpayers poured over \$245m more into their Police Service. Where that money has gone is a mystery to me. Even allowing for the cost of implementing much-needed technological change and equally vital improved accountability measures following Fitzgerald, how was it that they could almost double the Police budget and yet run down operational service delivery to the degree that they did? Everyone else in Queensland knew that they were not getting the service they had in the past. Everyone thought crime was out of control. That is why the community was so angry that groups of citizens were prepared to become involved through Neighbourhood Watch, Crime Stoppers and other community policing, crime preventing initiatives. That is why those who have become maligned as the Concerned Citizens of Mundingburra were prepared to put their own time and money into actively lobbying the political process for a better Police Service. They were among the 270,611 Queenslanders who, in the last year, had first-hand bitter experience of criminal activity, either as assaults or robberies or break-ins. They had had enough.

They had had enough in the same way as the serving police officers of this State had had enough. Academics repeatedly told us all that the statistics did not show any alarming rise in the rate of crime per head of population, even allowing for unreported

crime. And they were right. But the statistics in today's review tell us that, although there was a significant increase in the number of offences as one might expect with increased population, in virtually every town and city in the State—some exceptions are Longreach and Dalby where the population has dropped, and Ipswich where they have pro-actively and aggressively pursued a safe city community policing strategy—but in almost every other town and city, rising crime was accompanied by a drop in police numbers or an increase that lagged way behind the crime rise.

I have compared the statistics contained in today's review with the previous review, which gives us a picture not just of 1994 and 1995 but also of 1993. It is a snapshot of the last three years, the years when, under the sick administration of the member for Kedron, we poured all that money into our Police Service. This is what we got: while they kept lying about how they had increased police numbers long after they had stopped increasing police numbers, we actually had a drop in numbers of 79 between 1993 and 1995. Over the past three years, we have had a miserable 0.55 increase in police numbers. At the same time, offences against the person rose by 19.9 per cent, while offences against property went up 10.8 per cent. On the Gold Coast, police numbers dropped by almost 12 per cent, while crimes against people rose 7.3 per cent and crimes against property went up 12.8 per cent. In Cairns, they had an increase of 20.5 per cent in crimes against people and 4 per cent in property crimes. The police serving them increased by 1.6 per cent.

On the Sunshine Coast, policing staff fell by 7.9 per cent while offences against persons and property went up a staggering 55 per cent and 40.8 per cent respectively. In Gladstone, the Independent member will probably not be surprised to learn that her city lost five police, dropping from 87 to 82 officers, while crimes against people went up 57 per cent and crimes against property went up 24 per cent.

In academic speak, perhaps the crime rate was not "out of control", but the member for Kedron's mismanagement most certainly was. He expected virtually exactly the same number of police to cope with those massive increases of 29 per cent in crimes committed upon people and 10.8 per cent against their property. No wonder serving police were tearing their hair out. No wonder, when all their attempts to get the then Minister, the member for Kedron, to even listen to them failed, they turned to the coalition. No wonder they were seeking help, just as the community was demanding action. It was the just grievances

of those overburdened, stressed out men and women that I was trying to address in the memorandum of understanding, which, to this day, I regard as simply an acknowledgment of their problems and an assurance that I would listen to them and try to find the answers to those problems—problems evident not only to them but also to the community. For that, I have been persecuted for the past nine months. No-one has attacked me more viciously or personally than that fraud across the Chamber who sat and fiddled and grew fat while our Police Service burned and our communities suffered—suffered from his neglect and incompetence.

The statistics contained in this review, which has been tabled, absolutely validate the findings of the Queensland Police Service review headed by Sir Max Bingham. Without even the benefit of this data, that fine committee identified significant problems with the management of the Queensland Police Service, problems which were seriously impacting on the effectiveness of its service delivery. They were particularly critical of the staffing model, and today's figures show clearly that the staffing model simply does not work. A Police Service staffing model which gives us so few police to deal with such increased crime is not worth the paper it is written on. The Bingham review told us we had a Police Service that was clean, a Police Service that has vastly improved both its accountability and its technological capacity. But it also told us that we had a Police Service that needed critical attention to make it efficient and effective in the way it uses its vastly increased budget.

I made a commitment in Opposition to do everything in my power to assist in delivering that critical attention. I see the Bingham review and the subsequent report as the blueprint for delivering that efficiency and effectiveness to the operational services of the Queensland Police. The coalition Government will do it not just through increasing the number of police but, just as importantly, by improving their professionalism and making a genuine commitment to community policing initiatives and crime prevention strategies. The review just tabled and all the information it contains will assist enormously in intelligently addressing those issues as we implement the recommendations of the Bingham report. I commend the review to all members.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Natural Gas

Hon. D. J. SLACK (Burnett—Minister for Economic Development and Trade and

Minister Assisting the Premier) (10.01 a.m.), by leave: I would like to inform honourable members of the progress of the State Government's plan to offer energy alternatives to the people of Queensland to deliver cheaper power and to ensure a continuity of gas supply for industrial and domestic consumers.

The Government is committed to meeting the energy needs of this State. Great progress has been made to harness our natural gas resources and to pipe this gas to the regional areas of the State at a competitive and realistic rate for all users. Central to this strategy, as honourable members would be aware, is the private sector's involvement in the construction, ownership and operation of the pipelines.

Just three weeks ago, Tenneco, which was selected to construct the south-west Queensland to Wallumbilla pipeline, announced that it was in the process of water testing the completed pipeline. I can inform honourable members that, if these tests are successful, the pipeline will be carrying gas to Brisbane by early next year.

Preferred developer AGL is currently working on environmental impact studies towards the construction of a natural gas pipeline from south-west Queensland to Mount Isa. The company has placed an order for steel pipes worth \$50m. The State Government is moving to acquire a transport infrastructure corridor in which AGL will be the first licensed user.

For consumers in the far north, this Government is working to facilitate a scheme to bring natural gas from Papua New Guinea across Torres Strait to the Queensland mainland. It is likely that a decision on the project will be made within 12 months, based on a recent decision that Chevron will take over investigations for the development of a single gas pipeline, carrying natural gas to north Queensland.

Gas consumers in central and southern Queensland are also set to benefit from the provision of new gas distribution franchises in the Sunshine Coast and Gympie, and new franchises are expected for Bundaberg and Maryborough. The relative environmental cleanliness of natural gas must be an important consideration in offering energy choices to residents and industry throughout Queensland. Reforms in the energy market under the Council of Australian Governments process will enhance the efficiency of gas and electricity industries and bring down prices in general for consumers. The availability of

natural gas at a competitive cost for industry will also be a key factor in attracting major projects to our State, creating jobs and wealth for Queenslanders.

The State Government is committed to this process and will continue to work to ensure industry and Queensland consumers enjoy the benefits of clean, reliable and cost-efficient energy.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Overseas Visit

Hon. B. W. DAVIDSON (Noosa—Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry) (10.04 a.m.), by leave: Last month I visited New Zealand to meet with tourism and business leaders. While many would expect that such a visit would have been commonplace for Queensland Tourism Ministers, I was amazed to find that my arrival in New Zealand was greeted with great relief.

The reason for this relief was that, despite its status as Queensland's second-largest international tourism market, despite the fact that New Zealand provides more than 200,000 tourists spending their hard-earned dollars in every region of our State, no Queensland Tourism Minister has bothered to visit New Zealand in the past three years.

The purpose of my trip was not only to reassure New Zealand wholesalers and retailers that this Government recognises their efforts to sell Queensland and is committed to working with them to grow the market even further but also to meet with airline officials. Aside from our own Australian airlines, the key players in developing and growing New Zealand tourism into Queensland are Air New Zealand and charter operator Freedom Air International. In the last 12 months, increased services through both scheduled and charter airlines have driven the New Zealand market to such an extent that it is now not only our second-largest international market but also one of our fastest growing.

This and future development issues were the basis for discussions at a meeting between myself and senior delegates with Mr Jim McRae, Air New Zealand's general manager. The single aviation market recently announced by the Federal Government has created enormous opportunities for both New Zealand and Australia in developing tourism between our countries. As well, charter air services are playing an increasingly important role in tourism growth from New Zealand into Queensland.

Freedom Air is bringing seven flights into Coolangatta over the peak Christmas period and, since my visit, approval has been given for 34 more flights next year. I met with Freedom Air's general manager, Mr Ric MacGillicuddy, and his senior staff to assure them of my continued support for their plans with regard to Queensland. As members of the House will recall, I have been quite open in my support of charter air services and made direct representations to my Federal colleagues to ensure approval was given for Freedom's flights.

Mr MacGillicuddy stated quite plainly that Freedom sees its future based very largely around Queensland. And no wonder—this State offers New Zealanders the best holiday experiences in the world. Mr MacGillicuddy and I discussed the potential for Freedom to charter flights to Queensland based around special events. Our numerous sporting, cultural and social events all possess enormous tourism potential and I am committed to ensuring this potential is exploited for the benefit not just of the tourism industry in Queensland but for all Queenslanders.

I am confident that the combined efforts of this Government, through the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation, the Queensland Events Corporation and my department, and airlines and tourism distributors will see continued growth from New Zealand. Most importantly, however, this growth will reflect this Government's increasing emphasis on diversifying Queensland's tourism appeal through the development of niche and special-interest markets, particularly event and cultural tourism.

This issue was much discussed at a tourism industry dinner which I hosted in Auckland. Guests included 16 tourism industry leaders, including major wholesalers and retailers and tourism media. As well, I was pleased to be joined by the Mayor of Hamilton, Margaret Evans, and Australia's Senior Trade Commissioner, Mr Frank Walsh.

Whilst in New Zealand, I also held meetings with two major business investors in Queensland, Lion Nathan Breweries and Fisher and Paykel. These meetings proved valuable in maintaining strong links between Queensland and these two important players in our State's business community. I now table a copy of my report on this trade mission to New Zealand.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Fire Blight

Hon. T. J. PERRETT (Barambah—Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry) (10.08 a.m.), by leave: I am not going to be quite as complimentary about New Zealand. Yet again, this State's rural industries face the serious threat of an outbreak of a devastating new exotic disease. The culprit this time is New Zealand apples, which carry a deadly bacterial disease known as fire blight. The potential victim is Queensland's \$20m a year apple industry, based on the Granite Belt.

Twice before our Tasman neighbours have tried to get their apples into our country, despite strong scientific evidence of a real risk of fire blight spreading, with a serious outbreak predicted to occur within 10 years. Not happy with two knock-backs, late last year New Zealand put a third application up to the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service.

What disturbs me the most, as Minister for Primary Industries in Queensland, is the suggestion coming from even within AQIS itself that the Australian apple industry is using quarantine as a trade barrier. Nothing could be further from the truth; the facts speak for themselves! New Zealand, along with all other apple-growing regions of the world, except for South Africa and Australia, is infected with fire blight. The disease totally destroys orchards and growers are forced to use antibiotic sprays to control it. This would be a disaster for our clean and green image. Australia enjoys market advantage in apple export because of our disease free status.

My department's highly qualified scientists have studied New Zealand's latest application to AQIS and rejected it because of technical deficiencies. Put simply, my scientists are telling me we could not keep fire blight out of this country if we let New Zealand apples in. What is more, we have the scientific evidence to back our stand. If this disease was to get in, it would cost growers and the taxpayers of Queensland millions and millions of dollars, and even then we would never get rid of it. I want to reassure the apple growers of Queensland that the State coalition Government will do everything possible to stop this madness.

My department has put together a comprehensive response to New Zealand's application for access to the Australian apple market. On the basis of science, this submission totally and unequivocally rejects New Zealand's application. I will work to ensure that AQIS and the Federal Minister responsible, the Honourable John Anderson,

whom I am meeting with in two weeks' time, fully understands our position.

Unlike the Labor Party, the coalition recognises the enormous importance of agriculture to the economy and social fabric of Queensland. We will fight to ensure it retains its position as a major economic powerhouse for the State.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders; Remaining Stages; Abridgment of Time

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer—Leader of Government Business) (10.10 a.m.), by leave: I move—

"That so much of Standing and Sessional Orders be suspended to enable the Financial Administration and Audit Amendment Bill (No. 2) to pass through all its remaining stages at this day's sitting."

Motion agreed to.

PARLIAMENTARY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Report

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Keppel) (10.11 a.m.): I lay upon the table of the House a report of the Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee titled, "Report on a Review of the Criminal Justice Commission's Report on Cannabis and the Law in Queensland". The report represents a culmination of extensive reviews conducted by the PCJC. I move that the report be printed.

Ordered to be printed.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

Report

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Keppel) (10.11 a.m.): I lay upon the table of the House a CJC research paper titled, "Gender and Ethics in Policing". While the CJC has a specific responsibility to table reports in the Parliament pursuant to section 22 of the Criminal Justice Act, as the committee has previously advised the Parliament there is currently no definition of "report" in the Act. The committee believes that it is in the spirit of the Criminal Justice Act that all non-confidential publications by the CJC be tabled in the Parliament. Therefore, the document is being tabled in accordance with the prior request of this committee to that effect.

The committee stresses that it has in no way conducted an inquiry into the matters which are the subject of the publication. The committee simply believes that the Parliament, and therefore the people of Queensland, should be informed of all non-confidential publications produced by the CJC. The committee also stresses that the CJC has determined that the document is not a report of the commission for the purposes of section 26 of the Criminal Justice Act.

LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report

Mrs GAMIN (Burleigh) (10.12 a.m.): I lay upon the table of the House the report of the Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee on its review of the Referendums Bill 1996. I also table submissions received by the committee. I commend the report to the House.

NOTICES OF MOTION

Election of Mr P. Lucas

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (10.13 a.m.): I give notice that I shall move—

"That the Parliament notes the election of Paul Lucas as the member for Lytton."

National Party Betrayal of Country People

Hon. R. J. GIBBS (Bundamba) (10.13 a.m.): I give notice that I shall move—

"That this Parliament condemns National Party Ministers for betraying the bush by ignoring the needs of the very people who voted for them and calls on the Government to start being a Government for all Queenslanders by providing services where they are needed."

Council of Australian Governments

Mr ROBERTSON (Sunnybank) (10.14 a.m.): I give notice that I shall move—

"That, in light of evidence of increasing racial intolerance and acts of racial vilification and violence, this Parliament calls on the Prime Minister of Australia and the Premiers and chief Ministers of all Australian States to use

tomorrow's Council of Australian Governments meeting in Brisbane to provide leadership and use this unique opportunity to make a unanimous and unequivocal statement calling on all Australians to stand as one against those who intentionally or otherwise seek to divide our nation by their ongoing insensitive and offensive attacks on fellow Australians of Aboriginal and Asian descent."

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Carruthers Inquiry Enabling Bill

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—Leader of the Opposition) (10.15 a.m.): Early this morning, Parliament passed a private member's Bill without a division on the second and third reading to ensure the resumption, protection and completion of the Carruthers inquiry and to ensure Queenslanders got value for the \$3.5m already spent on that inquiry. That Bill was a victory for honesty, integrity and accountability. The Bill has three effects: it enables Mr Carruthers to return, if he believes he has the support of the entire Parliament; it enables the CJC to appoint someone in his place if Mr Carruthers feels that the Government's denigration of his reputation is irreparable—and I accept that that is the most likely outcome; and it offers protection from interference to the two barristers currently working on making recommendations about any charges arising from the inquiry.

The main point is that there is now no reason why the Carruthers inquiry should not be completed and a report made. We now have an Act to ensure the resumption, protection and completion of the inquiry. The Premier and Ministers must now demonstrate that they support the resumption, protection and completion of the inquiry and must end their denigration of Mr Carruthers.

Unfortunately, this morning we heard a continuation of this denigration by Mr Connolly on ABC radio, which now makes him unfit to continue. I refer to the comments that the Premier made this morning about the Morris/Howard inquiry and referring it to the DPP. The Government could have done that right from the beginning without an inquiry. This has cost \$400,000.

Mr Schwarten: They could have put it into police stations.

Mr BEATTIE: They could have put it into police stations. The Premier should demand today that Mr Morris return the

money. He should demand that the taxpayers of this State have that money effectively used. This report is an absolute waste of taxpayers' money and the Government should get the money back. Taxpayers are entitled to that money and it should not be wasted.

National Australia Day

Mr HEGARTY (Redlands) (10.17 a.m.): From time to time there is a move towards a national day. The debate then centres around which is most suitable—Australia Day, Anzac Day or some other day. These days mark important events which, whether positive or negative, have helped shape this country's place in the world. However, Australians cannot generally agree on such matters, but few would argue that one day surely unites the nation in a positive way.

Whether one is rich or poor, black, white or yellow, Melbourne Cup is truly a nation-stopping event. The first Melbourne Cup was run in 1861 and the Victoria Government gazetted the first Tuesday in November as a public holiday in 1877, clearly and correctly recognising the community's interests in this event.

Horsereading has always run deep in our national psyche. It was our first sport. When the pioneers settled an area, they did three things: they built a racecourse, a school and a church, usually in that order. The whole nation has always stopped for the cup. It is one of the quirks of the Australian psyche that on this one day we become interested in horsereading and gambling, often to ignore them again for the rest of the year.

I have never condoned excessive gambling, but few could ignore this colourful and happy event. I believe that, for a number of reasons, it deserves special recognition above and beyond that which it currently receives.

We all know that businesses and many Government activities are rescheduled around Cup Day activities. Indeed, it is recorded that the Federal Parliament took an extra long luncheon adjournment in the 1950s to allow members time to listen to the cup. Of course, since the televising of the cup in recent decades, even more time is devoted to the event. Many business houses generously allow lunch time and afternoon functions to cater for their employees who are interested in the cup. This is to be applauded.

However, it must be recognised that these events have a real economic cost to the community. It is questionable in this day and

age whether many small businesses can afford the luxury of paid time off for such an activity. I propose not that we stop this positive practice, but that we recognise its effect. We should recognise its positive effect on the spirit of our nation and recognise that the Melbourne Cup is already so entrenched as part of our culture that its recognition as a public holiday will go some way towards national unity.

Time expired.

Freedom of Information

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (10.19 a.m.): On Tuesday, I raised as a matter of privilege an issue in relation to freedom of information. I asked the Department of Public Works and Housing to provide information on Roma Street rail yards and said that I had been advised under section 28 of the Act that they may refuse. The Minister took a point of privilege and said that the information that I had asked for would fill about two semitrailers. He also said that my request would necessitate their supplying the whole block of archives.

Yesterday, I received a letter from the Minister saying that the department had identified 7,500 documents. One can fit 7,500 into the two boxes that I am holding. The Minister would have us believe that one needs two semitrailers to move these two and a half boxes of information.

When I was the Minister for Public Works and Housing, no applications under section 28 were ever refused. In fact, some of those applications did not require 7,500 documents; some of them required over 30 documents.

I ask members to read the report which was handed down yesterday by the Queensland Information Commissioner. I refer honourable members to pages 28 and 29, and in particular to the following comment—

". . . claims from within the executive branch of government that the FOI Act, and similar Fitzgerald-inspired accountability mechanisms, have 'gone too far' and constitute an expensive and inefficient distraction from the performance of the main tasks of government, ought to be regarded by the Parliament with a healthy scepticism."

The Minister is attempting to cover up his misleading of the Parliament.

Mr CONNOR: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Firstly, I find offensive and ask the member to withdraw his comment that I

am trying to cover up something. Secondly, the member is misleading the House in that there were 7,500 documents, not pages. That is how much has been found so far.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member will resume his seat. The Minister found the remark offensive. I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr MACKENROTH: That he misled the Parliament? Mr Speaker, I am trying to prove that he has misled the Parliament. The Minister will not let me look at the documents. If he lets me look at the documents and I find that I am wrong, I will apologise.

Mr CONNOR: Mr Speaker, the member did not withdraw.

Mr MACKENROTH: Mr Speaker, I will withdraw until I get the documents—and I will get them.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member has withdrawn.

TAFE Queensland—A New Focus: Working Better Together

Mrs GAMIN (Burleigh) (10.22 a.m.): Thanks to the work of my ministerial colleague Santo Santoro, TAFE Queensland is transforming the way in which it does business. The initiative TAFE Queensland—A New Focus: Working Better Together aims to make TAFE a more competitive training provider and a more responsive employer. One of the main elements of these reforms in TAFE has been to focus on ways to cut red tape and to make the organisation more competitive in domestic and international markets.

In my region, this is certainly having an impact on the directions of the Gold Coast Institute of TAFE—GCIT. The institute is building a strong reputation for innovation, particularly in international markets. Success in international markets will contribute to the prosperity of Queensland and, importantly, will assist to internationalise our own vocational education and training staff and curriculum. In turn, this enhances TAFE Queensland's reputation as a provider of high-quality, internationally competitive training products and services.

The Gold Coast Institute of TAFE has every opportunity to expand its international operations. One of the professional cookery teachers at GCIT, Liz Stokes, was a member of the TAFE Queensland team which recently competed with such distinction in the prestigious Culinary Olympics. Also, one of the

institute's current international students, Babro Sahlin, from Sweden, made it into the finals of the RAQ Fashion Awards student designer competition.

GCIT, together with Griffith University, will be offering a number of combined award courses in 1997 which will allow school leavers to gain a diploma from GCIT and a degree from Griffith in just four years. This will combine the best of both worlds, with the practical and employment-related studies of TAFE complemented by a higher education qualification.

Time expired.

Giant Steps Program

Mr BREDHAUER (Cook) (10.24 a.m.): Today I welcome to the gallery of the Parliament parents and carers of autistic Queensland children who are protesting over the Borbidge Government's refusal to go ahead with a planned one-year trial of an intensive autism therapy program. The innovative Giant Steps program would have helped autistic Queensland children to improve their educational opportunities. However, the State Government has dashed the children's hopes by failing to fund the Giant Steps program, which has proved highly successful overseas and in New South Wales and Tasmania.

The Government's failure to fund the program is an indictment of Education Minister Quinn's lack of responsibility in providing resources for students with disabilities. In a letter to Giant Steps Queensland in April, Mr Quinn indicated that a pilot program would commence at the beginning of the 1997 school year. However, the Government failed to make any funding allocation in the State Budget and the program now appears unlikely to proceed.

The Giant Steps program began in Canada in 1982 and provides intensive therapy for autistic children. If the children respond well to the therapy, they can often be moved into mainstream educational facilities. The program operates in New South Wales and Tasmania and moves are under way to introduce Giant Steps in all other States.

The one-year pilot program proposed for Queensland would have involved 12 autistic children under the supervision of local therapists trained by experienced people flown in from Canada for the purpose. The organisation was also negotiating with the Education Department for access to surplus classroom space to house the program. Mr

Quinn should demonstrate that he has a commitment to providing educational opportunities for students with disabilities, in this case autistic Queensland children, and fund the Giant Steps program immediately.

TAFE Queensland—A New Focus: Working Better Together

Mr RADKE (Greenslopes) (10.25 a.m.): In July of this year, the honourable member for Clayfield announced a major initiative known as A New Focus: Working Better Together to revitalise the TAFE sector in Queensland. The imperative for the initiative arose from the increasingly competitive vocational education and training market and the need to ensure that TAFE maintains its high-quality status as a training provider.

My electorate of Greenslopes forms part of the catchment area for the South Bank Institute of TAFE, and within the electorate the Coorparoo campus is a major centre for access and employment programs. The Faculty of Foundation Studies is located at the Coorparoo campus, where real-life facilities such as the canteen, coffee shop and restaurant are used for hospitality training. Industry works closely with the faculty to ensure that the training provided is relevant and responsive to labour market needs. For example, the faculty utilises workplace or enterprise-based teachers and involves industry in the production of training manuals. High employment outcomes are achieved. For example, up to 60 per cent success rates for people with disabilities and up to 72 per cent for others wanting to enter the work force have been achieved. Literacy and numeracy programs are integrated with vocationally based programs and close links with job clubs and employment agencies are maintained.

The TAFE Queensland initiative aims to improve working relationships both within the organisation and externally with industry and local communities. The Queen Alexandra Home Community Centre is a focal point within the Greenslopes electorate for new and innovative community cultural, commercial and educational pursuits. I commend the initiative of the honourable member for Clayfield and the processes that he is using in his ministerial initiative in TAFE to ensure that TAFE Queensland serves the needs of all Queenslanders in the best possible manner. We must all continue to work better together.

Mr P. Connolly, QC

Hon. M. J. FOLEY (Yeronga) (10.27 a.m.): Mr Peter Connolly, QC, has demonstrated by his conduct that his appointment to head the commission of inquiry into the CJC is inappropriate. Mr Connolly should resign his commission forthwith. The Opposition objected to Mr Connolly's appointment on the grounds of a conflict of interests in that Mr Connolly had acted as counsel for Police Minister Cooper in the Carruthers inquiry. However, that objection on the grounds of bias—

Mr COOPER: I rise to a point of order. Mr Connolly was not my counsel.

Mr FOLEY: That presentation of an advice by Mr Connolly, QC, on behalf of Mr Cooper gave rise to a conflict of interest and an objection on the ground of bias, but since then two further actions have fatally compromised Mr Connolly's position: firstly, his intemperate criticism of the honourable Kenneth Carruthers, QC, whom he described as childish and paranoid. That was intemperate to the point of being highly inappropriate for an independent commissioner. Secondly, Mr Connolly's descent into the arena of political debate on the radio this morning describing the private member's Bill passed by the Parliament as political kaffuffle was imprudent, undignified and improper. He found himself in the position of arguing the same political line as his former client, Mr Cooper. It was behaviour more appropriate for a political spin doctor than an independent commissioner. An independent commissioner should not be on talkback radio seven hours after the Parliament has passed a Bill. The principle set out by Mr Connolly was as follows in an article in the March 1995 edition of *Proctor*—

Time expired.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Comments by Mr P. Connolly, QC

Mr BEATTIE (10.30 a.m.): I refer the Premier to Commissioner Connolly's attack on ABC radio today describing the private member's Bill passed this morning by the Parliament as a political kaffuffle. I ask: does the Premier not agree that Connolly's comments are a contempt of this Parliament and that his frequent public attacks on the Parliament and the Carruthers inquiry make him an unfit and improper person to conduct a so-called independent inquiry?

Mr BORBIDGE: No.

Comments by Mr P. Connolly, QC

Mr BEATTIE: I direct a question to the Attorney-General. Given that Commissioner Tony Fitzgerald, QC, established strong bipartisan support for the Criminal Justice Commission, I refer the Attorney-General to media comments this morning by Commissioner Peter Connolly, QC, and I ask: in light of Connolly's comments, which are highly destructive of the Fitzgerald reform process and make it impossible for him to conduct an independent inquiry, will the Attorney-General now withdraw his commission?

Mr BEANLAND: We have witnessed yet again today, as we did in the early hours of this morning, character assassinations on Mr Connolly, QC. We have seen this so often from members of the Labor Party. If lawyers do not toe the Labor line, day after day these character assassinations are attempted. When Mr Gyles represented "Saint Carmen" at the Western Australian royal commission, it was fine then for Labor members to get around and praise him. But because he has now called into question and highlighted the bias of Mr Carruthers in relation to a number of matters, it is a different story altogether. Labor Party members suddenly started to attack Mr Gyles, as they are now attacking Mr Connolly.

I heard what Mr Connolly said this morning. It was totally in order. The Leader of the Opposition was the one misleading the public this morning, and he knows it. What a dreadful misleading exercise he undertook on radio this morning! He had the gall to go on radio this morning and tell the public that the inquiry asked for personal documents and so on. The inquiry asked for no such thing, and the Leader of the Opposition knows it. He knows that he misled the public of Queensland. The inquiry purely asked for documents not to be destroyed. Mr Connolly indicated that this morning quite clearly, quite precisely.

As I said a number of times last evening, we cannot undo what Mr Carruthers himself has largely done. It was Mr Carruthers who threw in the towel. It was Mr Carruthers who decided to show bias in relation to this matter. It was Mr Carruthers who decided to leave this State—not anybody else. It was Mr Carruthers who decided to create the misconception and misperception in people's minds. Quite clearly, those things cannot be undone. Several people have phoned me in relation to this matter. No matter how many pieces of legislation are put through this Parliament, we cannot undo what has already been done in

relation to this matter. That is what Mr Connolly highlighted quite clearly this morning, and I totally agree with that matter.

Again this morning we have seen an effort by the Opposition to crucify Mr Connolly through personal attacks. It is Mr Connolly today; it will be somebody else tomorrow. The other day it was Mr Hanger; then it was Mr Gyles. The Opposition is desperate.

Suncorp/Metway/QIDC Merger

Mr CARROLL: I ask the Honourable the Premier to detail the effects of the resolutions of yesterday's meeting of Metway shareholders which was called to allow voting on the proposal to merge Metway, Suncorp and the QIDC.

Mr BORBIDGE: In reply to the honourable member—I think it is significant that it took the shareholders of Metway less than 30 minutes yesterday to pour a bucket of cold water over the very deliberate campaign of economic sabotage waged by the Labor Party members opposite. This Government is delighted with the outcome of the Metway board meeting yesterday, which delivered a rousing vote of confidence in the merged entity. More than 1,000 Metway shareholders at the convention centre—

Mr Fouras: Why wouldn't they?

Mr BORBIDGE:—voted unanimously to accept the merger proposal. If the honourable member for Ashgrove had had his way, they would have been taken over by St George. I recall the member for Logan saying in this place for years that he did not want Queensland to be a branch office State; he wanted head offices here in Queensland. The first chance he got to do something constructive about it, the Labor Party wanted to see Metway lost to New South Wales.

Mr Littleproud: They never put their money where their mouth is.

Mr BORBIDGE: As my colleague reminds me, they did not put their money where their mouths were when it came to the vote yesterday. Like the other Metway shareholders, they voted for the proposal—despite the fact that for five long months now the Labor Party, which never had the guts to do this sort of thing, has put every obstacle in the path of the Government's plans. I think it is significant that the shareholders of Metway yesterday voted for the proposal, despite the last-minute intervention of the visiting Professor of MBA fame, "Mr Unforgiven", who attempted, no doubt on the urging of a couple of his

business mates, to drop a bucket on the merger.

This decision means that the path has now been paved for a turnaround in what has been a trend in recent years of major Queensland institutions being swallowed up by the southern States—by the Melbourne and the Sydney business establishments. Yesterday, because of the political conviction and determination of this Government, and despite the negative whingeing and whining of the Labor Party, despite the fact that the markets rallied behind the Government's strategy and the fact that independent analysts said that it was in the best interests of Queensland that the merger proceed, the shareholders of Metway agreed with a plan that will create a very special Queensland organisation—an organisation which will hold No. 1 position in terms of total deposits, in terms of home lending, in terms of general insurance, in terms of third-party insurance and in terms of motor vehicle insurance in this State. But more than that, they agreed with a plan that will see this institution immediately become a strong and positive financial institution in this country, a lead player in the national market. They have agreed with a plan that will provide the missing ingredient in terms of economic development in this State, which has been a home-grown financial institution up with the best of the best.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: Loss of jobs.

Mr BORBIDGE: The honourable member was happy to sell Metway out. He did not give a cold crumpet for the staff of Metway when he was ready to throw Metway to St George.

The legacy of this will be a very healthy return to the Government as we down sell; it will be job creation in Queensland; it will be economic development in this State. It is interesting how members opposite are always right and everyone else is always wrong. They tried to talk down the share price and it went up. They tried to sabotage the shareholders' meeting. I expected the member for Logan to be walking up and down outside the AGM yesterday with a sandwich board saying "The end of the world is nigh". That was the intellectual quality of the absolutely insipid argument that had been proposed by the Labor Party.

Surely the time has come for the Labor Party to start to play a positive and constructive role. Members opposite did not have the guts to carry this through. They would have thrown Metway to the New South Wales wolves, and to hang with all the jobs

that would have been lost there. They would have sacrificed for all time the opportunity for Queensland to have a major national financial institution. The actions of Labor—the actions of the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the shadow Treasurer and the gentleman up the back, who no doubt is off studying again today—amount to economic sabotage. They amount to actions that were against the interests of the people of Queensland—

Mr BEATTIE: I rise to a point of order. I find those comments offensive. We have the Premier behaving like Mr Magoo pretending he is Sid Vicious.

Mr SPEAKER: What is the member's point of order?

Mr BEATTIE: The comments are offensive; they are not true. We have not sought in any way to sabotage this arrangement. I ask for those comments to be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Premier.

Mr BORBIDGE: If the Leader of the Opposition takes offence, certainly I withdraw. But can I say that it is the strangest expression of support that I have ever witnessed for any proposal that we have seen coming from the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Logan and all the other knockers and whingers opposite!

The fact is that even some of our staunchest critics, the *Australian Financial Review* amongst them—the southern press that the member for Logan, along with a couple of his business mates, had been background briefing—are now reluctantly admitting that this Government and the people of Queensland are on a winner with this particular strategy, which is now in the process of delivering to the people of Queensland, despite the objections of those opposite, despite their negativity, despite their anti-Queensland economic sabotage, a situation in which this State, by courtesy of this Government—

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. The Premier has persisted with an allegation that the Opposition was involved in economic sabotage of Queensland. As the shadow Treasurer, I find that particularly offensive, and I point out that we have only been trying to protect taxpayers' money that has been used in large amounts to subsidise this bank merger.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Premier did not refer to the shadow Treasurer. There is no point of order.

Mr BORBIDGE: I thought the member might have worked out the error of his ways now that Labor Holdings has made a bit of money out of the courageous and positive stand that this Government has taken. We do not mind acting in the interests of Queensland, even if now and then it helps out Labor Holdings. This project is a major economic development stimulus for the State of Queensland and it will be embraced by Queenslanders. It will be a major Queensland success story and the records of history will show that Labor opposed it in this place all the way.

Mr K. Carruthers, QC

Mr ELDER: I ask the Police Minister: if he and the Premier, as they claim, are so anxious to clear their names of corruption allegations, why have they so publicly denigrated Mr Carruthers, QC, and made it impossible for him to complete his inquiry without their political interference?

Mr COOPER: I have not publicly denigrated Mr Carruthers.

Rural Queensland

Mr SPRINGBORG: I ask the Premier: can he outline to the House just what lies beneath the bush-friendly exterior currently being portrayed by the Leader of the Opposition?

Mr BORBIDGE: I think that one of the great and unbelievable events of Queensland politics in recent weeks has been the new cuddly and bush-friendly Leader of the Opposition—the Leader of the Labor Party, who spent a recent weekend out at Barcaldine telling anyone who would listen that Labor had learnt its lesson. Of course, on more than one occasion we have already heard him denounce the policies of the Labor Government of which he was a proud member for so long. We have heard him denounce the move by his now shadow Treasurer who, in a former life, tried to close down one-third of Queensland Rail. We have heard him denounce the policies of his colleagues, the members for Yeronga and Murrumba.

Mr ARDILL: I rise to a point of order. The Premier is again misleading the House—telling lies. The Labor Party did not close down one-third of Queensland Rail and did not attempt to close down one-third of Queensland Rail. In fact, it closed down less of the rail—one-tenth—than those opposite.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The remark that the member passed in relation to the Premier is unparliamentary. I ask the member to withdraw it.

Mr ARDILL: I withdraw.

Mr BORBIDGE: The member has really hurt me. It is a bit like being mauled by the proverbial dead sheep.

Mr ARDILL: Mr Speaker, at your direction, I withdrew the offending words. My statement was correct and I seek a withdrawal from the Premier of the untruth that he told.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I think the honourable member has asked the Premier to withdraw some reference about a sheep.

Mr BORBIDGE: I am confused, but to keep the member happy, I will withdraw whatever he found offensive.

The Labor Party in a former life planned to close down one-third of Queensland Rail and former Labor Attorneys-General, now on the front bench, in their former lives presided over the closure of country courthouses. We have also heard the Leader of the Opposition denounce the general policies pursued by his would-be leadership challenger, the member for Logan, and the previous Government's adherence to the policies of economic rationalism.

What we have already seen from the Leader of the Opposition is a public repudiation of a number of his front bench colleagues. However, the question the people of rural and regional Queensland need to ask themselves is: does a leopard ever change its spots? Could this Labor Party, so helplessly divided between those who know why they lost and those who still cannot understand why they lost, ever be bush friendly? I doubt it, and I doubt it for a couple of reasons which I will outline.

Fundamentally, this is a Labor Party with a dislike for anything that happens outside the capital city. This is still a Labor Party which, if it is successful at the next election, will seek to abolish the electoral weightage applied to some rural electorates, electoral weightage that was recommended by the independent EARC as a result of the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry. While the Leader of the Opposition stands on the stump out at Barcaldine and appears all bush friendly, what he does not say is that he intends to cut in half the level of parliamentary representation currently enjoyed by the people who live in that region.

If we need any proof of that, we need look only at what took place last year, when the then Minister for Justice, now the shadow

Minister for Justice and presumably the person who would be the Minister in a Labor Government, used taxpayers' funds to support a High Court challenge to electoral weightage put forward by the then Labor leader in Western Australia. The Labor Party cronies in Western Australia were challenging the boundaries there, and what did Mr Foley do?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will refer to the member as "the honourable member for Yeronga", not "Mr Foley".

Mr BORBIDGE: The honourable member for Yeronga came out at taxpayers' expense to support his colleagues in WA.

I understand from my investigations that the challenge, at the instruction of the Minister, was headed up by the Solicitor-General and utilised the full resources of his department. Further, an amount of in excess of \$5,000 was spent in travel to and from the High Court as the Solicitor-General was made to argue the Labor Party's case.

The Leader of the Opposition has an obligation to outline to the people of rural and regional Queensland just how he plans to reduce their representation, how under his policies the recommendations of independent EARC will be tossed out the window, and how under his policies the electorate of Gregory will be amalgamated with the electorate of Warrego, how Mount Isa will be amalgamated with Charters Towers and how Cook will become part of Cairns.

Let us have a look at the commitment of the Leader of the Opposition. A recent notional redistribution of the State under a numerically equal electoral structure, which the Leader of the Opposition proposes in defiance of EARC, shows one member representing a seat stretching from Mornington Island to the New South Wales border and east to Jericho, which would cover 43 per cent of the State, while there would be 56 members in the 200 kilometre by 75 kilometre strip from Noosa to the Tweed and out to Ipswich, covering only 0.77 per cent of the State. That is the commitment of the Labor Party; that is the commitment of the Leader of the Opposition.

On 3 September 1995, the *Courier-Mail* carried an article headed "Labor bent to revamp five rural electorates", which stated—

"Five huge electorates in western and northern Queensland could become even larger under an electoral review proposed by Attorney-General, Matt Foley."

Next time the Leader of the Opposition goes bush, he might like to explain to the people of

rural and regional Queensland how he is going to throw out the recommendations of EARC arising from the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry and how he is going to decimate parliamentary and political representation in the bush and how he is going to make it absolutely impossible for parliamentary representation and leave 43 per cent of the area of Queensland with one member of Parliament.

Given his recent exercises, the Leader of the Opposition can go bush as often as he likes, because people will not forget. The Leader of the Opposition can explain to the people how the member for Yeronga utilised taxpayers' money and utilised the Office of the Solicitor-General to go to bat in the High Court in Canberra for a politically motivated stunt engineered by the then Leader of the Opposition in the Western Australian Parliament.

Debate interrupted.

PRIVILEGE

Electoral Redistribution

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—Leader of the Opposition) (10.50 a.m.): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. For the information of the House, I point out that the Opposition is committed to the EARC principles and the EARC recommendations. What the Premier has said is simply not true. He continues to behave like Mr Magoo seeking to be Sid Vicious.

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Premier) (10.51 a.m.): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I take it, therefore, that the Leader of the Opposition has totally dissociated himself from the comments made by the then Minister for Justice and Attorney-General in the *Courier-Mail* in respect of the stated policy of the Labor Party as of 5 September 1995, when it was official Labor Party policy that five huge electorates in western and northern Queensland could become even larger under an electoral review proposed by the then Attorney-General, Matt Foley. That is what the member did in Government. Why would anyone believe a fraud like him in Opposition?

Mr BEATTIE: I rise to a point of order. Sid Vicious continues. I find that remark offensive and seek its withdrawal. It is about time that the Premier started behaving like a Premier.

Mr BORBIDGE: If the Leader of the Opposition takes offence, I withdraw the comments made by the member for Yeronga.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Carruthers Inquiry

Mr BARTON: I ask the Minister for Police and Corrective Services: why did he attack the Carruthers inquiry as a "show trial" when he himself referred his secret Police Union deal to the CJC for investigation, and then voted in Cabinet to establish the commission of inquiry, headed by his own legal adviser, to scuttle Mr Carruthers before he could recommend whether the Minister and the Premier should face charges for electoral bribery?

Mr COOPER: Firstly, I have already said that Mr Carruthers has not been publicly denigrated by me; end of story. The honourable member's question referred to Mr Connolly as my legal adviser. He is not. I refute that statement. He is not my legal adviser.

As far as a "show trial"—members opposite must be deaf, dumb and blind. The general public can see exactly what has been going on out there. Opposition members can ask anyone about that. Let me have a look at what members opposite did when they were in Government. Do they remember the Cooke inquiry? They would have a rough idea about the Cooke inquiry. They shut it down. But that did not matter, did it? We have not shut anything down, but the former Government did.

I refer to an article written by Chris Griffith, which stated—

"However, the incoming Labor government regarded the inquiry as politically motivated and ideologically driven.

The relationship between Mr Cooke . . . and the Goss government was publicly spiteful—as has been the relationship between . . . Borbidge and Mr Carruthers.

But, according to Cooke inquiry sources, the bad blood meant inquiry staff also had to overcome enormous odds so that Mr Cooke could deliver his final report, which examined the Australian Workers' Union."

He went on—

"Despite the obstacles, he delivered the report on time.

Last week Mr Cooke and his former senior counsel, Ken Fleming, QC, refused to comment, but inquiry sources for the first time disclosed the hardships staff faced in its final months:

Staff were told to vacate their office in the Jetset Centre by June 30, 1991—before Mr Cooke's report into the AWU was completed. The inquiry could not finish a planned review of public service unions as a result (He also faced a legal injunction on this issue);"

That is what members opposite were going to do to him—close him down and then threaten him with legal injunctions. How on earth could he finish his report? Talk about the pot calling the kettle black!

Mr Barton: I wasn't here then.

Mr COOPER: The member for Waterford should not try to duck out of it. It was his lot who did it. Members opposite are all tarred with the same brush. They know damned well that they are.

The article goes on—

"In the weeks before June 30, all but one of the inquiry's phones were cut off and Mr Cooke was left with just one typist. He wrote much of his report on the AWU in longhand."

Members opposite took everything away from him. But that was okay with them, was it not?

The article continues—

"While Mr Cooke was writing his report, Public Works Department staff were busily trampling through his personal office measuring partitions and detailing renovations;

In the end, Mr Cooke worked on the report from his Chambers, while his two remaining staffers proofread drafts in another building—Forestry House. This continued for three weeks."

Look at the way that members opposite treated these people. They are a disgrace. The article continued—

"The government threatened to withdraw the inquiry's cars because they were more than two years old."

Mr BARTON: I rise to a point of order. The Minister's answer surely must have some relevance to my question, which had nothing to do with the Cooke inquiry. Frankly, the Minister's references to me having any involvement in shutting down the Cooke inquiry are offensive, and I seek their withdrawal.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Minister.

Mr COOPER: I think it is very relevant. I think I should finish reading this article. I will just go back to one point, because I want Opposition members to hear this.

Mr Barton interjected.

Mr COOPER: As the member was not there, it might be a good idea if he listens to this. This is how his colleagues performed—

"The government threatened to withdraw the inquiry's cars because they were more than two years old. The government had asked the Cooke inquiry to hire cars which inquiry staff regarded as enormously expensive;

The government constantly whittled away support staff when they were needed by the inquiry. The staff had been seconded from departments;

Mr Cooke also faced political attacks—that his inquiry was extremely expensive, had found little and his reports were 'B-class'."

That is what I would call denigration and public ridicule. Members opposite pulled everything out from under that inquiry. They did that deliberately. For political reasons they closed down a legitimate inquiry that was getting close and getting hot. That is the way they handled these issues. They should be ashamed of themselves.

Debate interrupted.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

Hon. W. A. M. Gunn

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the honourable member for Cunningham, I draw to the attention of the House that, in the gallery, we have the former Deputy Premier Bill Gunn.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Rural Initiatives

Mr ELLIOTT: I refer the Premier to the recent visit to Barcaldine by the Opposition Leader, Mr Beattie, which apparently was something akin to a conversion on the road to Damascus, in that he claimed to have rediscovered the bush, despite the damage done to rural areas by the former Labor Government. I ask: can the Premier inform the House what initiatives have been undertaken for rural Queensland under the coalition Government?

Mr BORBIDGE: I thank the honourable member for his question and the opportunity to detail to the House the changes that this Government has brought about by making sure that rural and regional Queenslanders are

not treated as second-class citizens and are treated as equal partners in the development of this State.

What we have seen in the recent State Budget is a commitment that has been unprecedented from a State Government towards rural and regional Queenslanders. After six long years of hostility and neglect by honourable members opposite, when they ravaged the social infrastructure of the inland, pulled out railway jobs, closed down railway lines, took away teachers and nurses, closed hospital wards and operating theatres—

Mr PALASZCZUK: I rise to a point of order. The Premier is misleading the House. When the National Party Government was in power, it closed down 733—

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

Mr PALASZCZUK: Yes, Mr Speaker—10,000 kilometres of railway lines—

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

Mr PALASZCZUK: Fifty-five police stations and 733 schools.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Inala will resume his seat. This is not a debate.

Mr BORBIDGE: The honourable member for Inala thinks that he represents western Queensland. Inala is about as far west as the Labor Party goes.

Let us consider the performance of this Government. As to the rebuilding of the Department of Primary Industries—the coalition Budget provided for the employment of an additional 242 full-time staff, including 76 positions that are currently being filled, to boost regional service delivery to primary producers. The sugar industry on the Atherton Tableland is expanding with the establishment of a new sugar mill. In conjunction with rural industry leaders, the State secured an \$80m extension to drought funding from the Federal Government. The sum of \$2.5m over three years has been provided for a new drought and rural development program within the DPI to increase support for droughted producers and enhance measures for farm viability. Eight industry-based institutes are to be established to provide enhanced linkages between extension information and research.

In regard to the courthouses that the member for Yeronga and the member for Murrumba so shamefully closed down, four courthouses will be reopened on a part-time basis to provide regular court services at

Inglewood, Springsure, Millmerran and Mitchell—courthouses previously closed by the Labor Government. The upgrading of courthouse facilities is under way, including major projects at Bundaberg, Rockhampton and Gympie.

As to initiatives taken by my colleague the Minister for Health—an office of rural health is currently being established at Roma on the western downs. A remote area nurses package has been developed to help keep experienced nurses in the bush. That includes allowances for professional training and development, additional leave, an isolation bonus, locum relief and two air fares per year for the nurse and family to travel out of the area. Four rural health training units have been established and are fully operational at Cairns, Townsville, Toowoomba and Rockhampton. Therapy, counselling and other allied health services have been increased in rural Queensland through the successful Outreach Allied Health Services Program.

As to education—we have provided for airconditioning of State schools north of the twentieth parallel. A 250 per cent increase in the Remote Area Incentive Scheme for State school teachers has been provided, with expenditure rising from \$2.2m to \$5.6m this financial year and \$8.1m the following year.

With regard to natural resources—within the first two weeks of assuming Government, Crown land rental payment levels for grazing and agricultural categories were frozen to help producers, on which the previous Labor Government would not even allow the debate of a private member's Bill. In addition, planning for the Comet and Dawson River dams constitutes the largest water resource development project since the Burdekin irrigation area. The Water Infrastructure Task Force, establishment by the Minister for Natural Resources, has identified billions of dollars of potential water resource projects—an issue ignored by Labor for six long years. Assistance has been provided for local government planning for development of water infrastructure in areas such as Winton, Karumba and Normanton, including a feasibility study for a new dam at Winton. Stock route water supplies across the State are being upgraded. Additional funding has been injected into the noxious weed and pest control programs.

As to roads—\$60m has been invested in upgrading the Flinders Highway to allow Type II road trains access to Townsville by 2003. The completion of bitumen sealing of the Winton to Hughenden road will occur over five

years. Other roads earmarked for completion of sealing include Georgetown to Croydon, Normanton to Croydon and Nardoo to Fiery Creek. The upgrading of the bridges and roads to the port of Karumba is another initiative. The dredging of the port of Karumba is one of the major initiatives undertaken by this Government to assist our live export trade.

Let us consider what else the Minister for Transport has been doing. Transportation of donated drought fodder has been provided at no cost. The Mareeba-Einasleigh rail line is to be re-opened. Progress is under way to locate workshops in country towns, including expanding facilities in Townsville and Alpha. Work is under way to establish maintenance facilities at Hughenden and Charleville.

As to my colleague the Minister for Emergency Services—ambulance regional communications are being overhauled to determine a process whereby the first telephone call will be to the local ambulance centre rather than a regional communications centre. That will get over Labor's massive administrative mess that cost lives. Under the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care, five multipurpose community centres will be provided, including new facilities in Edmonton and Miles. A \$4.35m funding package will provide 40 additional multipurpose children's centres in rural communities throughout Queensland.

The list goes on and on. This Government has done more for rural and regional Queensland in eight months than Labor could ever have contemplated in six years. It was withdrawing services and treating regional and remote Queenslanders as second-class citizens. In eight months, this Government is well on the way to putting Government back into the bush to redress six long years of arrogant abuse of country Queensland by Labor.

Cairns Economy

Mr HAMILL: In directing a question to the Treasurer, I refer to the economic survey commissioned by the *Cairns Post* and compiled by W. S. Cummings Research Services.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

Mr HAMILL: For the information of the Leader of Government Business, I point out that that is a company headed by a former Liberal Party candidate for Leichhardt. That survey shows that the Cairns economy has crashed into deep recession since May with growth levels of minus 3 per cent. Is this not

further proof of the dramatic slowdown in the Queensland economy which has occurred as a result of the Treasurer's capital work freeze, her seven new or increased taxes, and her campaign of undermining business confidence?

Mrs SHELDON: I think that—

Mr Schwarten interjected.

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

Mrs SHELDON: Everyone in north Queensland and Cairns knows that the slump that that area is currently experiencing is due to the inept economic policies of its member, the member for Cairns.

Giant Steps Program

Mr WOOLMER: I direct a question to the Minister for Education. Earlier today, the member for Cook pleaded the case for private funding for the privately operated Giant Steps program. Can the Minister inform the House of his knowledge of that organisation and any commitment to fund it?

Mr QUINN: Yes, I am aware of the Giant Steps program and also the coverage in the media—I believe that it was *Today Tonight*—at the end of October. I will outline to the House the background to the program and what has been done to date, because I think we need to put the facts on the table so that everyone is aware of the issues. In early 1995, negotiations commenced between the Department of Education and Giant Steps Autistic Therapy Association of Queensland, with a view to establishing a Giant Steps program in Queensland.

A working party was established with membership from the Office of Non-State Schooling, the Low Incident Support Centre and the Acting Assistant Director, Student Support Services. The working party presented to the director-general on 16 February this year a budget proposal for a pilot program for students with autistic spectrum disorder, based on the principles of Giant Steps. That proposal was not approved.

Funding for such a trial was based on a formula used for non-State special school programs, that is, enrolment reflecting special education support. For 12 students, that would be approximately \$200,000. That option also included an external evaluation by a reputable agency. Giant Steps had requested a contribution of \$796,500. Under that proposal, Giant Steps was required to find additional

funding from other sources and to advise the department of that. The Giant Steps committee has still to advise the department of that. No application—I repeat, no application—has been lodged for approval to commence as a non-State special school.

The correspondence between the people involved in the Giant Steps program and me illustrates that the department was intending to facilitate such a pilot program provided the conditions were met by the Giant Steps program itself. Those conditions were not met, and on that basis the funding was not included in the State Budget. I can also say that so far no research is available to support the claims made by the Giant Steps program.

Mr Bredhauer: You told them a trial was anticipated to commence in 1997.

Mr QUINN: The member should listen. Officers from the Department of Education and Griffith University investigated the programs based on Giant Steps in Tasmania and New South Wales—so there has been some research carried out—and found that, although practices were good, there were no specific methodologies that related to Giant Steps that were not being used in special education programs in State schools in Queensland at present. So the programs that the department is running in the special education units and in special schools in Queensland reflected what the Giant Steps program was, in fact, attempting to do.

Currently, the Departments of Education in both New South Wales and Tasmania are arranging for reviews to be undertaken to determine the unique characteristics and the efficacy of Giant Steps programs. That was one of the conditions that the department wished to place on the pilot program—it was asking for external review. Also, reviews of international literature have indicated that, despite the existence of Giant Steps programs for over a decade, limited research articles have been published relating to the educational programs and none has been published on the specific methodology used in Giant Steps programs. So based on all of that information, we made the right decision in not proposing to fund the program in the Budget.

However, the offer is still open to the people associated with the Giant Steps program. If they wish to apply for funding through the non-State organisations, and comply with the conditions that the department requests, then the funding will be considered. However, this department is not about providing funding on the basis that no

evaluation has been carried out of the effectiveness of the program itself.

There has been a range of correspondence between that particular organisation and me. Some of it has been quoted selectively. There was never any absolute guarantee—

Mr BREDHAUER: I rise to a point of order. I draw the attention of the House to a letter from the Minister to the Giant Steps organisation, in which he states—

"I am informed that the trial is anticipated to commence at the beginning of the 1997 school year."

The Minister said that, and I have not misquoted it.

Mr QUINN: I never said that the member for Cook misquoted me; I simply said that there has been some misquoting of the relevant correspondence. The correspondence was based on the department trying to facilitate a pilot program with an anticipated commencement date in 1997, which was as I stated in the correspondence. It was not a firm and hard commitment to fund that particular proposal.

In conclusion, the State Department of Education provides an enormous range of settings for students with special disabilities, of which autism is one. It is providing enhanced funding in the budget for those students for a range of settings across the State. This was a pilot program for 12 students. We have approximately 1,200 such students in our schools. They are being adequately catered for. If this particular organisation wishes to come back to the Office of Non-State Schooling with a firm proposal, including funding and agreeing to the proposals that we put forward, we are more than willing to look at it again.

Goods and Services Tax

Mr BREDHAUER: I will let the people be the judge. I refer the Treasurer to media reports of widespread support for a goods and services tax among Queensland members of the National Party. I refer the Treasurer also to the parliamentary debate in this House on 25 February 1993 during which she repeatedly supported a GST, and I ask: as the Treasurer and the Premier are scheduled to host the Council of Australian Governments meeting tomorrow, does she still support the introduction of a GST as a taxation reform?

Mrs SHELDON: Both the Premier and I support a restructuring of Federal/State taxing

arrangements. Over the years, the decrease in real terms in funding to our State and the fact that we have to deliver all the services has placed more and more strain on the State Budget. In point of fact, this restructuring can take place with the existing taxes. I draw the attention of the House to fuel excise, which is a Federal Government tax. If that tax—which amounts to several billion dollars a year—was returned in full to the State of Queensland, we would have adequate funding for our roads and for everything else that we need in this State.

We are saying, "Let us look at the existing taxing situation and look at a more equitable arrangement of those taxes so that we can indeed deliver to our people the services that they need." As a coalition Government, we have never espoused a GST.

Greyhound Racing Authority

Mr J. N. GOSS: I direct a question to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing. I understand that the Greyhound Racing Authority has recently received funding from the Racing Development Fund to assist with its operational expenditure and also to provide emergency safety-related capital works for some clubs, and I ask: can he confirm this and advise the House why it was necessary?

Mr COOPER: I thank the member for the question. It is pretty well known that the member is very keen on his dogs. If members have a good look at him, they would see that he even looks almost as sleek as a greyhound—but I ask him to please not stand up. He has an enormous interest in greyhounds.

Mr Gibbs: He's known as an old bunny chaser.

Mr COOPER: A plate licker. The member may have heard all the descriptions of himself, but nothing has dented his confidence or his faith in the greyhound industry. The member represents people who live on the north side of Brisbane, particularly those located in the Lawnton area. I know that he has chaired a few meetings in that area, because a decision has to be made about greyhound racing at Lawnton and Redcliffe once we know how far the people want to go with greyhound racing at Albion Park.

I can confirm that some time ago a grant of \$250,000 was made to the Greyhound Racing Authority to cover the safety-related capital works for clubs throughout the State. Facilities at a number of greyhound venues

were run down and some had been damaged by flooding earlier this year. It was the Government's responsibility, through the RDF, to make sure that those funds were supplied so that the industry could remain viable. An amount of \$500,000 has also been provided to cover operating losses to the authority carried forward from last financial year and operating costs for the current year. Again, that was vital so that the authority could continue its functions without increasing levies. As has been said before, this Government is trying to make sure that it delivers the cheapest possible racing that it can—be it greyhound racing or whatever.

The Government has also earmarked another \$750,000 for the Greyhound Racing Authority so that it can establish its own greyhound breeders' incentive scheme. That is a first, and it is going to provide additional benefits to the owners of greyhounds in this State. I believe that, as this Government revamps the greyhound industry, it will receive widespread support throughout the State.

The initiatives result in a total package of \$1.5m in Government support for the greyhound industry this year. That is certainly substantially in excess of what that industry has received over the past several years. It will provide a great boost for the industry. In fact, if one compares that funding with the funding that the industry has received over the last six years, one finds that that level of funding in one year is about equal to the funding that was given to the authority in the previous six years. That funding will be accepted very well by the greyhound industry.

I encourage the member to continue to maintain his very close interest in the greyhound industry. We do not have a greyhound racing track between Brisbane and Bundaberg. However, we want to make sure that the north side of Brisbane and the greyhound industry generally are properly catered for.

Public Service Hit Lists

Ms BLIGH: I ask the Premier: will he give this Parliament an unequivocal assurance that he was in no way involved in the preparation or implementation of any public service hit lists?

Mr BORBIDGE: I find it amazing that the Labor Party continues—

Mr Elder: "Yes" or "No".

Mr BORBIDGE: I want to talk about the Opposition's hit lists. The other day, as part of

his 10-point plan to invigorate job growth in Queensland, we saw from the Leader of the Opposition a hit list. This is how he is going to solve unemployment in Queensland: sack the senior public servants who were appointed. This matter has been canvassed and canvassed and canvassed. The Opposition has been getting up to mischief and spreading fibs from one end of Brisbane to the other. The challenge to the Labor Party is for the Leader of the Opposition to name his hit list.

Queensland Abattoir Corporation

Mr MALONE: I ask the Minister for Primary Industries: can he elaborate on his comments, reported in the *Courier-Mail* of 12 November, regarding the Government's plan to gradually exit from ownership of the Queensland Abattoir Corporation? Can the Minister advise whether the Government has completely rejected the proposal by the Queensland Abattoir Corporation for the relocation of its Brisbane, Ipswich and Toowoomba operations to a new state-of-the-art abattoir complex in south-east Queensland? Does the Government have any preferred site in regard to the future location of the new abattoir?

Mr PERRETT: I thank the honourable member for his question. As I informed the House yesterday, the Queensland Government has made the decision to gradually exit from its ownership role in the meat processing industry. I stress to the House that this exit will be made in an orderly manner. We will not be closing down the public abattoir system overnight. We will develop an exit strategy through a process of consultation with the Queensland meat and livestock industry, including both the producer sector and the processor sector. This will be handled by a steering committee chaired by my director-general, Mr Roley Nieper. That committee will report to me and to Cabinet.

Mrs Bird: More jobs gone.

Mr PERRETT: I take that interjection about jobs. One has only to do the sums. There will be no less stock slaughtered in this State and we are going to need a work force to slaughter it; it is as simple as that. The Opposition is trying to create a furphy; to create a problem that does not exist. The lot opposite gave their old mate Ron McLean the job of working out a deal between the QAC and the workers. That has been done and redundancy arrangements have already been negotiated. Therefore, the Opposition is trying to stir up something out of nothing.

The Queensland Government recognises that it is essential to the future of the meat and livestock industries in this State to ensure the ongoing provision of a service kill or contract slaughtering capacity within the meat processing industry. However, it is the Government's view that there is no longer any compelling reason for the Government to provide that service kill capacity itself through the continued ownership of abattoirs. We have called, and will be renewing that call, for expressions of interest from the private sector for the ongoing provision of the service kill role. I do not expect any lack of interest from the private sector because we have, in fact, already received a number of proposals.

As part of this process of negotiation, we will be looking at the future of the five existing public abattoirs operated by the Queensland Abattoir Corporation. Where there are opportunities to sell any of these facilities to the private sector, these opportunities will be explored. However, we have to recognise the reality that environmental and urban pressures in regard to the abattoirs at Cannon Hill in Brisbane and Churchill in Ipswich have probably set a limit of no more than four to five years of the continued operation of meat processing activities on those sites.

In relation to the second part of the question from the member for Mirani—the Government has ruled out the provision of public funding for a new abattoir. In this day and age, it is simply not appropriate to contemplate spending \$40m or \$50m, or maybe more, of taxpayers' money on building a new abattoir, particularly when there is no shortage of proposals from the private sector for the development of a new processing capacity.

As far as the Queensland Abattoir Corporation is concerned, if the corporation can come back to Government with a proposal that includes 100 per cent private sector funding, firm contractual commitments from its major clients, an acceptable strategy for repayment of its current debt to Treasury and a feasible exit strategy for Government in terms of ownership prior to relocation commencing, we would obviously be prepared to have a good look at that proposal. However, I stress again that the Government will not be providing capital funding for a new abattoir.

Finally, the Government has no particular preference as to the location for a proposed new state-of-the-art abattoir. If this proposal was to come to fruition, the matter of site selection for any new private sector abattoir

would rest entirely with the private sector proponents to negotiate with the various local governments. A number of local governments are clearly interested in doing what they can within their legal and operational jurisdictions to attract private sector investment, including investment in new meat processing facilities. However, any assistance measures that are proposed by local governments to the private sector operators would have to stand or fall on their own merits. The Queensland Government certainly does not intend to become involved in an adjudication role between competing local governments in so far as the private sector investment is concerned.

Queensland Abattoir Corporation

Mr GIBBS: I refer the Minister for Primary Industries to his meat industry announcement yesterday, and I ask: what discussions has the Minister personally had with the Queensland Abattoir Corporation concerning this strategy? I note that the Minister did not outline a time frame in his previous answer. What is the proposed time frame? What discussions have the Minister or his officers had with the Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union on this issue?

Mr PERRETT: Obviously, the Opposition spokesman has not been listening to what we have been saying during the past couple of days. I remind the House that it was the honourable member's predecessor who commissioned a report from the Queensland Abattoir Corporation. He put it in the bottom drawer because it was all too hard. He did not like what he read in it, and he marked it "Taipan". When the member for Bundamba took over the portfolio, he saw that it was marked "Taipan" and he did not get it out in case it bit him.

This Government has had the intestinal fortitude to get that report out and do what needs to be done for the future of the beef industry in this State. There have been ongoing negotiations at all levels, practically ever since we came into Government. Let me say that it has been worked through over and over again.

Mr Elder: With whom?

Mr PERRETT: There have been negotiations with all sectors of industry—producers, processors and the AMIEU. It is as simple as that. The Queensland Abattoir Corporation has been integral to those discussions. Members opposite have been very critical of the fact that the Queensland

Abattoir Corporation has carried a large debt for a number of years and, until this Government came to power, the Government was subsidising the interest paid to keep that operation afloat.

Mr PURCELL: I rise to a point of order. The Minister is misleading the House. The Queensland Abattoir Corporation and its operation at Cannon Hill were in the black for some three years under the previous Government.

Mr PERRETT: I have always believed in the philosophy that it is better to sit there and look a fool than to open your mouth and prove it! All the member has to do is to look at the reports which come to this place and he will see that the Queensland Abattoir Corporation carries a debt of \$10.2m. There is a significant debt there. The member for Bulimba is very naive. It is better that he keeps quiet on the issue because, frankly, he is getting nowhere.

The Government is absolutely determined to get it right for the future of the meat industry in Queensland. It is our biggest industry in terms of production, processing and job creation. The industry—whether involving cattle, sheep, pigs or whatever—creates about 8,000 jobs in this State. That will be maintained and this Government will see it through to the end. There is no time frame. We are going to get it right, and if it takes four or five years, so be it. This Government has had the guts to do what the former Government did not do.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table—

- (a) Premier (Mr Borbidge)—
Bikeways Project Board—Annual Report for 1995-96
- (b) Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry (Mr Perrett)—
Electrical Workers and Contracts Board—
Annual Report for 1995-96.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Building Tribunal Annual Report

Hon. R. T. CONNOR (Nerang—Minister for Public Works and Housing) (11.30 a.m.), by leave: I wish to advise the House regarding the tabling of the annual

report of the Queensland Building Tribunal for the 1995-96 financial year. Under section 46J(1) of the Financial Administration and Audit Act, the annual report of the Queensland Building Tribunal was required to be furnished to me by 31 October 1996. Under section 46J(2) of the Financial Administration and Audit Act, I have extended the time allowed for the Queensland Building Tribunal to submit its annual report.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Department of Public Works and Housing Annual Report

Hon. R. T. CONNOR (Nerang—Minister for Public Works and Housing) (11.30 a.m.), by leave: I wish to advise the House that, due to exceptional circumstances, there will be a delay in the tabling of the annual report of the Department of Public Works and Housing. The Auditor-General has requested an extension of time to allow his officers to complete the 1995-96 audit. My department will allow extra time for the incorporation of the audit statements in the annual report and to proceed to printing. Therefore, I have extended the time for presentation of the annual report on the operations of the department for an additional period of two months to allow both departments time to complete the requirements for the annual report.

PRIVILEGE

Queensland Building Tribunal Annual Report

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (11.31 a.m.): I rise on a point of privilege. The Minister for Public Works and Housing said that the Queensland Building Tribunal annual report was not prepared. It has been sent to all members of Parliament. In fact, I have a copy in my electorate office.

TRANSPORT (GLADSTONE EAST END TO HARBOUR CORRIDOR) BILL

Hon. D. J. SLACK (Burnett—Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier) (11.32 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to authorise the acquisition of certain land for rail transport corridor purposes, and for other purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. D. J. SLACK (Burnett—Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier) (11.33 a.m.): I move—

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

Since 1914 Queensland Cement Limited—QCL—has provided cement for the development of Queensland. QCL has grown to become one of Queensland's largest companies. Since 1935 dead coral limestone has been dredged in Moreton Bay as the raw material for the company's cement works at Darra. The existing QCL operations at Gladstone were approved under the Queensland Cement and Lime Company Limited Agreement Act 1977—the QCL Agreement Act.

The Act provided for an initial rated capacity of 500,000 tonnes of clinker per year. Following completion of environmental studies for the mine, the slurry pipeline, the cement manufacturing plant and the source of sand, the original project was approved, and manufacturing of clinker commenced in 1981. New facilities for clinker grinding were commissioned in 1993.

The need to expand operations in the Gladstone area is due to QCL being unable to secure additional licences to dredge coral limestone in Moreton Bay. As a result, there will be insufficient licensed reserves to guarantee production at QCL's Darra plant beyond 1998. Rather than importing product from associated companies or from overseas, QCL has decided to expand its existing Gladstone operation in order to secure supply, product quality, product variability, and local investment.

The decision not to extend coral dredging licences in Moreton Bay was made by the previous Government and it is supported by this Government. In order to facilitate the cessation of coral dredging, the previous Government agreed to facilitate the expansion of the Gladstone operation. This was on the condition that limestone from the east-end mine be transported to the clinker plant at Fisherman's Landing by rail in order to prevent a very large increase in road traffic in the Gladstone area. This Government fully endorses this approach.

The upgrading of QCL's Gladstone operations will mean increased clinker production of an additional 1 million tonnes a year. At present, limestone is transported as a slurry through a pipeline to the old plant. However, the pipeline cannot be used to transport limestone to the new plant as it uses a different manufacturing process which cannot accept a wet slurry as input material. In addition, the pipeline would not have the capacity to deliver the extra volume required.

The solution lies in the construction of a new railway. The effective relocation of QCL's operations to Gladstone depend on it, as does the general public interest. The railway that will be built will service the State development area—the Aldoga site—in the Gladstone region, and will also in the public interest facilitate the planned relocation of QCL's operations from Moreton Bay and Darra to the Gladstone region.

Much of the land required is already held by the State in a variety of tenures. The State has recently acquired by agreement a large area of land to be used for both the Aldoga industrial land project as well as the railway corridor. The rail line, once constructed, will service future industrial projects as they are established at the Aldoga site and on other parts of the selected route. This line will be an important piece of infrastructure contributing significantly to the economic development of the State in general and Gladstone in particular.

A number of private landowners hold the balance of land required for the railway. Most of these land-holders agree that the Government has good reasons to build a railway and have accepted that some of their land will be given over for that purpose. They will receive appropriate and fair financial compensation. However, a small number of land-holders are holding out and will not be persuaded to willingly agree to the necessary land being acquired.

Every effort has been made to accommodate the wishes of these land-holders while balancing the legitimate consideration of not incurring unnecessary and excessive extra costs to the public purse. The proposed rail alignment will take a small proportion of each property mostly close to, or along, the property boundaries. No residence will be demolished, and the occupants will not be required to relocate. Fences will be erected along the rail route and fair financial compensation will be paid in accordance with the existing compensation regime.

If the railway line is not completed on time, QCL estimates that it would then face additional costs of approximately \$4.5m per month. Obviously, this is a matter of some concern for QCL. If this occurs then there is also the possibility of the Government being approached to subsidise the additional costs incurred by QCL. The Government has a duty to consider the public interest. The Government has given long and careful consideration to all the options available. It has done so with a view to achieving a balanced decision which enables the railway to be built with a minimal impact on all landowners whilst at the same time protecting the interests of Queensland taxpayers.

The refusal of a small number of landowners to accept the preferred option has necessitated the introduction of special legislation to acquire the land. However, compensation rights which exist under current legislation will still apply. The intention of this Bill is to make the required land available without delay. There is no intention to defraud existing landowners out of the value of their property. They will be properly compensated for any land they lose in the same way they would be compensated if the processes under the Acquisition of Land Act were allowed to run their course.

I will now draw members' attention to specific provisions. Although the Bill is short, it is quite complex and this is due to the inherent complexities of dealing in land. Freehold land held by private individuals, and the State and local Government, is to be taken for rail corridor purposes. Land held by the State in a range of other tenures is allocated to the same purpose. Land is taken for roads. Some parts of roads are closed where they interfere with the rail route, and new roads are opened to take their place. Where rail and road cross by bridge, both activities can legitimately co-exist. Existing interests in the land are converted to rights to claim compensation, and provision is made so that compensation payable will be the same as currently exists, using mechanisms described in the Acquisition of Land Act 1967.

Native title issues have also been considered. The Bill contains provisions to properly deal with any claims which may arise. Claims may be dealt with under the Native Title (Queensland) Act 1993. In summary, this Bill delivers exactly what would be achieved using existing legislation but, significantly, it removes the potential for costly and unnecessary delays.

Debate, on motion of Mr Elder, adjourned.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. D. E. McCAULEY (Callide—
Minister for Local Government and Planning)
(11.40 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend legislation about local government, and for other purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill and Explanatory Notes presented and Bill, on motion of Mrs McCauley, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. D. E. McCAULEY (Callide—
Minister for Local Government and Planning)
(11.41 a.m.): I move—

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

It gives me pleasure to introduce this Bill which deals with a number of very important issues. The Bill puts in place an entirely new process for the review of local government external boundaries and electoral arrangements which means the office of Local Government Commissioner is no longer required. The Bill sets out a better process for reviewing the external boundaries and electoral arrangements of local governments. The independent Electoral Commissioner of Queensland will now be responsible for conducting the reviews, assisted by qualified review commissioners as and when the need arises. These commissioners will be appointed by the Governor in Council to a standing panel. The Local Government Association of Queensland must be consulted prior to a person's initial appointment as a review commissioner. That appointment can be up to three years and there is scope for reappointment.

Review commissioners are not intended to work on a full-time basis. They only undertake their role when the Minister makes a reference on a reviewable local government matter to the Electoral Commissioner and it is decided that review commissioners should form part of the commission. Once the decision is made that the commission is to include one or more review commissioners, it is then up to the Electoral Commissioner to select the requisite number from the standing panel. Once the commission has made its

determination and reported to the Minister, it ceases, and the review commissioners have no further role until they are appointed to a commission to carry out another review. The extent to which review commissioners are used will depend on the nature of the references given by the Minister. For major references that involve looking at significant changes to external boundaries, a number of review commissioners are likely to be appointed. In the case of minor references that do not involve complex issues, the scope is there for the Electoral Commissioner to deal with the matter as a single-member commission.

Given the matters to be examined by a local government electoral and boundaries review commission, the Public Service Act is also to be amended by the Bill to include the review commissioners in the list of exempt term appointees because their role is equivalent to that of the Electoral Commissioner. The matters they are dealing with require them to act independently and to be seen to act independently.

Another fundamental change from the current provisions of the Local Government Act is that the commission makes the final determination, which cannot be rejected by the Minister. It is only in the area of implementation that the Government has a discretion. The implementation issues are spelt out in the Act and include the apportionment of assets and liabilities, which existing local laws should apply to the area being transferred, etc.

The Bill contains provisions for the constitution of a special local government electoral and boundaries review commission to undertake the redistribution of ward boundaries for Brisbane if this is necessary before a triennial election. It will now be possible for a reference to be issued that involves consideration of a change in the external boundaries of the city and also any necessary adjustments to ward boundaries if that change is to proceed. However, compliance with the quota of electors for each councillor and the margin of allowance of 10 per cent will still apply.

Apart from the special procedures for a redistribution of Brisbane wards, the Bill provides three ways for dealing with reviewable local government matters and the minimum process to be undertaken for each one. Firstly, there are major reviews, such as those which could result in the abolition, creation or amalgamation of local government areas as well as other major boundary adjustments.

These reviews require public notification of proposed changes and time for the lodgment of submissions from interested parties. The Minister may specify that a reference is to be treated as a major reference. If such action is not taken, it is up to the Electoral Commissioner to decide if a reference should be treated this way. A reference to review external boundaries that could also result in a change to Brisbane's ward boundaries must always be treated as a major reference.

Secondly, the Bill provides that a reference may be treated as a minor reference. These types of references could result in minor adjustments to external boundaries, electoral divisions or other electoral arrangements. Instead of undertaking a comprehensive review process, the streamlined procedures will enable consultation to occur with the affected local governments, any affected land-holders and other people who are directly affected. However, if it becomes apparent to a commission after it has received responses from those it directly consulted that there are wider ramifications, the commission may decide to upgrade the reference and treat it as a major reference with a full public consultation process.

Thirdly, affected local governments and landowners who have reached agreement among themselves on a proposed change to external boundaries will be able to apply directly to the Electoral Commissioner. These very minor external boundary adjustments can be dealt with by the Electoral Commissioner sitting as a single-member commission and do not require a reference from the Minister or a public consultation process.

I will now mention how referendums fit into the review process. A referendum must be held for a proposal to create or abolish a local government area or to amalgamate local government areas. It would be held after a commission had given public notice of a proposed amalgamation and still considered the amalgamation should occur following an examination of the submissions received. There is also discretion for a commission to decide to hold a referendum on proposals for making adjustments to external boundaries. A referendum question is approved if a majority of electors who take part vote "Yes" for the question. However, if the affected area is broken up into voting areas, the referendum question is only approved if a majority of electors in each voting area support the "Yes" case. Because of the complex circumstances that could apply in the case of an amalgamation or the creation of a new local

government, it is not possible to specify in the legislation who should participate in a referendum and whether voting areas are needed. The range of possibilities is almost infinite. Therefore these decisions can only be made once a specific proposal is put forward by a commission.

The outcome of a compulsory referendum determines whether a proposal for the creation or abolition of local government areas or an amalgamation will be implemented. If the commission's proposals are not supported at the referendum, the commission cannot make a determination that the changes are to proceed. It is possible that such changes could be rejected at a referendum because of local issues, despite there being strong overall public interest reasons for them to occur. For example, there may be a council experiencing extreme financial difficulties to the point where its viability can no longer be sustained. If a reference was given and it was proposed to amalgamate the council with an adjoining local government area, a referendum would have to be held. If the proposal was to be approved by the electors in each local government area, the change could not proceed if rejected by a majority of electors in one area. They could inherit substantial debts and a poor standard of infrastructure. Rates may also have to rise to remedy the situation and improve the living conditions of people in the run-down area. Even a significant offer of additional State financial assistance might not affect the outcome. The Bill then permits Parliament to have a final say if a mandatory referendum is not carried. If good public policy reasons clearly exist for proceeding with the proposal, the Legislative Assembly could request the Governor in Council to make a regulation to implement the proposal.

Where an adjustment of local government external boundaries is proposed and the commission has exercised its discretion to conduct a referendum to gauge opinion, the result of the referendum would not be binding on the commission. Although it would not be binding, the commission would have to seriously consider the referendum result before making a decision to go in a different direction. Public confidence in the review process depends on the commissioners exercising sound judgment. It is not possible to legislate to say that some external boundary change proposals require a compulsory referendum while for others a referendum is optional. The variety of circumstances that could arise in practice means the decision on whether to hold a referendum can only be made in the light of a

specific proposal and the circumstances surrounding it. The commissioners therefore have to exercise sound judgment in deciding which external boundary change proposals should be the subject of a discretionary referendum.

The Bill contains a range of other amendments to the Local Government Act and the City of Brisbane Act. The most critical ones that relate to the long-term future directions of the local government system deal with National Competition Policy. In July 1996, Cabinet approved the release of a policy statement on National Competition Policy and Queensland local government. The statement was developed in conjunction with a State/local government working group on NCP and outlines the application of the competitive neutrality reforms. These reforms require the removal of the advantages and disadvantages that local government businesses derive by virtue of Government ownership. They only apply to activities involving the trade in goods or services and not the social or regulatory activities of local governments.

Competitive neutrality reforms facilitate better decision making because the true costs and the level of performance of the businesses will be much more transparent. The reforms also promote productivity gains which will flow to consumers and industry in the form of better services and lower prices. I might add that contrary to what Bill Ludwig and a number of mayors and other ill-informed people might say, the reforms do not involve privatisation or the compulsory tendering out of any local government activities. Those are furrphies being pushed by people for their own ends. There is also no requirement to implement the reforms unless the benefits outweigh the costs.

The policy statement defined significant business activities as those which have a current annual expenditure in excess of \$5m in 1992-93 terms—classified as type 1 and type 2 business activities depending upon their size. Seventeen local governments were identified in the statement with significant business activities that are above these thresholds. The Bill applies the first stage of the competitive neutrality reforms to those local governments. They are the largest councils in the State and include Brisbane, Gold Coast, Townsville, Logan and Ipswich. The relevant business activities are their garbage, water and sewerage services—depending upon their size—and Brisbane's public transport service. These local governments have to carry out public benefit assessments by 30 June 1997 to determine

whether the benefits outweigh the costs of either corporatising, commercialising or applying full cost pricing to the nominated activities.

My department, in conjunction with Queensland Treasury and the State/local government working group, is finalising the guidelines for conducting a public benefit assessment. The guidelines have a local government flavour but will be consistent with those that apply to the assessment of State Government business activities. An issues paper on enabling legislation for local government owned corporatisations was released for public comment last month. Work is also under way on a commercialisation and full cost pricing framework.

Legislation is expected to be introduced into Parliament early next year to enable local governments to take the results of their public benefit assessments and to apply these reforms. Under the policy statement, the initial target completion date for those local governments implementing corporatisation, commercialisation or full cost pricing reforms is July 1998.

Queensland will be eligible for Commonwealth "competition payments", subject to meeting the timetable for the implementation of the reforms in the policy statement. The State Government has already agreed in principle to allocate a proportion of these payments to local governments undertaking the reforms. The State Government has also agreed that if a local government corporatises a significant business activity and that makes the activity subject to State taxes, an amount equivalent to those taxes would be payable to the local government that owns the corporate entity. It has also been agreed that amounts equivalent to State debt guarantee fees would also be retained by the relevant local government. In effect, there would be no additional payment of taxes to the State Government because a local government corporatises an activity. The Bill reflects these principles.

Strong approaches have been made to the Commonwealth to have them adopt the same approach as the State Government. Tax equivalent regimes should apply rather than the transfer of any additional funds from one level of Government to another. If State business activities are corporatised, they are protected in this way from Commonwealth taxes. We will continue to argue for similar protection for local governments and an early resolution of this issue.

The Bill also contains a number of important amendments relating to local government elections. It sets the date for the next triennial elections for Brisbane City Council as 15 March 1997—the same date that is being fixed under the Local Government Act for the elections of all other local governments. Action has also been taken to declare that the Rosalie Shire will have no electoral divisions for the 1997 triennial elections and will remain undivided unless an Electoral and Boundaries Review Commission redivides the shire. The existing divisions of the shire are outside the margin of allowance for the quota of electors and the council does not support the final recommendation of the Local Government Commissioner on how its area should be divided.

Additional amendments have been included in the Bill to clarify or improve the practical application of the local government election procedures. For example, further amendments have been made to deal with the issue that arose last August on whether or not councillors had to live in the electoral divisions they represented. The proposed amendments not only retain the principle that councillors need not live in their divisions, they also provide assistance to returning officers in dealing with this issue. However, the amendments also make it clear that if a person lives in the area of the local government and is an elector for an electoral district or a part of an electoral district included in the area on the cut-off day for compilation of the voters roll for a by-election, the person can nominate for the by-election—provided of course they suffer no other disqualifications from office. The nomination form to be signed by the returning officer accepting the nomination now reflects this principle.

Provision has also been made to widen the discretion of the chief executive officer of a council to appoint another person as the returning officer for an election. The Bill clarifies the procedure to be followed to contract out responsibility for the conduct of the elections. A number of other electoral amendments provide for greater consistency with revised procedures under the Electoral Act. For example, the procedure for taking action against non-voters has been amended in line with the State requirements. The provisions in the Electoral Act dealing with special grounds for deciding that a person is not properly nominated have also been incorporated in the Bill. For instance, a returning officer could decide not to accept a nomination if the person has changed their

name to include the word "informal". The Bill also clarifies that a registered political party can only nominate a person to fill a vacancy if the vacating councillor at the time of candidature had been endorsed on the nomination form by a registered political party.

Other electoral amendments relate to the introduction of tear-off declarations for declaration envelopes, clarification that the local government is to meet the cost of elections in its area, alternative addresses to which postal votes can be sent and powers of delegation by electoral officers. The Bill also contains a number of other miscellaneous amendments to the Local Government Act and the City of Brisbane Act. For instance, it clarifies that local governments may apply utility charges for services such as water supply to parts of one or more financial years. It also clarifies that differing charges may be levied for differing periods in one or more years and how meters may be read if the reading does not occur on the previously nominated day. Many local governments that use water meters charge for water usage on the basis of periods which do not coincide with the financial year. This practice commenced under the old Local Government Act. Legal opinion obtained by the Ombudsman and the Local Government Association indicates such a charge is not in accordance with the current Act. However, it is not possible for local governments to read all meters at 30 June each year.

With the transition of more local governments to user-pays systems, it is increasingly important they are given the flexibility to adopt varying charging procedures appropriate to their local circumstances. The Brisbane City Council is satisfied that its current utility charging arrangements meet the requirements of the City of Brisbane Act. However, the council requested an amendment to that Act to provide the additional flexibility being given to other local Governments in setting volume based utility charges.

The draft Bill also validates the fixed use component of utility charges for water made by the Livingstone Shire Council for the 1993-94 financial year in relation to water consumers in the Capricorn Coast area. The Livingstone Shire Council levied a base charge for water in 1993-94 along with an excess charge. This was intended to apply from 1 July 1993 to the date of a meter reading in April 1994, but neither the Budget resolution nor the wording on the rate notice made this clear.

The council then charged on a usage basis at the rate of \$1 per kilolitre for the

period from April 1994 to July 1994 and for subsequent three monthly periods with a minimum charge of \$390 per financial year. This process resulted in an argument that charges were levied twice in respect of the period from the meter reading in April 1994 to 30 June 1994. The Ombudsman recommended the Livingstone Shire Council should make a refund to each user for the amount apparently charged twice. If the council was to make this refund and still balance its budget, it would have to raise additional revenue equal to the amount refunded plus any administrative costs. The effect on a person who was a ratepayer at the time of the charge and is still a ratepayer is likely to be a refund largely offset by an additional levy.

Because of the complexity over the issue of refunds and as most ratepayers pay the same amount or a lower amount each year than what would have been paid if there had been no change in 1993-94 to the council's charging scheme, the Bill contains a provision validating the charges made in that year. However, I made it clear to the Livingstone Shire Council that I do not like having to bring such legislation into Parliament—particularly where a more considered approach on their part in the first place might have resolved the matter. It is now up to the council to adequately explain its actions to the community and no doubt they will be judged appropriately at the local government elections next March. The Livingstone Shire Council should also act quickly to mend its relationship with the Ombudsman.

The Bill also clarifies certain provisions dealing with interest accrued on unpaid rates, the recovery of overdue rates and incentives for the early payment of rates. The latter amendment has been incorporated into the City of Brisbane Act. Because a review is under way of the Art Unions and Public Amusements Act, the provisions that allow local governments to run a lottery to encourage earlier payment of rates will expire on 30 June 1998. This will enable the offering of such incentives to then be picked up in the new Art Unions and Public Amusements Act.

The Bill also extends the application of certain provisions in the Local Government Act which are due to expire. The power for local governments to make local laws to authorise council officers to enter any place to seize a dangerous dog has been extended to allow an evaluation of the provisions to be completed. A provision which enables local governments to make local laws for the purpose of prohibiting or regulating the

construction and maintenance of levee banks has also been extended pending the development of new legislation for the management of the State's natural resources. Under the Local Government Act, all local governments are to review their local laws for redundant provisions by 25 March 1997. The draft Bill extends the deadline for completion of the current local law review to 30 June 1999.

The Bill also clarifies that local law policies not only bind the local government but also the community—provided the local law expressly states that a local government may make a local law policy and the local law contains relevant enforcement provisions in relation to the local law policy. This was always believed to be the case. However, some uncertainty has arisen as a result of legal advice provided to the department. Furthermore, the Bill allows the Minister to exempt certain local governments from the requirement to develop and administer an equal employment opportunity management plan. Such an exemption could only be made in accordance with criteria fixed by regulation.

The Bill also clarifies that local governments may make superannuation contributions as part of salary sacrificing arrangements for their senior executive officers. I hope to see these provisions extended to elected officials next year.

Given the size of the Bill and the wide variety of issues of importance to local government that it addresses, consultation occurred with a range of bodies including the Local Government Association, Brisbane City Council, Institute of Municipal Management, Local Government Superannuation Board, Ombudsman's Office, Local Government Commissioner, Electoral Commissioner and the Queensland Treasury. I want to thank all those people who contributed to the development of the Bill and in providing their comments on such short notice. The Bill reflects many of the comments that were made. Thanks also to my departmental officers for their hard work in this regard. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Mackenroth, adjourned.

PRIVILEGE

Queensland Building Tribunal Annual Report

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (12.01 p.m.): I rise on a matter of privilege. Earlier, I rose in relation to a

ministerial statement made by the Minister for Public Works and Housing in relation to the annual report of the Queensland Building Tribunal. The statement that the Minister made was three sentences long. He said that he had allowed an extension of time for the Queensland Building Tribunal to submit its annual report. At that time, I mentioned that members had a copy of that report. I had a copy of it sent to me in the mail. Here it is. It is the Queensland Building Tribunal annual report for July 1995 to June 1996. As it is quite apparent from what the Minister said earlier in his ministerial statement that he has misled the House, particularly as the report should have been tabled in the Parliament by 31 October, I move—

"That the matter be referred to the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee."

Ms BLIGH (South Brisbane) (12.03 p.m.): I second the motion before the House. The ministerial statement makes it clear that the Queensland Building Tribunal was required to submit that report by 31 October. I have certainly had my copy of that document since at least 25 October. Therefore, it was in existence long before the required date for submission. That is not what the Minister said this morning in his statement to the House. The question for the House and for the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee is whether there was a misleading and whether the misleading was deliberate. In my view, there are a number of things in the Building Tribunal's report which the Minister deliberately wanted to conceal from the Parliament and the people.

Hon. R. T. CONNOR (Nerang—Minister for Public Works and Housing) (12.05 p.m.): First of all, I shall give members a bit of background as to what happened. As I understand it, a draft report was sent to my department. The department has informed me that the problem was that the Queensland Building Tribunal failed to get its financial statements audited. I have been informed that the Auditor-General did not audit the financial statements of the Building Tribunal. On that basis, it was not a report. It was not complete; therefore, it was not a report. There were also other considerations in relation to it. I have a letter coming—

Mr Mackenroth interjected.

Mr CONNOR: I will tell the honourable member in a minute. I sent a letter to the Queensland Building Tribunal, and I am getting a copy of that letter brought to the

House now. I am trying to get it here as fast as I can.

Ms Bligh: I bet you are.

Mr CONNOR: Yes, I am. It is all legitimate. I might add that not only is it legitimate but, as the department has told me, it is what I am required to do as a result of section 45KB(2) of the Financial Administration and Audit Act. I am acting on my department's advice as to what I am required to do under that Act.

The other matter is this. The Queensland Building Tribunal made statements in that draft report which were considered by the Legal and Contractual section of my department to be inappropriate to be in an annual report.

Mr Mackenroth: You are censoring the report.

Mr CONNOR: I am not censoring anything. We have not censored anything. The Legal and Contractual section report advised sending the draft report back to the Queensland Building Tribunal and informing it of its obligations under the Act. According to Legal and Contractual, that report simply did not comply with the Act. Do Opposition members know John Scrivens? According to the Legal and Contractual section of the Department of Public Works and Housing, that report did not comply.

As I said, very shortly I will have here a letter that has been prepared by the Legal and Contractual section of my department. Very shortly, that letter will be here. I am quite happy to supply the Opposition with a copy of exactly what was said to the Queensland Building Tribunal. If Opposition members will give me the opportunity to supply that, I will be very happy to do that. As I said, that letter should be here very shortly. I am doing my best to keep members informed. This matter was brought to my attention only yesterday. I understand that the Building Tribunal had breached certain aspects—

Mr Milliner: This is your responsibility.

Mr CONNOR: It is an authority. It comes under the Queensland Building Services Authority Act, as I understand it. It has a responsibility to report.

I might add that I think it is important to recall something else that happened under the previous Minister. Members may recall that the previous Minister is the honourable member for Chatsworth. Under that Minister, an annual report was not compiled for three years. As I understand it, between 1992 and 1995, it put out only one report—a combined

report of three years. If the honourable member for Chatsworth wants to take that to the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee—he was the Minister at that time. I am sure that the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee would be very interested to know why there was only one report that covered three years. Perhaps I should be moving an amendment to the motion that, in effect, the previous Minister should also be referred to the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee in relation to why the Queensland Building Tribunal put in only one annual report in three years. People who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

I am doing my best to live up to my obligations under the Act. As I said, that letter should be here very shortly. If the Leader of Opposition Business wants to give me a bit of time, I would be very happy to get that letter to him. I have been to my office. A copy of that letter is on its way over here now. If the member is happy to postpone this discussion for a very short time, I would be happy to get that letter to him. Would he be happy to do that?

Mr Mackenroth interjected.

Mr CONNOR: Yes, as soon as I sit down, the member will bring the debate to an end.

I am trying to restore some sanity to the House. This is the fourth time that the member for Chatsworth has moved a motion referring me to the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee. He has failed three times. Each time totally frivolous matters have been involved. The member for Chatsworth may have nothing better to do than present issues to the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee, but I am trying to run a department. Trying to send frivolous matters to the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee is totally inappropriate action to take. If the member has nothing better to do, that is fine, but I have: I am trying to get on with running my department.

Mr Mackenroth interjected.

Mr CONNOR: As to the matter that the member mentioned in his interjection—I mentioned earlier today that the member was misleading the House.

Mrs EDMOND: I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, have mercy. This is tedious repetition.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Laming): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr CONNOR: He could have mercy on me by giving me an opportunity to obtain that letter, but he will not.

Mr Hamill: You are trying to filibuster.

Mr CONNOR: He would also be saving the time of the House if he were to do that. However, that is his decision and not mine.

In relation to the other matter raised by the member for Chatsworth in an interjection, members may recall that this morning, when he rose on a matter of privilege, the member for Chatsworth maintained that I had said that 7,500 documents were involved. He did not read further through that letter and find that that was the number discovered so far and that the process was still continuing.

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (12.12 p.m.): The Minister asked me to have mercy on him. I really am trying to have mercy on him: I am trying to bury him and get him off the front bench. I think that that is the best I could do. As to the matter that I raised to be referred to the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee—the Minister made a three-sentence statement that he had extended the time for the submission of the annual report, when an annual report had been sent to me. If the Minister had other matters that he wished to raise, he should have informed the Parliament of that this morning and not simply have made a statement. What is even worse is that he then went on to say, basically, that there are other matters that he wants changed in the annual report. Ministers do not change annual reports that are sent to them by bodies that are under their control. The annual reports of those bodies are——

Mr CONNOR: I rise to a point of order. The member is misleading the House. What I said quite clearly was that I was informed that the Auditor-General had not signed off the financial statements. I now have the letter fully informing Mr Cotterell——

Ms BLIGH: I rise to a point of order. The Minister is not making a point of order. That letter has no relevance to the point of order that the Minister is taking on the member for Chatsworth.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister has made his point of order. The House is aware that the letter is in the House.

Mr MACKENROTH: The issue is that the Minister did mislead the Parliament this morning. This morning I raised the matter of exaggeration. The Minister said that this is the fourth occasion that I have moved a motion referring him to the Members' Ethics and

Parliamentary Privileges Committee. This is the third occasion that I have sought for him to be referred to the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee.

Mr ROBERTSON: I rise to a point of order. I ask the Minister to have the courtesy of providing all members with a copy of the letter that he just handed to the member for Gladstone.

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

Motion agreed to.

DRUGS MISUSE AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 30 October (see p. 3657).

Mr BARTON (Waterford) (12.16 p.m.): In rising to speak to the Drugs Misuse Amendment Bill, I point out at the outset that the Opposition shares the concerns of the Government about the proliferation and use of new designer drugs, particularly the one that has come to attention in recent weeks known as Fantasy or GHB. We have seen in the past several weeks just how dangerous this particular drug can be. We support the Government in its action to ensure that the drug is made illegal and made illegal as soon as possible. I state very clearly, in the strongest possible terms, that we share the concern of the Government about the risk to young people. When we are literally only one day away from the beginning of Schoolies Week, it is absolutely essential that this action be taken now. I, in common with the Minister, was wondering whether we would ever reach the point of debating this Bill.

Opposition members understand that young people seek new experiences. However, sadly the truth is that, when it comes to drugs, seeking those new experiences can sometimes lead to death. We all know of examples of experimentation or tragic mistakes of young people leading to unfortunate deaths.

We agree with the Government. I say very strongly that this legislation needs to be passed today so that, if information is correct that large quantities of the designer drug Fantasy will arrive from interstate for Schoolies Week, we have a demonstration from this Parliament that it is our intention that that drug be made illegal so that the Police Service is in a position to act.

The events on the Gold Coast certainly did highlight the nature of the problem. I am

sure that, in common with me, most members of this Parliament would have believed that, if designer drugs of that nature did exist and were being used, those drugs would be illegal and police would be in a position to act. When I heard about the events at the rave club on the Gold Coast and the fact that police were suspicious of actions at that particular rave club, my first response was to feel that police had not acted properly in not taking action to close it down. Of course, subsequently we all discovered that the police did not have the legal powers to do that, because at that time the drug was not illegal. That event several weeks ago showed just how easy it is for people to put their lives at risk, by taking action that, at the time, may be technically legal. We must ensure that the people who sell potentially deadly drugs at dance parties and rave parties are stopped. We must do it today.

I have found it amazing that there could be clubs that, in fact, sell only water. Clearly, if people are promoting such a club, even if they are not the sellers of the drugs themselves but are promoting and organising a club that provides only water, I suggest that they know full well what is happening at their establishments. They know full well that drugs are being sold and taken on their premises. I think that they are equally as responsible as the people who actually sell the drugs. Those people are no better than the drug dealers. The police must be given the clear capacity to stop the people who engage in those activities. The Opposition believes that this Bill does that, and it will support it. However, I must say that Opposition members did and still do have some concerns about some matters contained in the Bill about which I will speak shortly. I may ask a couple of questions of the Minister later to clarify some points contained in the Bill.

From reading the Alert Digest of the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee, Opposition members also appreciate that the Bill may offend at least one important principle of good legislation—the fact that regulations will not necessarily pass away automatically after 10 years. Again, the Opposition's view is that in this special case the Parliament needs to say, "Yes, we have taken note of that, but we are prepared to let the Bill go through the way it is." I would hate to think that because we did not take action and convert the Schedules of the Act into regulations a whole range of dangerous drugs would automatically cease to be illegal through some slip-up at some point in the future.

The Opposition also agrees that it is absolutely necessary to convert the Act's

Schedules into schedules of regulations because, as was demonstrated in this latest case in relation to Fantasy, people are developing new drugs. If those people were to get off on technicalities because of the time that it took to bring amending legislation before this Parliament and have it passed and proclaimed, then we would not be doing the right thing and what is in the best interests of Queenslanders, particularly people who may take those drugs believing that they are not doing anything illegal. The Opposition does not take it lightly that important public issues are removed from statutes to subordinate legislation. It believes that that particular legislative principle is important. However, this is a special case. The Opposition believes that if we fail to undertake this measure we would leave identified, dangerous and potentially deadly drugs in the community.

The Opposition will support the provisions of the Bill relating to the publication of recipes. However, it has expressed some concerns publicly about that matter. Although the Opposition supports that provision, it still has some concerns. It is concerned that those provisions may result in some young people receiving tough prison sentences—and they can be very long prison sentences—for doing nothing more than accessing the Internet, printing out a recipe and passing it on to someone else to demonstrate what is on the Internet. Of course, the Opposition is aware that young people have been able to find the plans for how to make nuclear weapons on the Internet. This is the era in which we live—there is a large amount of information on the Internet that cannot be regulated effectively. I would hate to think that some young person who was scrolling through the Internet could find a recipe for a designer drug, print it out, take it to school or take it to his or her club or show his or her workmates, and suddenly find that he or she is facing a very tough prison sentence.

The Opposition takes some comfort from the words that the Minister used in his second-reading speech. He stated very clearly that it was not the Government's intention for that to occur—that what the Government was seeking to do was to catch up with the people who are passing on the recipes for drugs to make a profit, or who are using the recipes to promote the manufacture and sale of dangerous drugs. I will not read the Minister's words; they appear very clearly in *Hansard*. The Opposition has been influenced by the fact that the Minister has said very clearly that that is not the Government's intention. However, it wants the people who are involved in manufacturing

designer drugs and the people who are involved in either selling the recipes or passing on the recipes to other people to manufacture the drugs and who deal in drugs to be nailed. The Opposition takes comfort from the Minister's speech.

This is not a Bill about which the Opposition intends to hold a lengthy debate; it will save its energy to debate Bills about which it has some very real differences with the Government. However, I will make some brief comments about some of the clauses during the Committee stage. The Opposition supports the need to ban this newly discovered group of drugs, which have demonstrated already how potentially dangerous they are. It supports the change in the Act to allow newly identified dangerous drugs in the future to be speedily made illegal by the conversion of the Schedules in the Act to regulations. The Opposition supports the need to punish those people who publish recipes in circumstances in which they are seeking to proliferate drug use, but not for other purposes. The Opposition supports this Bill.

Mrs EDMOND (Mount Coot-tha) (12.27 p.m.): As my colleague just said, the Opposition supports the Bill. It is deeply concerned—and I think that it shares that concern with the Government—about the recent tragic drug-related incident involving several young people at a rave party at the Gold Coast. That was caused by their exposure to a dangerous drug with the street name Fantasy.

It is of concern to me that increasingly we are seeing a manipulation of chemical formulas just to evade the law. It is for that reason that the Opposition supports this legislation in the direction that it has taken. The Health Minister, along with the Police Minister, have quite rightly been in the media to respond to the issue as a matter of great public importance. As the mother of a Year 12 student who is just about ready to go off on Schoolies Week, I was extremely concerned to read in the paper that there has been a huge boost in the supplies of drugs on the Gold Coast and other areas to take advantage of kids. I think they are really a low form of life—to take advantage of kids who are letting off steam.

It is important that those types of drugs be scheduled as dangerous drugs so that it is quite clear under the law to those who seek to sell or produce those substances that they are breaking the law. Similarly, it is important that young people and other adults who are willing

to take up those sorts of drugs, or experiment with them on a regular basis, know that they are breaking the law and are almost certainly taking a major risk with their own life. However, the absence of a harm-minimisation approach by this Government to the existence of this newly discovered dangerous drug in our community, considering its apparent popularity owing to its street status as a designer drug, is very disappointing. It is a problem that, in making people aware, one is often making the drug better known to those young people.

Having heard from the Minister for Health about this serious drug issue, I could not help casting my mind back to some of the puerile press releases put out by the now Minister for Health when he was in Opposition bagging health promotion and other drug awareness related programs, which he suddenly tells us that he supports. This is a conversion of Pauline dimensions. I remember one particular press release that the Minister put out bagging the Goss Government for its commitment to provide a needle exchange service on the Gold Coast. I think the now Minister referred to it as a needle exchange supermarket and implied that this harm-minimisation approach was some sort of communist plot. He really is very keen to find reds under the bed. I thought that the old Cold War had long gone, but not for Mr Horan. I think he used to refer to these health promotion and community-based initiatives as a waste of money and time.

If the Minister stopped and thought about it for long enough, he would realise that a lot of those promotions keep people out of hospitals and save lives. They also save the lives of innocent drug-free people, too. There is more to health promotion than sending out pictures of the Minister, or press releases saying that the Minister is concerned. While the Health Minister was big-noting himself about how serious he is about preventing serious illness or death, which in the case of our young people is often the result of drug use, I had a look at some of the types of programs in regard to which he has been cutting funding.

Bearing in mind that I have only looked at programs, aimed at preventing young people from taking drugs, which were sponsored by the Queensland Health Promotion Council, I want the Parliament to know that, while the Minister is promoting himself on the basis of his sincere concern about the serious issue of drugs, he has cut funding to the Health Promotion Council and, therefore, to the work that it is doing. He has also scrapped a vast number of health prevention programs from his department by gutting the Health

Advancement Branch, essentially because those were initiatives of Labor in Government.

Let us look at the sorts of programs sponsored through the grants issued by the council just in the area of drug awareness and injury prevention that the Minister thinks are not worth the money: drug and alcohol coordination with the Queensland Police Service; "Rumble in the Jungle", a unique skill-based initiative for young people; the Southern Zone Population Health Unit, which is reducing youth access to tobacco through community involvement; the south coast region which has established a healthy school communities program; GAIN Incorporated, whose theme is, "Don't drink, pop or drop"; the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's multilingual, intravenous drug users brochure, which is aimed at ensuring safer needle and syringe usage and disposal; and the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, which provides a drink-driving rehabilitation program for Wide Bay. That is just a small sample of some of the grants issued by the Health Promotion Council when Jim Elder was the Minister for Health and it gives people an idea of the types of programs that we are talking about. I am sure that any reasonable person would acknowledge that these worthy programs should be above political point scoring.

Here we have a small sample of those programs which promote healthy lifestyles for our young people and discourage drug use in a practical and hands-on way, which is clearly what is needed on the Gold Coast and elsewhere. The Minister is big on platitudes, lip service, secret deals, half-baked promises and stolen rhetoric that he either does not understand or honestly supports. However, he is very low on action and support for the sorts of drug prevention programs needed to combat drug experimentation and drug dependency in our local communities, particularly in our youth communities. If one pretends that something is not there and it is not discussed, it does not go away. Young people need to be aware of the risks that they are taking. If the Government thinks that banning the drug Fantasy will fix the drug problems facing Queenslanders, it has a lot to learn.

My criticism of the Government stems from my ardent belief in the importance of a whole-of-Government approach to fighting the prevalence of drugs in our community which takes a harm-minimisation focus seriously. Virtually all medical experts and law enforcers with experience in this field will say that prohibition on its own will not solve the

problem. The latest report into illicit drugs, conducted by the Victorian Premier's Drug Advisory Council in March of this year and headed up by well-known academic Professor Pennington, looked at the central issues in great detail and came up with many important recommendations for consideration.

Professor Pennington's report works on the premise that harm-minimisation drug strategies are essential. Prohibition to control drugs must be backed up with innovative measures aimed at delivering realistic programs to address the prevalence of drugs and drug usage as a societal problem. The Pennington report's argument that the prohibition approach nationally and internationally has been adhered to for long enough to produce any profoundly positive results but has failed to swing the tide of drug trafficking, production and consumption is very persuasive. Internationally, Australia and Sweden have been recognised as the most outstanding achievers in fighting the harmful effects of drug dependency due to a commitment to a multifaceted harm-minimisation approach on this issue. This model demands a serious commitment to health promotion, education and injury prevention strategies.

Given the Government's reactive and single-minded response to the serious incident at the Gold Coast involving the drug Fantasy, I am not confident that a comprehensive drug strategy to deal with the problems we are discussing in the House today has been worked through properly. I think that this is a knee-jerk reaction. It is a reactive reaction to a single issue rather than thinking about and working on a whole-of-Government strategy to attack this very real problem in our society today. The Health Minister in particular has failed to use this issue to highlight anything other than the need to ban the drug in question. I have no problem with banning that drug, but I think that it would have been equally appropriate for him to make some mention of the public health issues at stake here.

It is for this and other reasons that I have considerable reservations about the Government's decision to include in this legislation special provisions to give the Executive arm of Government special powers to add substances to the schedules of dangerous drugs. Quite clearly, the Government has a bit of a fetish for extending its Executive powers to suit its own agenda, and that is a concern to all on this side of the House. As I have said earlier, I accept the need for a more rapid response to situations

where there is clear manipulation of chemical formula just to dodge the existing laws.

The only person in this Government attempting to promote a harm-minimisation approach to drug awareness seems to be the Education Minister, Mr Quinn, who recently launched the book for schools called *Managing Drug Related Incidents—Suggestions for Schools*. I congratulate the Education Minister on taking this initiative. However, there seems to be a total policy vacuum on the part of some of the relevant Ministers in this Government on the issue. They seem to have a limited understanding of the fact that drugs in our community are a fact of life and, as a consequence of that, we need more than a one-pronged approach to the problem.

When the Minister for Education first came into this House, he was very concerned that drug-minimisation programs, drug-awareness programs and needle-exchange programs actually encouraged people to use drugs, particularly on the Gold Coast. As a result of some fairly strenuous persuasion on my part, he came along to an AIDS education day that we organised here at Parliament House for parliamentarians with the assistance of the AIDS groups and the Health Department to inform people realistically about the issues involved and about what harm-minimisation means. Harm-minimisation does not mean encouragement to use; it means trying to keep young people alive long enough to grow out of their habits. A lot of information and research proves that if these young people can be kept alive and healthy for a number of years, they actually grow through the process of using drugs and move on to a healthy, normal and productive life. The Minister for Education took on board the details that were made available to him that day and he grew out of that experience. It is good to see him supporting such programs.

The people of the Gold Coast want to see more support from the Government for practical, community-based responses to the serious issues posed by the prevalence of dangerous designer drugs which seem to be very popular at the moment. The member for Southport should be severely reprimanded for his irresponsible comments in relation to the Gold Coast drug incident. He said that people who take drugs like this should be responsible for paying for their own medical treatment, including emergency care. I wonder whether the member for Southport has considered that his foolish and ridiculous suggestion would mean that decisions about people's medical care might deny obese, cholesterol rich,

hypertensive, retired footballers who drink and smoke access to free health care in Queensland as well. They should also take responsibility. What is wrong with that? What is the difference?

I will not oppose this legislation, but I stress my real concern about the reactive approach taken by the Government in extending its powers to add substances to the schedule of dangerous drugs, considering its abuse of these sorts of powers on many other important issues. Again, my concern is that this is a reactive and single-minded approach without looking at all of the wider issues involved. With a cloud remaining over the Premier and the Police Minister's integrity and honesty in relation to the secret Police Union deal which was signed to shore up votes in the Mundingburra by-election, I am sure that all honourable members would forgive me for feeling somewhat apprehensive about giving the Government more Executive powers.

Ms SPENCE (Mount Gravatt) (12.39 p.m.): In common with my colleagues on this side of the House, I support the Bill, the major purpose of which is to add Fantasy, or GHB, to Schedule 2 on the list of dangerous drugs. I welcome this opportunity to debate the subject of illicit drugs. We do not often have that opportunity in the Parliament. In fact, in the seven years that I have been here, I think that there has been only one other drug-related Bill before the Parliament which gave us the opportunity to have a debate such as this.

Obviously, the use of dangerous drugs is one of the biggest problems we face in our society today. Therefore, it is disappointing that no Government members are taking the opportunity today to participate in this debate. That makes one suspect that Government members are either uninterested in the subject of drugs and the harm they do in our society or are too frightened to take a position either way on the subject of drugs.

This is no bidding war. We are all concerned about the dangers and harms that illicit drugs do to people in our society, particularly to the young people who use them. By talking about this issue, we as politicians should be educating ourselves about the problems and exploring some solutions. In supporting this Bill today, I believe that we are not really offering Queenslanders many solutions to the illegal drug problem. What we are doing today is really just yet again wielding the big stick and saying, "Drugs are bad. If you take them, we will punish you." We are not talking about, as my colleague

said, harm minimisation, or ways in which we can prevent people from harming themselves through drug use. We are not talking about education or any preventive measures. Basically, we are just saying, "We hope stiffer penalties will deter young people from using drugs." I do not happen to think they will.

Mr Woolmer: Mrs Spence—

Ms SPENCE: If the member opposite wants to participate in the debate, why does he not put his name on the speaking list? It is shameful that no Government members are interested enough in this issue to participate in the debate today.

There is a lack of public understanding about designer drugs. I suspect that people in the general community think that these drugs are being invented in factories and back alleys and are being sprung upon us. That is not the case. Designer drugs have been around in medical forms for a long, long time. The drug Fantasy, which we are outlawing today, has a medical purpose. It has been a laboratory manufactured drug since the 1930s. It is a drug that has been used as an anaesthetic in controlled doses. It has been medically used to prevent cerebral depression. It has been medically used in Europe to treat alcohol withdrawal symptoms. It is a powder and is a well-known drug in the medical community elsewhere.

In controlled and medically supervised surroundings, it is a useful drug. The danger with these sorts of drugs arises when they are produced in back streets without precautions and quality control and are introduced into nightclub scenes, as we have seen recently. I understand that the problem with the use of the drugs Fantasy and Ecstasy at dance party scenes is that the users dehydrate very quickly and thereby do themselves harm. In addition, the fact that they are undertaking immense levels of physical activity while using this drug also does them harm. These drugs are not as harmful if one keeps up one's fluid levels and does not participate in great levels of physical activity. There are messages that we can send to our young people about how to minimise harm to themselves when under the influence of these drugs.

I am a member of a group called the Australian Parliamentarians for Drug Law Reform. I am pleased to say that the group has representatives from every State in Australia. It includes politicians from all political persuasions, including Sir John Gorton, Professor Peter Baume, Don Chipp, Sir Rupert Hamer, Kevin Rizzoli, Joan Kirner and over 100 other politicians throughout Australia.

Membership of this group clearly does not indicate that one is a member of a radical fringe, is pro-drugs or pro-legalisation of drugs. However, members believe that the current policy of criminalisation in regard to illegal drugs does not work. Members believe that it is the duty and responsibility of politicians in this country to inform themselves and to talk about the issue of drug law reform—something that does not happen in Queensland. Members of this Government appear very reluctant to do that.

Members of the Australian Parliamentarians for Drug Law Reform believe that current drug policies cannot deal with excess crime, violence and health problems caused by prohibition. The lessons of history should serve us well. Laws did not stop people's thirst for alcohol in prohibitionist America, their participation in SP bookmaking in Australia or prostitution anywhere. Far from changing addictive behaviour, prohibition assists organised crime, encourages corruption in the criminal justice system, erodes civil liberties and increases the burden on taxpayers, who are not only experiencing property related drugs crimes but also being taxed to support increases in expenditure on prisons, courts and police.

Members of the group believe that this country can do better with less waste. Legalisation is not the only alternative. Different policies might make sense for different drugs. Many options are available, including decriminalising users only, permitting doctors to prescribe some drugs to addicts to undercut the black market, or shifting the allocation of anti-drug resources to focus mainly on treatment and prevention rather than on drug law enforcement. Some or all of these strategies are being practised in different parts of Australia. It would take a lot of finetuning and experimenting to get our approaches to the treatment of addiction right.

No-one can claim to know precisely what is best—neither the legalisation advocates nor the prohibition partisans. We all share concerns about the problems caused by drug abuse in our society, but we must also concern ourselves with the harms caused by our policies. Even though I am supporting this legislation today, I suspect that some harms will be associated with it.

As my colleague mentioned, when we threaten the big stick of very harsh penalties and prison sentences, instances arise such as the Anna Woods case in Sydney, in which a young girl died from taking Ecstasy. Her death was caused by her friends' failure to seek

medical attention. They were frightened that, had they sought medical attention, they would all have been subjects of a police investigation and perhaps been found guilty and received a stiff penalty. In imposing such penalties, we have to realise that there are negatives. If we do not educate our young people about what to do and whether they are going to be subjects of police investigations, they will in future fail to call for medical help when they should do so, and we will see more lives lost, such as in the case of Anna Woods.

It has been said that illegal drug trafficking may be the last bastion of free enterprise in Australia. Unencumbered by health regulations, safety laws, minimum wages and morality, illegal drug traffickers market drugs exactly as they please. As the market has increasingly demanded more and better drugs, so have the drug traffickers responded. Sure, we catch some traffickers and users. This legislation will no doubt do that. Then we will build more and better goals so that more of our young people can be accommodated. But in the meantime the social costs rise and the drug trade continues.

Let us not fool ourselves into believing that this legislation will stop the drug trade in Fantasy. It will continue. I hope the police do catch some of the peddlers of this drug, but I do not believe that just by making it illegal we will solve the problem. We have to have a multifaceted approach to the problem of illegal drugs. We have to have policies on harm minimisation. We have to have sensible debate and sensible education for our young people so that they do not want to involve themselves in the illicit drug trade. There is no better time for rational debate than the present. I believe that as legislators we should not be afraid of participating in the debate on drug law reform.

It saddens me to think that, in participating in debates like this, colleagues in this House think that it is smart to label people with silly names because they actually happen to have an opinion and happen to have thought about this subject. I think it will be a sign of maturity when each one of us can stand up and talk about the drugs issue, as they have done in Victoria. I congratulate Jeff Kennett on his courage in getting the Pennington commission going and debating the Pennington report. I think that process was very educative for Victorian parliamentarians and I would welcome that process in Queensland, because I believe when we can all get up and talk sensibly about the problem of drugs and how we might solve it, then we

will go a long way to actually solving the drug problem in this country and in this State.

I am happy to support this Bill. I believe that the Minister, like the members of the Opposition, is very concerned about the drug problem in our society and that he is doing all he can to find solutions to that problem.

Mrs BIRD (Whitsunday) (12.52 p.m.): I am pleased to participate in this debate. Along with the other members of the Opposition, I will be supporting the Bill. I do, however, need to say that while the Bill is necessary if only to classify this drug as illegal and legitimise a mechanism by which action can be brought against the peddlers of both lethal designer drugs and illegal and illicit drugs, I know—and I expect many others here know also—that it will do very little to alter the scene in which people peddle drugs and others continue to become addicts at an increasing rate.

It is curious that Queenslanders were so shocked by the recent events in which people outside a Gold Coast dance club needed life support and assistance. It is astonishing that so many people were shocked by these events. Perhaps that was because the victims were all in the same place at the same time. Perhaps it was because the reaction to this designer drug was different from that involving well-known drugs such as heroin and speed. But overdoses involving illegal drugs are a frequent occurrence. Every weekend such incidents occur. They have been occurring for a long, long time, and they are occurring with increasing frequency. Are we so out of touch—particularly in this place—with what is occurring out there that we are ignorant of the fact that every weekend Brisbane produces at least 8 or 10 overdoses or unreported cases of young people suffering from drug-induced hallucinations?

The tragedy of the events on the Gold Coast is not only that they occurred but also that so many parents are clearly not aware of the situation that exists, that society has a lamentable lack of knowledge of the various aspects—how, where and why—of what is the recreational lifestyle of a great many of our young people. Perhaps in this respect what occurred at the Gold Coast will force decision makers such as us and parents such as us to seek answers to these questions.

It is now very clear that the drug problem has reached all layers of our society. Young people take drugs for many reasons, and we must not comfort ourselves by saying that it is just a stage they are going through. Initially they may do it for reasons of peer pressure—to be part of a scene. More

innocently, they do it for curiosity. They do it because of insecurity—a sense of not belonging and an inability to cope with life. They may do it as an out from society after suffering psychological and/or physical abuse. They do it because of a lack of self-worth. But increasingly, and probably more importantly, young people become involved with drugs because of a very solvable problem for which we should be seeking answers: youth unemployment.

Firstly, it is part of the recreational culture of the unemployed to take drugs. To fill in time, drugs fit the bill. Secondly, there is the financial aspect. The appeal of being able to make lots of money as a distributor in the drug network is becoming far too great. Initially young people may intend to sell for a short time to make money to do something else and then get out. That does not work, or it rarely works. By the time their time is up to buy whatever they wanted to buy or to become involved in whatever they intended to do, they themselves have become addicted. In many cases, young people end up selling to feed their own addiction.

I am aware of a recent article in the paper about the Minister having treatment with Rohypnol. I want to tell him just how innocently that drug can affect our young people. Rowies, as Rohypnol is called, are one of the most popular drugs in the drug scene. Taken in abundance, rowies cause young people to reach a stage at which they are uncontrollable. This leads them to commit violent acts and do things that they would never consider doing under normal circumstances—things that are alien to their personality.

Last week, information came to me that two other drugs have become fairly prevalent in the Brisbane region. A crystalline form of cocaine, called crack, is now available in the city, as is ice. My colleague the member for Mount Gravatt just spoke about how we should be teaching our children to cope with situations as they arise. I understand that ice, if taken intravenously, is extremely dangerous. I understand that ice is now being sold in Brisbane as speed; therefore it is being injected and putting lives at risk. This is a serious situation. We desperately need to get this information out to young people. They must be informed. Add to this the already available legal and illegal drugs on the marketplace—and we have heard previously about the ability of young people to get legal drugs by visiting a number of doctors—and one starts to realise the time bomb and the pressure to conform that many of our youth are dealing with on a daily basis.

It is not my intention to paint a picture of rampant drug taking, but it is my view that the scene is well on the way to being out of control. It is time we stopped playing ostrich and dealt with the issue of drugs in our society. We must take responsibility for our own lack of knowledge. We are only too quick to blame rave parties, dance parties and other environments, but the reality is that we are facing the threat of designer drugs becoming part of our youth culture, especially for those people with risk-taking personalities. It is my belief that education, communication and honest information ad nauseam is the answer to dealing with young people taking drugs and to help them make sensible, balanced decisions about drug taking without becoming victims of psychological conditioning and/or pressure.

Recently in this place I launched a book titled *Help! I think my kid's on drugs*. This book was written by Chris Stone and Rowena Soloman. The authors come from very different backgrounds. Chris was once one of Australia's 10 most wanted criminals, with a chequered past of heroin and alcohol addiction and long prison terms. Rowena, who has worked with Drug Arm for many years, is a counsellor to gaol inmates and well known in the community as one of the best advisers in this capacity.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

Mrs BIRD: Before the luncheon adjournment, I was talking about a book I recently launched, *Help! I think my kid's on drugs*. That book was written by Chris Stone and Rowena Soloman, and it is aimed at empowering parents with the knowledge of what to do and when to do it. It enlightens us as parents and gives us that confidence on how to deal with drug situations as they arise. So impressed was I with both Chris and Rowena that I have arranged several seminars and workshops in my electorate for teachers, community workers, parents and interested people to attend. Our hope is that through these workshops and seminars we will empower the people in the electorate and attack the issue at a community level.

I am pleased to support the Bill. It had to be; nevertheless, we must not comfort ourselves that we have done our bit. We must aim for harm minimisation, a reduction in the supply of drugs and take a more reformist view on what is really happening outside in the community, and we must impart knowledge to our children on what to do should some situations arise.

Queensland rural communities are sadly lacking in support when it comes to rehabilitation centres. Support volunteer organisations do an excellent job, but the fact remains that local rehabilitation centres in metropolitan areas are of little benefit for those who are alienated from their family support. In many cases, family counselling is essential for successful recovery. The excuse that country areas do not have the numbers of victims to qualify for a service denies the true existence of the enormous problem.

Recovery is a long-term strategy, and occasionally there will be a fall back. We must have centre support for those occasions when young people slip back. Recognising that this Bill only identifies that drugs are dangerous and that it is not the solution to the problem, I am pleased to support the Bill and I thank the Minister for bringing it into the House.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon T. R. Cooper (Crows Nest—Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6, as read, agreed to.

Clause 7—

Mr BARTON (2.34 p.m.): I want to examine this clause which prohibits publishing instructions or recipes for designer drugs. I would like to make some comments and then I would ask the Minister to respond to them. During the second-reading debate, I talked about a concern held by a number of Opposition members that, while we agree with the provision essentially, this clause could lead to a number of young people being charged with a very serious offence that could potentially lead to a very long gaol term. I am concerned about those people who may, for example, trip over a recipe for a designer drug on the Internet. If people were distributing those recipes in any other way, we would probably have a harder attitude towards it, but all sorts of things do appear on the Internet. This clause, and even the Explanatory Notes, are written in the broadest possible terms to ensure that it includes people who are passing on recipes or instructions on how to make these designer drugs.

Clause 7 defines "publishing" and it states—

". . . exhibit and display to any person, whether the publication is made orally or in written, electronic or another form."

When it comes to electronic forms of publishing, if a person was accessing the Internet and that person found a recipe for a designer drug, it would appear that the terms "exhibit" and "display" could apply to that person if he or she simply got somebody else and said, "Come and have a look at this." Under that wording of the clause, that person would not even have to print out or technically pass on or publish that information.

For a while, I exercised my mind about how could we potentially amend this clause to make sure that it applies to the people who are publishing for the wrong reasons, those who are publishing because they want to pass on the information or because they are involved in the manufacture of these drugs. While I appreciate that that was what was intended, by including this catch-all clause there is the potential for over-zealous police officers in some circumstances charging people who have absolutely no intention of manufacturing or encouraging people to manufacture the drugs or to make profits out of them. I appreciate that this is a matter in which police officers will have to use a fair degree of discretion, but it does appear that this clause is written so broadly that it could even apply to somebody who simply had a recipe up on screen. A person may have inadvertently accessed a recipe for a drug and said to somebody else, "Come and look at this", or maybe that person rang a colleague and said, "Get into the Internet. I will tell you the access code. You will not believe what will come on screen; you will see a recipe or a set of instructions for a new designer drug."

I ask what the Minister's intention is for how police will act in relation to this matter, because I would hate to see a lot of young people get pegged in by a very broadly worded, catch-all clause. I know that this clause intends to catch the crooks who are trying to make money out of drugs, but it could catch some innocent people on the way through.

Mr COOPER: I am supposed to be at a Police Ministers Council meeting; I was a bit rushed and I neglected to thank all speakers in the debate. Before I address the member's concerns about the clause, I trust I can enjoy his indulgence to acknowledge the speakers in the debate. Thankfully, all members who contributed—the member for Waterford, the member for Mount Coot-tha, the member for Mount Gravatt and the member for Whitsunday—were extremely responsible in their response to the legislation. In one instance it was referred to as being a knee-jerk reaction, but it is not. There are many

schemes in place for drug education, but we can always do better. It is my intention to do better so that, when instances such as the extremely unfortunate incident at the Gold Coast arise, they can be dealt with. We could have left the legislation as it is and done nothing about it, but we wanted to make sure that we could change this legislation so that we could list dangerous drugs as they came on the scene. That is only one way in which we can address this drug problem.

I take on board and I agree with many of the comments made about drug education. We should become more enlightened and more understanding of young people. I do understand. I had four young children who survived the pressures of peer groups. It is far better to address these problems by education and compassion, rather than with a big stick approach. This legislation is not intended as a big stick. It is a big stick for the drug pushers and peddlers, but it is not aimed at the kids. It is to protect them as best we can from the dangers of being exposed to these drugs that we know are out there. Sometimes they are not aware of them, and sometimes they are and they want to experiment with them. In those cases, we must show the necessary compassion. I am sure every member in this place would prefer to do things that way.

I certainly welcome the support of the Opposition. It is a fact that the pushers and suppliers need to be called to account. As well, the 10-year automatic expiry period was mentioned in the Alert Digest, which was quite complimentary of this legislation. It would be wrong and, in my opinion, it would be a mistake if we allowed some of these dangerous drugs to fall off the end of the table at the end of 10 years if someone forgot that the regulation had to be renewed. Therefore, it is far better to allow them to remain there.

We should also be able to alter or at least add to that list immediately when a new drug comes onto the scene. But members should not forget that these matters can always be brought into this place for approval when the Parliament is sitting. If there was any disagreement about a drug put on the schedule, a motion for disallowance could be moved in this place. Therefore, any police who were getting a bit anxious or a bit active and wanted to push the law to its ultimate limit might find that the Parliament disallowed the inclusion of those substances that were put on the—

Mr Beattie: We're with you.

Mr COOPER: Yes, that is all right. I just wanted to explain all this. This Parliament

could decide whether or not those substances would be included on the schedule. If anyone acted improperly, then that person would be taking an enormous risk.

Members will note that section 13 has been amended to allow for this offence that we are talking about—publishing—to be dealt with by a magistrate. The maximum penalty in that case is two years. Two years is still a long sentence for a school child. The matter is in the hands of the magistrate. It is also the fact that police have a discretion not to prosecute young people who access recipes on the Internet. Obviously, that is a judgment that the police could make. Also, the Director of Public Prosecutions does not have to proceed with a prosecution. He or she has a discretion. I am pretty sure that we can cover young people who innocently access recipes on the Internet without a real intent. The main intent of this legislation is to make sure that we deal with those serious cases of people who are peddling and pushing drugs.

Clause 7, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 8 to 21, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 13 November (see p. 3989).

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—Leader of the Opposition) (2.45 p.m.): We fully support this matter being dealt with at this time. The Opposition will be supporting the Financial Administration and Audit Amendment Bill (No. 2) 1996. Our decision to support the amendment comes only after very detailed examination of its ramifications, because we also put great store in the recommendations of EARC in relation to the term of the Auditor-General.

I am pleased to advise the House that I have had discussions with Mr Barrie Rollason, the present Auditor-General, in relation to some specific concerns that I initially held about extending his term of office. There has also been correspondence between the Premier and myself on two occasions. Both the Premier and I have adopted the view, which is entirely proper, that the office of the

Auditor-General should be above politics and that any actions taken by this Parliament in relation to the term of the Auditor-General should be approached in a bipartisan way if, indeed, the integrity and independence of the office are to be safeguarded.

In reaching our decision to support the amendment, it was necessary to specifically consider the reports and recommendations of EARC and of the parliamentary EARC committee, which was, at the time, chaired by my colleague the Honourable Matt Foley, MLA, the shadow Attorney-General.

EARC specifically recommended a non-reviewable term of office for the Auditor-General. Section 51 (2) of the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1977 states that a person can be appointed Auditor-General for only one term, with the maximum limit being seven years. Mr Barrie Rollason was appointed by the Governor in Council on 17 December 1992 for a term of four years. Thus, his term comes to an end on 17 December this year. He possibly could have been appointed for a period of seven years. That would have been the maximum period at that time.

The policy on the term of office advocated by EARC and PEARC protects the independence of the office of the Auditor-General and should not be departed from without compelling reason. The specific recommendation for a non-reviewable term was clearly arrived at only after very detailed examination and was designed to ensure that pressures were not able to be brought to bear upon an Auditor-General. That is a very important consideration.

It should also be noted that section 7.52 of EARC's report on its review of public sector auditing in Queensland agrees that incumbents should not be able to be reappointed to the position following completion of their term. EARC said that this recommendation was designed to—

". . . help to ensure that incumbents are able to concentrate on the independent exercise of their functions, free from any concerns as to re-appointment.

However, the commission disagrees with the recommendation of the New South Wales Public Accounts Committee that following completion of their term, Auditors-General should be prevented from further appointment to any position in the relevant public sector. Not only would this restriction deprive the State of the services of a former Auditor-General, whose skills might be invaluable for a

variety of Executive or advisory positions, but it would unduly restrict the personal rights of the individual to employment."

It would be open to the Government or to a statutory authority to employ the obvious skills and expertise of a former Auditor-General in another capacity if that was so desired. Therefore, my initial reading of the position was that it would not be appropriate to depart from the conditions set down in the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1997. However, I did make the point to the Premier that, if there were specific reasons why the present Auditor-General should be given an extension of term—and I instanced the possibility of his needing to complete a major inquiry—then obviously the Opposition would certainly give consideration to these specific circumstances. The Opposition believes that the independent strategic review of the Queensland Audit Office, due to take place in 1997, and arising from another EARC recommendation for an independent review to be undertaken at least once every five years, does definitely meet that criterion and, therefore, establishes specific and special circumstances for the Auditor-General's term to be extended by one year.

After discussions with Mr Rollason and senior staff of the Office of the Auditor-General and from the correspondence from the Premier, I am convinced that it would be not only appropriate but in fact desirable for Mr Rollason to remain in his position during that review or, at the very least, throughout the initial stages and major part of the review. I am informed that, in some other States, such reviews have taken up to 18 months, but I would be dismayed were this review to go into 1998. We are extending Mr Rollason's term by a year for the period of the review so that Mr Rollason holds that position at the time of the review. When that is completed, there will be an opportunity for a new Auditor-General to be appointed, who can then move forward from the period of the completion of the review. Accordingly, the Opposition believes that a 12-month extension of Mr Rollason's term is entirely appropriate so that he heads the Office of the Auditor-General at the time of this review. He indicated that he would be fully briefing the Premier of his meeting with me, and I understand from a private communication between the Premier and me that that communication took place.

Therefore, both the Government and the Opposition—and, I understand, the member for Gladstone—are supportive of this amendment, which gives effect to that decision. I extend my appreciation to the

Premier and the Office of the Auditor-General for their courtesies in dealing with this matter. From the Opposition's point of view, the decision to support an extension has not been taken lightly because of the imperative of maintaining the standards properly set by EARC. Everyone in this House knows my strong commitment to the Fitzgerald process, including EARC and the CJC. Nevertheless, in the circumstances, I believe that the decision that we are making today is most certainly the right decision.

On many occasions, publicly and in this House, the Opposition has said—and I say again today—that we will give our bipartisan commitment to those matters that we believe are in the interests of the State. Such a case is before us today. Other illustrations include Century Zinc, Comalco Refinery and Korea Zinc. The Townsville Zinc Refinery Bill has been introduced into this House and the Opposition will be supporting that legislation. There are also a number of other measures, such as the gun laws, about which we believe that, if the Government has got it right, we will support them. On this occasion, as the Premier knows, we believe that this is the appropriate action to take. I thank him for his courtesies in dealing with this matter. It has been dealt with in the manner in which these matters should be dealt. The Premier acted properly from the beginning by writing to me in a bipartisan way. I have responded to that courtesy in a positive way. I thank him for the courtesy. I commend his Bill to the House.

Mr HOLLIS (Redcliffe) (2.55 p.m.): I join briefly in this debate about the extension of the term of the Auditor-General. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier that the seven-year term for an Auditor-General and no reappointment has a very valid reason, that is, so that the Auditor-General will remain independent. In 1992, as Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, I was appointed as chair of the selection panel to appoint Mr Barrie Rollason to the position of Auditor-General. I believe that it is appropriate today for me to say a few words about the role of the Queensland Audit Office and Mr Rollason over the past four years.

I have no doubt that longstanding members would know that Mr Rollason started work with the Auditor-General's office as a boy. He has now worked in that department for over 40 years. When one considers that the Public Service Bill was recently before the House, one realises that there will not be too many public servants in Queensland who will be able to say, "I've had 40 years and gone

from the boy to the top." That is very unfortunate for public servants.

Of course, great pressure is now placed on those who have the job of scrutinising what happens in Government. Over recent weeks we have seen that in the scrutiny by the Criminal Justice Commission of the activities of Government. We often see that also when Auditors-General present adverse reports on aspects of Government accountability.

Over the past four years, the huge changes that have occurred at the Audit Office have become very apparent. It has changed from the Department of the Auditor-General to the QAO. It has almost corporatised itself in many ways. It now has a fee for service, which was not the case previously. Eventually the QAO will become completely self-funding, as audit offices are in many countries. That restructure has caused major difficulties for staff and major problems have been associated with reorganisation and the general ethos of what the Auditor-General's office is all about. A change of offices was necessary so that the office would become more professional. That has happened very well over time. This year, the Public Accounts Committee will face the job of reviewing the performance of the QAO. As the Premier stated in his second-reading speech, one good aspect of the extension of the appointment is that Mr Rollason will be present while people review his actions over the past four years. I believe that it is incumbent upon any Government to ensure that people have the opportunity to explain their actions and the reasons for them.

As Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, I travelled to many parts of Australia and New Zealand. I have seen Mr Rollason at different venues—at Public Accounts Committee seminars and meetings of Auditors-General. He is greatly respected by Auditors-General throughout Australia and New Zealand for his attitude of being extremely independent. Members on both sides of the House would all say that Mr Rollason has been fiercely independent. That is a very good sign of a good Auditor-General.

The work that he presented to the Public Accounts Committee was always carried out on a very professional basis. We always knew that, when we asked for the Auditor-General's advice, he would give it free of political persuasion. That is a very important aspect of his stewardship of the Auditor-General's position. I travelled overseas in 1993 and I remember the great help that Mr Rollason gave me by making contacts available to me.

He made people such as Sir John Bourne, the Controller and Auditor-General of the United Kingdom, Noel Hepworth from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and Sir David Cooksley from the Audit Commission in England aware that the very minor Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of Queensland was visiting that country and he ensured that hospitality was extended to me. He ensured also that, when I visited those people, I learnt a bit more about accountability processes. If we go through our lives in Parliament and do not learn, there is something wrong with us. One of my greatest achievements during my time here is not to have become an accountant or to have obtained a bachelor of commerce but to have developed an understanding of the accountability processes. I thank the Auditor-General for giving me those opportunities to increase my understanding. If during our time in this place we all learnt about what is expected of us in terms of the accountability processes and also what is expected of Government departments, the structure of the Queensland Government would be greatly improved.

So I thank the Auditor-General for putting me on that learning curve and, as I say, for the assistance that he gave to the Public Accounts Committee during my tenure as the chair of that committee. I know that Mr Rollason is continuing that bipartisan approach to offer advice and help to the Public Accounts Committee, which is now under the chairmanship of Bob Harper. It is important that the Auditor-General and the Public Accounts Committee have cooperation and understanding so that problems can be ironed out where they should be ironed out, which is in the committee hearings involving the Auditor-General, the Minister and the officers of his or her department. If we all adopted that attitude, I am sure that much of the friction and many of the problems that occur from time to time within the public sector and within the Parliament would be solved.

With those few words, I say that this Bill is very worth while. As I say, it gives Mr Rollason the chance to expand his achievements and to answer any criticisms that there may be of his time in office. I wish him well for the final year of his term as Auditor-General.

Mr HARPER (Mount Ommaney) (3.02 p.m.): I rise to speak very briefly to this Bill. Firstly, I had known the Auditor-General personally for some time before I came to this place. I knew him in my previous life in the electricity industry so I can personally attest to his integrity, his independence and his ability. I

am pleased to say that, in common with the previous speaker, I still have a good and proper working relationship with the Auditor-General and commend him for his professional cooperation.

I think that it is well worth noting the fact of the independence of the Auditor-General. Certainly, this Bill does not change that. I note that, by this Bill, an appointment can be made for up to seven years. Originally, the current Auditor-General was given a four-year term. Also, and very importantly, this legislation will expire at the end of that 12-month extension of the Auditor-General's appointment.

Although I speak as the member for Mount Ommaney, I can attest to the fact that the members of the Public Accounts Committee take their role very seriously in matters relating to the Auditor-General. The committee members look forward to their involvement in the review of the Audit Office next year. I think that particular review is very important not only for the efficiency of the Audit Office but also for the independence of the Auditor-General, the way in which the Audit Office operates and for the business of Government to proceed properly. As I said, the members of the committee look forward to making a well and truly worthwhile contribution to that review. I commend the Bill to the House.

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Premier) (3.04 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate. I will not prolong the business of the House unduly except to formally advise the House, as was acknowledged by the Leader of the Opposition, that the Government would have embarked on this particular course of action only with full bipartisan support. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the courtesies that he extended to the Government in that regard.

I think that members on both sides of this House have a great deal of respect for Mr Rollason, the Auditor-General, and the manner in which he has conducted himself. Obviously, it is entirely appropriate that this legislation proceed.

In respect of the matters raised by the honourable member for Mount Ommaney, I will be writing shortly to the Public Accounts Committee about the proposed terms of reference for the review of the Queensland Audit Office and I will be informing the committee of the proposed strategy for the review process. I will be indicating that the proposal is that the review be conducted by a

retired Auditor-General from another Australian jurisdiction and, of course, subject to advice from the committee, suggesting that the Public Accounts Committee act as a reference group for the review by the retired Auditor-General so that there is appropriate parliamentary oversight of the strategic review.

I am currently giving consideration to the draft terms of reference. I will be writing to the Public Accounts Committee next week in that regard. Obviously, I will appreciate very much the response from the committee. I thank honourable members on both sides of the House for their support for this legislation.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Borbidge, read a third time.

CONSUMER LAW AND OTHER JUSTICE LEGISLATION (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 30 October (see p. 3655).

Ms SPENCE (Mount Gravatt) (3.07 p.m.): The Opposition is pleased to support the Consumer Law and Other Justice Legislation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill. Indeed, it welcomes many of the changes that this Bill makes to legislation.

Before saying some of the positive things about the changes made to legislation by this miscellaneous provisions Bill, I would like to make a fairly negative comment. The Scrutiny of Legislation Committee picked up this matter—and, indeed, I picked up this matter long before it did when I was trying to understand the 24 changes to legislation that are contained in this Bill—and I refer to the sufficiency of the Explanatory Notes that come with the Bill.

The Legislative Standards Act requires Explanatory Notes for a Bill to include a simple explanation of the purpose and intended operation of each clause of the Bill. Explanatory Notes may be referred to if a question arises about the interpretation of a provision or provisions of a Bill. It is disappointing that the Explanatory Notes

associated with this legislation fail to adequately explain the purpose and intended operation of each clause of the Bill. I refer particularly to the explanation of clause 126—a clause that covers seven pages of the Bill—which deals with the appointment of inspectors, inspectors' powers, the issuing of warrants, other enforcement matters and compensation. It is a lengthy and important section of the Bill. What do we get in the Explanatory Notes for those seven pages of legislation? We get one line in the Explanatory Notes that states—

"Clause 126 provides for the insertion of the power to appoint inspectors and for inspectors powers into the Act."

I say to the Attorney-General that he should pay more attention to the Explanatory Notes that go with his legislation in future, particularly when we have a piece of legislation that is as extensive as this Bill. I am sure that members would not appreciate the importance of the legislation that we are debating. By this legislation, we are proposing to change 24 Acts of Parliament. That is quite an incredible thing to do with one Bill. I would like to list some of the Acts that we are proposing to change to reveal to members the diversity of the legislation that we are changing by this Bill.

We are changing the Land Sales Act, the Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane Act, the Mobile Homes Act, the Motor Vehicles Securities Act, the Partnership (Limited Liability) Act, the Pawnbrokers Act, the Primary Producers' Cooperative Associations Act, the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act, the Roman Catholic Church Lands Act, the Roman Catholic Church (Northern Lands) Vesting Act, the Scout Association of Australia Queensland Branch Act, the Second-hand Dealers and Collectors Act, the Travel Agents Act, the Co-operative and Other Societies Act, the Coroners Act, the Hawkers Act, the Juvenile Justice Legislation Amendment Act, the Classification of Computer Games and Images (Interim) Act, the Classification of Films Act, the Classification of Publications Act, the Associations Incorporation Act, the Bills of Sale and Other Instruments Act, and the Business Names Act. That covers the 24 Acts. Anyone would be very confused by a single piece of legislation that attempts to change 24 Acts of Parliament. Therefore, if one is to attempt to understand the breadth of changes that we are making in a piece of legislation such as this, it is very important to have detailed and sufficient Explanatory Notes.

I intend to discuss a few of the most important Acts that this Bill changes. They are

also the Acts that members would have the most interest in. Firstly, the changes proposed in the Bill to the Associations Incorporation Act provide flexibility in the conduct of management committee meetings by means of telephone, video link or any other form of communication. This provision will be of benefit to associations in country areas or which have Statewide membership. It is important to bring the operations of management committees up to the 1990s way of doing business. I serve on a number of management committees and we frequently have tele-conference meetings. They are a very adequate and efficient way of holding meetings in this day and age. The Bill also allows for management committees to have video link-up meetings. I am sure that this reflects the need to update our legislation to make it relevant to present day practices.

The Bill also alters the requirement that management committees meet every four months. The previous legislation required that management committees met every two months. I do not totally understand the reasoning behind this change. It seems to me that it is vital for many associations that management committees meet more than three times a year, and I would be pleased to hear the Minister's comment on this point later in the debate. My attention is drawn to the problems that the RSPCA has been having recently. If its management committee had met only every four months, although some people might have been very pleased, the association would not have benefited. The amendment also relaxes the rules in relation to the qualifications of people who can serve on management committees, who no longer have to be Queenslanders. They can live 65 kilometres from the Queensland border. It has been explained to me that this is because many people who work on the Gold Coast live over the New South Wales border, but they want to serve on management committees. I accept that that is a very sensible provision to make in the Bill.

Secondly, the Bill proposes changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Act which will allow parents of adopted children the same right to change their child's name that parents of non-adopted children have. It also allows the registrar to register a birth, despite the fact that the fee has not been paid. I understand that many people cannot afford the fee that is required. They may move on, and the child's birth may never be registered. Through this amendment, the registrar now has the ability to waive the fee and register births in cases of

hardship. I think that is a very sensible solution to the problem.

This change also provides that registration may be made in the name of the father only if that is the wish of the applicant. I understand that, in previous cases, if the parents were not married the child was registered in the mother's name. This amendment changes that provision. I am sure that it is a very welcome amendment for many couples. It is long overdue. I congratulate the Minister on that change.

Thirdly, the Bill changes the Business Names Act through amendments which tighten up procedures and processes for applicants for business names. When lodging an application, applicants are required to pay a fee and, if that fee is not paid and someone else lodges an application asking for the same business name, the second applicant will be given the name. Similarly, if an applicant pays a fee with a cheque that is dishonoured, the next applicant will gain the business name if the fee is not paid on the dishonoured cheque. Business names are very important to small businesses. They, too, will welcome the tightening up of this particular Act.

Fourthly, perhaps one of the most significant changes in this Bill relates to the classification of films, magazines and video games to bring Queensland legislation into accord with the Commonwealth Classification Act 1995. While the Opposition supports the amendments proposed today, we question why this Government has not used this opportunity to seriously examine the success of Queensland's censorship laws. Members should be aware that the amendments that we are debating today relate merely to a number of technical changes which will bring Queensland censorship laws into line with Commonwealth requirements. The Minister and the Government have not taken this opportunity to investigate the state of censorship in this country or, in fact, to tighten up our censorship regulations.

It is surprising to me, as it is surprising to many members of the community, that the Government has not taken this opportunity to examine our censorship laws, given the fact that so many Government members concern themselves with the issue of censorship from time to time. Frequently, Government members use the media to deplore the censorship laws in this State. Last week, the member for Maroochydore commented about the sale of offensive CDs in a supermarket. The member for Mansfield has deplored the kind of language that was used on a particular

radio station in this State. Time and time again, Government members act in a very self-righteous and moralistic manner on the subject of censorship, yet when the Government has an opportunity to do something to change the censorship laws, it does nothing.

I have received a letter from the Australian Federation for the Family. I suspect that the gentleman who wrote the letter, Mr Jack Sonnemann, has also written to the Minister. He expresses his concern that the Minister has not taken this opportunity to actually toughen our censorship laws. Mr Sonnemann states—

"Please help. Denver Beanland seems to be attempting to shirk his responsibility as chief legal officer of Queensland in regards to smut rags like Penthouse and Picture being sold to, displayed to and accessed by our children.

According to my understanding of the Consumer Law Amendment Bill the responsibility on magazine censorship will be placed in the hands of someone in the Australian Capital Territory."

Mr Sonnemann continues in that vein.

I have no problems with the amendments being made today to our classifications laws. However, it would seem to me rather hypocritical that this Government has not done more about this subject and discussed it in greater depth. It is very silent about what it will do in respect of our censorship laws in the future. I suggest to Government backbenchers who make shock/horror statements in the media about censorship—for example, about the sale of grubby movies and CDs—that it might be better if they lobbied their Minister about this subject. Rather than engaging in media stunts, they might do some real work on this legislation, as opposed to just talking about it.

As to the amendments required to be made to Queensland's censorship legislation—the enactment of the Commonwealth Act has compelled technical changes to Queensland's censorship Acts, which include "replacing references in the three Acts to the former Australian Capital Territory ordinance, offices and procedures with references to those contained in the Commonwealth Act". Secondly, the amendments will ensure that the "Classification of Films Act 1991, like the two other censorship Acts, 'picks up' the decisions of the Commonwealth censor and enables them to be enforced in Queensland". Thirdly,

the amendments will ensure that the "enforcement provisions comport as far as is practicable with those contained in the model State/Territory Classifications (Publications, Films and Computer Games) (Enforcement) Bill prepared for censorship Ministers".

The complex nature of the legislation covering censorship of films and videos was embodied in eight or nine Federal, State or Territory Acts and was addressed in March 1995 when the legislation was centralised under the Commonwealth Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act. The former Attorney-General, Michael Lavarch, when speaking about the guidelines set out in the schedule to the classifications Act, stated that adults in a free society should be allowed as far as possible to see what they wish and creative artists, including film makers, to depict what they please without fear of interventions by the State. However, he also said that the exercise of these rights carried certain responsibilities that must be subject to a number of constraints for the good of society as a whole. To ensure children and young people are protected from material of a disturbing nature and the community from material that could endanger their health or safety it was essential that the guidelines set out in the Schedule were comprehensive and unambiguous.

The National Classification Code, which is included in the Schedule to the Act, states that the classifications decisions should give effect to the following principles—

- a) adults should be able to read, hear and see what they want;
- b) minors should be protected from material likely to harm or disturb them;
- c) everyone should be protected from exposure to unsolicited material that they find offensive;
- d) the need to take account of community concerns about:
 - depictions that condone or incite violence, particularly sexual violence; and
 - the portrayal of persons in a demeaning manner."

I read out those principles because I believe that members of the House, particularly members of the Government who have made public statements condemning subjects that they find offensive, should be aware of the guidelines that we are all working under in this country with respect to censorship. Every State is now working under the same set of

principles under a Commonwealth Act. We in the Labor Party agree with the broad principles. However, it is the detail of how our censorship laws apply in practice that concerns people. For example, I refer to incidents of people receiving unsolicited pornographic material in the mail, viewing offensive material on the shelves of our supermarkets or newsagents, or having that type of offensive material on display for children to see. That is what concerns members of the general public.

I can assure the Minister that we in the Labor Party are concerned about those types of details and how our censorship laws operate. As a member of Parliament, in common with other honourable members, from time to time I am exposed to such unpleasanties as crank callers and crazies.

Mr Stephan: I've never had one of them.

Ms SPENCE: I will not say what I was going to say!

Recently, over about four months, someone sent me unsolicited pornographic material in the mail. That person was not able to be identified. There were no markings on the material. Whoever was doing that had gone to extreme lengths to cover their tracks. That person was printing on the envelopes with different pens, using different styles of printing every time and was using post offices from Northgate to Beenleigh—all over the place. There was absolutely no way of identifying who was responsible. I was quite disturbed by that. Personally, I find pornographic literature very offensive. I do not want to look at it, and I do not know anyone who wants to look at it. I called in the police to investigate this matter. Although I did not think that they had any hope of finding out who was responsible, I merely let them know that this form of harassment was occurring. Such behaviour is a form of stalking or harassment. The police were concerned that, even if they could find the culprit, there was probably no law under which that person could be punished, anyway.

The problems of censorship confront all of us from time to time. Constituents have complained to me that they have been sent catalogues in the mail of a pornographic nature advertising X-rated material from Canberra. It is okay if someone sends away for that material. However, if the recipient does not want such material and finds that type of thing offensive, it can be incredibly distressing. It is the detail of our censorship laws which concerns us all. Perhaps the Attorney-General

might consider giving some time to that detail during his term in office.

I will turn to another section of the Bill, namely, that concerning the enforcement powers. This Bill provides for the insertion of inspectors' powers into both the Land Sales Act and the Mobile Homes Act. Inspectors can only exercise their broad powers of search and seizure if entry has been gained either with the consent of the occupier of the place or by the authorisation of a warrant. I am concerned that this is the third piece of consumer legislation that has come before the House in the Minister's time in this portfolio. With each piece of legislation, tougher enforcement powers are provided to the inspectors. As a civil libertarian, I am not sure how concerned I should be. I have spoken to my colleagues, and they agree that those inspectors need the powers that the Minister is proposing to give them under this legislation. However, I assure the Minister that we will continually monitor the legislation that he brings before the House which increases the powers of his inspectors.

With that, I congratulate the Minister on this legislation. As I said, it changes 24 Acts of Parliament. No doubt the Minister's department has spent a lot of time on this Bill. The Opposition is pleased to give the Bill its support.

Mr MULHERIN (Mackay) (3.30 p.m.): I rise to speak in support of the Consumer Law and Other Justice Legislation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill. The Bill will amend 24 statutes administered by the Office of Consumer Affairs and the Department of Justice. It will respond to the legislative needs of this State and remove any statutory anomalies that exist.

The amendments range from amending the Associations Incorporation Act 1981, which will assist management committees in country areas with flexibility in the conduct of their meetings, to amending such statutes as the Roman Catholic Church Lands Act 1995, the Pawnbrokers Act 1984 and the Cooperative and Other Societies Act 1967.

However, one of the most important matters which this Bill will deal with relates to censorship. The Bill will amend the Classification of Publications Act 1991, the Classification of Films Act 1991 and the Classification of Computer Games and Images (Interim) Act 1995 to reflect the changes in the Commonwealth Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995 which came into effect on 1 January this year.

The changes to Queensland's censorship Acts include: replacing references in the three Acts to the former Australian Capital Territory

ordinance, offices and procedures with references to those contained in the new Commonwealth Act; ensuring that the Classification of Films Act 1991, like the two other censorship Acts, picks up the decisions of the Commonwealth censor and enables them to be enforced in Queensland; the insertion of provisions enabling the Commonwealth censor to call in certain publications, thereby facilitating compliance with the legislation; and ensuring that the enforcement provisions accord as far as is practicable with those contained in the model State/Territory Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) (Enforcement) Bill prepared for censorship Ministers.

Censorship has always generated a considerable amount of debate within the community. Recently, the honourable member for Maroochydore received considerable media coverage when she successfully complained to her local K mart store about the nature of the lyrics on the CD album titled *Tu-Plang* by ARIA award winning band Regurgitator. The honourable member found the lyrics smutty and vicious and felt that the album provided a graphic test case in the midst of the Australian music industry's year-long trial for self-regulation. The CD was marked with a white sticker warning that it contained explicit language which may cause offence and was removed from K mart Maroochydore's shelves.

K mart Queensland said it was the first complaint that the retailer had received and that it had no intention of removing this CD from its other stores. The band's manager, Mr Paul Curtis, said the band's lyrics were aimed at cynically exposing, rather than condoning, society's foibles. He felt that the honourable member had only created more interest in the band and had generated more sales for the album by her comments.

Mr J. H. Sullivan: Isn't that the problem, though—when you take something like that public you tend to create a desire for people to own the product rather than the alternative, which is to get the product out of circulation. That would have been the honourable member for Maroochydore's suggestion, wouldn't it?

Mr MULHERIN: Yes—her comments have highlighted the album. This is not the first time the honourable member for Maroochydore has commented on censorship. On 13 May 1993, during the debate on the Classification of Films Amendment Bill, she stated—

"The Bill is an improvement on what is presently in place, but I would suggest that it does not go far enough. The MA category is supposed to protect children from the extremes of films which were previously in the very broad category of M. It is interesting to note from the Bill that an MA film will be classified as such—

' . . . if the censor is of the opinion that the film describes, depicts, expresses or otherwise deals with sex, violence or coarse language in a way that makes the film unsuitable for viewing by persons under 15 years.'

That is fair enough but, if children who watch films that have all those attributes are accompanied by an adult 18 years or over, are the films somehow sanitised and not of a contaminating effect? Although the Bill is an improvement on the present legislation, it does not go far enough because, by having someone beside them, how will children who are subjected to these very real images suddenly be able to rationalise the impressions which are left directly in their minds?"

Back in 1993, the honourable member felt that there should be a tightening of the censorship relating to films.

Another coalition member, the honourable member for Mansfield, recently attacked radio station B105 for what he called the announcers' attempts to humour listeners with smut. The honourable member said that he did not usually listen to B105 but was forced to when he used the parliamentary gym.

Mr Nunn: Who has forced him?

Mr MULHERIN: That is what he reckons—he was forced to listen to it while exercising at the gym.

Mr Nunn: I understood he had a college education. I thought he could have turned it off.

Mr MULHERIN: One would have thought so.

If the honourable members for Maroochydore and Mansfield had any clout in their respective parties, one would have thought that these amendments would reflect their legislative views and those of the State coalition rather than legislation introduced into the Commonwealth Parliament by the former Labor Attorney-General, the Honourable Michael Lavarch.

I believe that most members support the majority in our community who believe that censorship should be a tolerant balance between the extreme views of radical libertarians and the ultra conservatives—a balance that supports and respects the rights of the adult individual and, on the other hand, protects the young and innocent from immoral and amoral influences. As legislators, our job is to reflect the views of the majority.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN (Caboolture) (3.36 p.m.): I am pleased to rise to join my colleagues on this side of the House in supporting the Consumer Law and Other Justice Legislation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill. In doing so, I want to raise a couple of matters with the Attorney and highlight where I believe there may be a problem with the drafting in a couple of the clauses that will need to be looked at before this Bill is passed. The Attorney might like to have a look at the provisions to which I will refer for the prospect of an amendment at the Committee stage.

I am fairly keen about one matter that relates to drafting generally. In our modern drafting regimes in Queensland, a number of standard phrases have been developed for inclusion in legislation. From time to time the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee, of which I am a proud member, has taken up a number of these issues. It is pleasing that the Minister has taken on some of those issues in this Bill. I will get to that later. One that we noticed with particular reference to this Bill is the issue of meetings. I believe that it occurs a couple of times in the Bill, but I will restrict my comments to the instance where it occurs in relation to the amendment of the Associations Incorporation Act. It relates to the method of conducting a meeting.

We are starting to see a standard phrase to try to accommodate technology and the ability of meetings to be held consequent upon changing technology. The phrase that has been used is "to take part in meetings by telephone, video link or another form of communication". The Scrutiny of Legislation Committee is quite sure that the existing forms of contemporaneous communication are not the only forms that are going to be available for the community in the near future, let alone the distant future—the time that we might hope that these amendments will hold force. However, there are forms of communication which I believe—and I know the committee shares this view—are not appropriate for the conduct of a meeting. "Another form of communication" could mean by letters passing backward and forward, it could mean by

facsimile or it could mean by radio link—a method that is not contemporaneous.

The issue is that people participating in a meeting and making decisions at a meeting should be aware of all that occurs at the meeting. Unless it can be contemporaneous—unless it is a two-way link-up that has the person at the other end of the link-up fully cognisant of what is going on at the place where the major part of the meeting is taking place—then I believe that it is diminished in its efficacy, and we should be looking at that. I am not suggesting to the Attorney that we need to tie this up to such an extent that it would be impossible to find a phrase that could be used as various Acts are amended. However, I believe it would be useful if at some stage he could have a look at trying to deal with the problem of emerging technology versus the need for people to be there at the same time.

When I was a member of the Parliamentary Electoral and Administrative Review Committee, I attended meetings held by video link. I understand that prior to my joining that committee, meetings were held with other members by telephone. It is important that those people who are not present where the bulk of the people attending the meeting are located nevertheless have the benefit of all of the deliberations, not just those that might be summarised and passed on to them for the issue to be resolved. I recognise that there is no amendment to this Bill foreshadowed in relation to that, but I would hope that the Minister would take that matter on board.

Honourable members will recall that the member for Mount Gravatt spoke about enforcement powers. The enforcement powers in this Bill as they relate to the Land Sales Act and the Mobile Homes Act are better, in a couple of ways, than we have seen previously. Unlike some other legislation that has been before the House recently, this Bill allows the inspectorate to enter a place not when it is available for entry but, if it is a public place, when it is open for entry by the public. That is an important distinction, and I would like to thank the Attorney for picking up on that. Personally, I would prefer it if entry were only by warrant or consent, but I accept that the Minister has made that provision slightly better.

Before we get to the Committee stage, I would like to refer to the Bill as it relates to the Mobile Homes Act, and I ask the Attorney to have his advisers address this issue before we discuss the clauses of the Bill. I will have to

refer to the clause, because I think the Attorney will need to consider it. Proposed new section 12F(1) says that subsection (2) powers really can only be exercised if entry is gained by consent or by warrant, and that is fine, but then subsection (2) has paragraphs (a) to (g). The word that links each of those paragraphs is the word "or", and it would seem to me that that would indicate that an inspector who gains entry authorised by warrant is entitled to search any of that place for any of the matter mentioned in the other paragraphs. I am not sure that the word "or" is necessary to link any of those paragraphs.

If I am right—and I suspect that there is a chance that I may not be—that would make paragraph (g) which is the paragraph which requires a person to give assistance where it is requested, meaningless. The inspector would only be able to examine or photograph anything or ask the person in charge of the place for assistance. If the inspector asked the person in charge for assistance, then he would not be able to examine or photograph anything. I have a feeling that the clarity of the clause would be strengthened if the word "or" was dropped. I do not think that it does anything to enhance the meaning of that clause. It certainly has the prospect of diminishing it. Maybe the Minister could have his staff address that issue prior to the Committee stage.

In relation to the powers of entry and consent—there are certain provisions about consent that are normally expected. The material before us really does not make it clear that the inspector who is seeking to gain entry by means of consent is required to advise the person in charge of the place, or the owner or occupier, of what that consent means. The inspector is obliged to indicate that consent need not necessarily be given, but I am not sure that it is spelled out that the inspector needs to advise what consent, if given, would entail. The inspector should be able to advise the person, for example, that if he or she did give consent and then refused to give assistance, he or she could be liable for a fine of 60 penalty units, which is quite a substantial sum of money. Inspectors should be specifically required to advise anybody whom they are asking for consent of the possible consequences of that consent.

Another matter that I would like to raise has been raised with the Attorney previously, that is, matter being made available for civil proceedings or derivatives. I am not content that there is any way to acquire material that might be used against some person in any proceeding, criminal or civil, that has been

gained by means other than a warrant. I would express some discomfort in relation to those powers in this Bill as they relate to the two Acts that I have mentioned. That issue has been taken up with the Attorney previously and the Attorney has not yet seen the benefit of the committee's views, or he has not been persuaded by the strength of our argument. I would hope that at some stage the Minister would take note of those views.

Other members have spoken about specific legislation, for example, the classification of films or literature. Essentially, I do not believe in censorship. However, I think it is quite clear that many forms of self-regulation are not working in the manner in which society would hope. For example, a number of outlets operating as subnews outlets, be they service stations or the like, display magazines that are really not material that is suitable for display at a child's eye level. Adults who go into a service station wanting to buy a newspaper or perhaps a gun magazine, dare I say, or a fishing magazine, find that they have to lean over to pick those things up. That material is displayed at children's eye level, not at an adult's eye level. That is quite an inappropriate way to display material. If the business community is not going to be cognisant of the sensitivities and sensibilities of different people, whether it be because of age or some particular personal views, then we have to regulate their actions in some ways.

Having said that, I am not a great proponent of censorship. I believe that I can determine what I want to see and I can put aside what I do not want to see in the same way that the member for Mount Gravatt is able to make those types of decisions and put aside the material that she does not wish to see. It is a bit beyond the pale to receive material in an unsolicited fashion. If it had been happening to me, I would have been making a list of all the people whom I had upset. It might have been such a long list that I would not have been able to determine the culprit!

In conclusion, there is no more important legislation that we bring before this House than legislation that deals with consumer issues. Every person in this State is a consumer, and the protections that we can give consumers through the consumer legislation that is brought into this Parliament benefits them all. There are certainly a number of sharp practices in the dealings of rather slippery business people which I know that the Attorney, as the Minister responsible for consumer affairs, will bring to the attention of

this House from time to time. Nevertheless, it is important that this House recognises that consumer legislation is legislation of a high status indeed. It is not one of the also-rans. It is legislation that deals with issues that really matter to people in their day-to-day lives. In the main, these amendments are sensible and logical. As I have said, I thank the Attorney for some of the "give" that appears in some of the matters that I have been consistently arguing in this Chamber for a number of years. I am happy to support this Bill.

Mr ROBERTS (Nudgee) (3.50 p.m.): I wish to take this opportunity to say a few words about some matters arising out of the Bill. One matter in particular relates to the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act. I have raised with the Attorney-General a particular case concerning one of my constituents. The Attorney has indicated that the matter will be addressed when the Act is next reviewed. However, I believe that it was worth while raising this matter again in this place.

This case concerns a constituent of mine who discovered that he has a son who is 20 years old. On discovering this, the son wished to have his father's name recorded on his birth certificate. The difficulty that arose was that, because of the age of the person involved, the current provisions of the Act require that, when the father's name is entered on the birth certificate, the son's name is changed to that of the father. The fellow concerned has grown up with his natural mother's name, which he wished to retain. However, he also wished to have his father's name recorded on his birth certificate. The Attorney has indicated that, probably in mid-1997, when the Act will be reviewed, that issue will be taken into account. It is important to take account of these issues and try to resolve them. This matter is quite distressing to both families. Hopefully, it can be resolved when the Act is next reviewed.

I wish to raise a couple of general issues in relation to consumer law. There are some parts of this legislation which I believe lack teeth. I want to give two examples of how consumers were basically left out on their own, and the existing laws were not very helpful. The first case related to the sale of smoke alarms. This is a matter that I have raised previously in this place.

A particular company operated in the following fashion. It placed an advertisement in a local newspaper advertising that a prize of a free dinner was available to people who filled out a coupon. In fact, as I understand it, most

people who filled out the coupon received the offer of a free dinner. At that free dinner, salespeople demonstrated the benefits of particular smoke alarm equipment. At the conclusion of the demonstration, they were requested to fill out a card which, in effect, invited a salesperson to their home to further discuss these particular products. Once in the home, a quote was given for the installation of what were battery-operated smoke alarms and smoke detectors. As I have indicated previously in correspondence and in this place, quite outrageous prices were being charged for those smoke alarms.

On reporting this matter to the Office of Consumer Affairs, the basic response was that the company was doing nothing illegal, that the basic message to be given to the consumer was: buyer beware. However, I believe that one issue that arose during that particular process is something which could be addressed by consumer legislation, that is, the method that the company used to, in my view, override the provisions of door-to-door sales legislation in respect of a cooling-off period. Simply because the people at that free dinner filled out cards which, in effect, invited salespersons to their homes, the cooling-off provisions of the door-to-door sales legislation had no effect. I simply draw this to the attention of the Attorney-General in the hope that this issue might be considered. Perhaps some powers could be given to inspectors so that they could take action in cases in which people deliberately seek to override particular provisions of Acts.

The other matter that I wish to raise also concerns constituents in my electorate who have taken out prepaid funeral benefits. This is another matter that I have raised in correspondence with the Attorney-General. In fact, it has led to Crown law advice. The particular contract that I am talking about was taken out in the 1950s. It involved a person making small contributions over a period. To a non-legal person, a plain reading of the document basically led one to believe that, upon the death of that person or his or her spouse, a benefit, as outlined in the contract, would be received. Again, a non-legal person reading that contract would be led to believe that, basically, that benefit would pay for a full funeral. However, recent advice which has been given to the holders of those contracts is to the effect that they are entitled to only \$160 worth of funeral benefits.

Mr Campbell: That doesn't go far.

Mr ROBERTS: No, it does not go very far at all. When the contract was taken out

and the amounts paid, the contract probably would have covered the full cost of a funeral. However, over time, that sum has been eroded.

These issues, including the last one, involve mainly the elderly in the community and those who are perhaps not as well educated as others. When they read contracts or have contracts explained to them, plain English and an understanding of the benefits should be a requirement. That is probably something which needs to be given a little more attention with respect to contracts that are entered into in a range of matters.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone) (3.57 p.m.): I want to make a couple of comments about one section of this consumer law and other justice legislation, which is certainly diverse. The purpose of the changes to the classifications of publications is to bring Queensland into line with Commonwealth standards. Although I can understand that purpose, I have to say that if we, as a State, wish to maintain a tighter control on material that is available, then I do not believe that being in line with Commonwealth standards is necessarily always a good thing. I hold out our right to remain separate and perhaps a little conservative.

This legislation involves a lot of changes to classifications of publications. The old classifications have been around for a long time, and people have become very familiar with them. Any changes to classifications should be very clear. If the RC classification is placed on a cassette holder, it should also be clearly marked as a restricted classification. People have become used to the R classification. The community should be educated about these classifications, which should be clearly marked.

The other issue that needs to be considered is that printed material is not the only medium that is available. A plethora of mediums is available to the community. As the member for Caboolture said, those mediums are available to our children. I refer to the Internet, e-mail, CD-ROMs, disks, videos, cassettes—the whole works. Those classifications, particularly those relating to questionable material, need to be clear.

The other point I want to raise is that publications in shops are always put within easy access of young people. They can be quite adult magazines, but they are right there where kids can not only access them but view them. At one stage, there was a voluntary program operating in this State involving a request that garages, magazine shops and

corner stores put adult magazines in what I call blinds so that all that was visible was the name of the publication. That is one very practical way of addressing the problem of visual pollution. And from my perspective, with children, that is what it is. The adults can still see what the magazine is, they still have the choice of purchasing it, but the offending pictures are not accessible to children, and they are not something that offends people when they walk into the premises. Although that program had some success as a voluntary mechanism, some organisations throughout the State blatantly refused to be involved, albeit that there was a demonstrated benefit to youth. I encourage the Minister to consider the compulsory use of what I call blinds, those magazines holders that cover the pictures but still allow access to the names on the magazines.

Hon. D. E. BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (4.01 p.m.), in reply: I thank the Opposition and the member for Gladstone for their support for this legislation. It contains a range of matters of concern to Queenslanders. The amendments are about improving the legislation for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

A number of points have been raised about the legislation and the Explanatory Notes. This Bill is a technical Bill to make non-contentious, administrative amendments to the legislation. Many amendments were necessary because, as I found on taking office, none of these sorts of changes had been made for many years under the Labor Government. Quite a bit of catch-up was needed. The Government also had a range of issues with which it wanted to deal. Consequently, this legislation contains a large number of amendments. Next year, another host of amendments will be introduced as quite a considerable number of issues still need to be addressed. Of course, many of the amendments have been requested by interests groups within the community, such as the Catholic Church and scout groups.

The member for Mount Gravatt mentioned communication for management committee meetings. Associations will be free to conduct management committee meetings as often as they wish. Some committees do not need to meet every two months, which is the current compulsory requirement. That requirement has caused hardship, particularly in country areas of this State. This is a vast State. The term "tyranny of distance" certainly applies to many of those groups when they are trying to meet. Although we still have very strict requirements for the frequency of holding

meetings—and they are the strictest in this country; they are far stricter than in other States—in passing these amendments we are attempting to find a middle ground for some associations.

Some community organisations are quite small. I noticed that the honourable member referred to the RSPCA at Yeronga. Of course, that is a very large association, and its members will be wanting regular meetings held. However, on the other side of this State, in places such as Bedourie, the circumstances are vastly different. We have to cater for all circumstances. Community groups will still need to meet on many occasions, but the compulsory requirement is at least four times a year. I understand that this State has some 17,000 associations. I think we all agree that this is a diverse State with a diversity of associations. We are trying to meet their many requirements. I am sure that members of associations would soon cause a commotion if their executive committees were not meeting on the basis that they wanted, and that varies from place to place, from town to city. These days, everybody has a very busy life. Even people in country areas are finding it more difficult to attend meetings, whether it be because of drought, busier lives or other reasons. Consequently, they need leeway in relation to these issues. The purpose of these amendments is to provide greater opportunities and more flexibility.

The member for Caboolture raised the issue of forms of communication. I am sure that committee members will be realistic in the way that they conduct their meetings. I do not expect them to use methods of meeting that would be detrimental to members. I trust that this provision will be used in the way that is intended by the legislation so that it will provide positive assistance to management committee members. If we discover that people are finding ways around the legislation and not doing the appropriate thing by their members, we will look at moving a slight amendment. In a changing society, with technology such as the Internet and a whole host of mechanisms for meetings—and perhaps many of us have not thought beyond video links and telephones—we do not want legislation to be some years behind what is happening in the community. Greater flexibility is the reason that that was agreed upon for inclusion in this particular amendment.

The member for Mount Gravatt raised the issue, as did some other members, of inspectors and inspectoral powers. Care was taken in the Explanatory Notes to explain what was new and different in that respect in the

legislation. Of course, the powers of the inspectors are fairly well spelt out within the legislation. They are fairly straightforward. Although there has been some criticism of the Explanatory Notes in that regard, when one reads through the legislation I am not sure that it could be much more explicit than it is currently. I certainly had no trouble following what inspectoral powers are and are not within the wording of the legislation.

Ms Spence: Do you think one line is sufficient explanation for seven pages?

Mr BEANLAND: I am coming to that. The member mentioned that one line. However, the fact is that those powers are spelled out very clearly within the legislation. I do not know that we could use language that is much more explicit. We could repeat what is in the Bill, but I do not think that that would achieve a great deal. To be fair, they were spelt out very clearly within the legislation so that no problems would arise and so that people would not need to refer to the Explanatory Notes. I am more concerned about these matters than perhaps most of the members opposite. I know that they say that they are concerned, and I am not doubting that. I am also very concerned about inspectoral powers. In my days in the Brisbane City Council I found that, in many cases, council inspectors had far wider powers than police officers. It was quite horrific when one considered what council inspectors could do. With regard to people's legal rights and privacy, I am very much aware of the need to be very careful about what powers we give inspectors.

Ms Spence: Some people would just like to have a full understanding by reading the Explanatory Notes, and by summarising seven pages in one line they cannot really get an understanding of the legislation. In fact, you are saying they have to turn to the legislation.

Mr BEANLAND: That is what the legislation is for. We do not mind repeating it, but the legislation is for that purpose. I do not know that there is much purpose in repeating those words in the case of an administrative Bill such as this. As the honourable member seems to be concerned that we do repeat them, I will consider that for a future occasion; however, I am much more concerned about what the Bill says in relation to the powers of inspectors.

As to the Mobile Homes Act—inspectors need powers in that regard, because residents are often elderly, frail people without financial means. They cannot afford to live in retirement

villages. In contrast to residents, mobile home park owners, as a group, generally have good financial backing and access to legal advice. The inspectors need powers of search to obtain assistance from owners to discover whether agreements exist and what they say. That is why inspectors have some of those powers.

I noticed that the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee referred to the Keno Bill. While I am on the subject of the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee—I point out that the sites where keno machines will be operating are vastly different from mobile home parks. In many cases elderly, frail people need support and assistance, in contrast to mobile home park owners. I think that the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee said that we should get permission in writing. No mobile home park owners will sign a document without first seeing their legal advisers, who will tell them not to sign anything. That is what all legal advisers say in relation to matters such as this. Of course, a person would not sign a document to allow consumer affairs inspectors onto the site, because that person would not be too sure what they might or might not find. Those owners might receive a clean bill of health and they might not, so it would be silly for them to sign such a document. It would be a hopeless exercise in that on each occasion we would end up having to require warrants. We certainly do not want to clog up the court system by requiring warrants to be issued on each occasion.

Mr J. H. Sullivan: Warrants could be obtained by electronic means with the legislative changes.

Mr BEANLAND: I do not know what the member for Caboolture said. I am trying to set out the format as it is explained in the legislation. We are trying to formulate workable legislation that will be of assistance to those people in those particular situations. If the Government adopted some of the proposals that were made by various members in this Chamber, the Bill would be simply unworkable, difficult and unenforceable.

A similar situation exists in relation to the Land Sales Act. If developers had something to hide, they would simply not sign a document to allow inspectors on the property. Again, under this legislation, those developers would have access to advice from lawyers and so forth. We are trying to give inspectors' powers some teeth. At the moment, they do not have that and it is all a bit of a farce. Members stand up in this Chamber and say, "Why aren't you doing this, that, or something

else under the legislation?" However, under the existing legislation, we do not have the power to do those things. The purpose of this legislation is to make those Acts workable and worth while. At the same time, I acknowledge that we have to be careful about the powers that we give to inspectors of the Consumers Affairs Office.

The member for Caboolture raised the issue of the insertion of the word "or" in some of the clauses. After a investigation into this matter, I understand that in relation to the mobile homes inspectors' powers, the word "or" is necessary for them to be able to elect to use any of the powers which are appropriate in order to avoid ambiguity that may otherwise arise. For example, there may be a mistaken belief that all the powers have to be exercised. Therefore, it is a necessary drafting measure, and I accept that. I think that it is appropriate that those clauses are worded in that particular way.

The member for Nudgee raised a matter in relation to greater enforcement of certain legislation to do with consumers. I think that the member will find that the matters that he raised will be addressed in the fair trading legislation. There has been a tightening up of enforcement and consumer protection measures in that legislation, particularly in relation to the substantiation notices. It is a most significant part of Queensland's consumer protection legislation. So when we come to debate the Fair Trading Bill, I am sure that the member will find that the points that he raised have been addressed by that Bill.

As to censorship, the member for Gladstone raised the matter of the RC label. I say that the RC label will not be on the material because it will not be in the marketplace. I understand that it is banned throughout Australia. The RC classification will make the law clear and it will make interpretation of the legislation easier for magistrates. However, this is not a piece of legislation on which we can hold a lengthy debate about censorship. If we are going to make major changes to censorship, we need to tackle that matter in separate censorship legislation and not in this Bill, which makes administrative and technical changes on a broad scale. The amendments in this Bill that relate to censorship are only to accommodate the terms of the new Commonwealth Act.

In 1991 or 1990, the former Government entered into a uniform agreement and Queensland did away with its own censorship regime. So when members talk about having a different system in place that will tighten up

legislation, at the end of the day the State would need to consider whether it should continue with the current Commonwealth regime or crank up a regime of its own. The censorship amendments contained in this Bill coincide with the new Commonwealth Act and are not intended to change the basic underpinnings of the censorship law. That is why they are only technical in nature.

We have a cooperative censorship system in this State. I accept that today a number of contentious issues have been raised. In fact, many of those issues have been raised at various ministerial meetings. I might say that Queensland is very vocal in this area. In relation to the Commonwealth legislation, we should also appreciate that, under the uniform scheme, the Commonwealth actually classifies the material and the States enforce the censorship decisions. There are no X-rated videos within this State and nor are categories 1 or 2 hard-core pornography allowed in this State. I know that members raised some points in relation to that matter. I know that there is a great deal of concern about some of the material that finds its way onto the shelves. However, it is slightly different from the hard-core material that is available in other States and Territories.

The member for Mount Gravatt raised the issue of receiving pornographic matter in the mail. That has been of concern to me for some time. This material comes through the post—and I am not saying this in relation to the member herself—much of it from the ACT, which allows various forms of pornographic material. It is posted throughout the nation. People receive this unsolicited material. I am not saying that the member for Mount Gravatt is necessarily receiving this material, but it certainly happens to constituents in my electorate.

Ms Spence: A lot of it is quite offensive.

Mr BEANLAND: I agree that a lot of it is quite offensive. Unfortunately, because of the freedom of interstate trade, which is allowed under the Constitution, there is nothing that we can do about it. I would not stand by idly and allow it to occur if I could take action. However, we cannot because such material is legal within the ACT.

I mentioned that there was no hard-core pornography and no X-rated videos allowed in Queensland. A member mentioned Mr Sonnemann. I have met with Mr Sonnemann and discussed with him the range of magazines and material that is available. We may need to consider a range of matters over time. One of those matters—audio

material—was raised at the last SCAG meeting. That issue was raised this afternoon by a couple of members. There is now in place a self-regulatory process for new material. We will see how that operates over the next 12 months.

I think a member raised the issue of a CD that is available at Maroochydore. I understand that that CD was released some 12 months ago and would not be covered by the new categories. However, I am appalled by some of the language that I hear on some CDs. I am also concerned about some of the things, such as the language, that I hear from time to time on the radio. It is very difficult for us to discourage the availability of that type of music with such lyrics when it is broadcast across the airwaves. I am aware of this matter. It was raised at the last SCAG meeting and we have asked for the broadcasting authority to look at some of these issues. It is all very well for State Ministers to be doing something at the level where such CDs are sold at music stores, but if it is played on the airwaves, then we are fighting a fairly uphill battle.

I have tried to cover the points raised by members in relation to this Bill. I accept that this is a very large piece of legislation which covers a range of material right across-the-board. I hope that, now that we have made this good start, next year we can introduce another Bill such as this one which will tidy up a few other outstanding matters.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. D. E. Beanland (Indooroopilly—Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 59, as read, agreed to.

Clause 60—

Ms SPENCE (4.21 p.m.): Clause 60 deals with the length of time that goods may be detained following their seizure. The Minister is proposing to increase that length of time from 60 days, as it is under the present Act, to a term of one year. I would like some explanation as to why the Minister believes that this is necessary. The Explanatory Notes state that this would only involve cases of seizure of a large number of computer games. What does the department consider to be a "large" number of computer games? Why is a year necessary for the classification of material?

I am particularly concerned about the negative effects on business if goods are

seized and held for a year while they are classified. It might be relatively harmless material and businesses can be greatly disadvantaged if a large amount of their stock is detained for a year and then classified at an acceptable level. With the quirky nature of the computer games industry, by the time the stock comes back to the shop a year later, it may be out of fashion and fairly worthless. Surely it would have to be an extraordinary circumstance for officers to hold goods for a year. I would like some explanation of that point.

Mr BEANLAND: I know the general answer to the question, but if the member would like a more specific answer I had better get one for her. Sixty days is too short a time in which to classify some of these materials. We need to issue certificates and advice needs to be sought in some cases. These are not straightforward matters.

The change will bring more consistency with the Justices Act. For example, prosecutions may be involved and sometimes raids can net a large amount of material. The current time limit in the Act is insufficient for officers to be able to carry out prosecutions. As the member would appreciate, there is a large amount of material coming onto the market now. It is not a small market any more. One has to go through the processes of being able to prepare and bring about prosecutions appropriately. The Office of Consumer Affairs and others who deal with these matters feel that 12 months is more in keeping with legislation elsewhere in the Justice Department, as a certain period is needed to bring prosecutions forward.

Ms SPENCE: I accept the explanation of the Minister. I accept that the department may need a year if the seizure of goods is intended to result in a case for prosecution and that preparation time is needed. However, surely 60 days should be ample time for the department to classify seized material. I would not like to think that officers are seizing material on the basis of classification and waiting for a whole year before returning it. There is something wrong with the process if seized goods cannot be classified within the 60-day term. As I said before, the Minister is going to disadvantage businesses, which may not be doing anything unlawful, if their seized goods are kept for a term longer than 60 days.

Mr BEANLAND: I understand that the Bill states a 12-month period for the classification of material but, of course, once we know that material is okay the office must give it back. We cannot retain material for no

good reason. The only way it can be retained—and we do not say that it will be retained for 12 months—is if a prosecution is going to be undertaken. Of course, we hope that prosecutions can be undertaken expeditiously. There is no reason why a case has to wait for 12 months before being finalised. It is fair to say that we make every effort to ensure that prosecutions are brought on very quickly indeed, because it is in the interests of the department, the Government and the Office of Consumer Affairs to get these prosecutions up and running if we want to send a message to the industry that we will not tolerate this type of material being available within the community. As the honourable member would understand, the Justices Act provides a maximum of 12 months in which to bring a prosecution on. Of course, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and others involved always endeavour to bring prosecutions about in the shortest period possible.

I can understand the concerns of the honourable member, as I have the same concerns. I am quite happy to give an undertaking to the Parliament that we always move to bring about prosecutions as expeditiously as possible and to classify and return lawful material as quickly as possible.

Clause 60, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 61 to 125, as read, agreed to.

Clause 126—

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN (4.27 p.m.): I will try to be brief. This clause relates to an issue that I raised with the Minister during the second-reading debate concerning the listing of the powers of the inspector and the use of the word "or" joining each of those powers. I listened to the Minister's response on the subject, but I was not convinced, I am sorry to say. However, if the Minister was to give the same response in this section of the debate, it would be classed as extrinsic material and the intention of Parliament will be clear to anybody who looks at this issue later.

According to the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, the word "or" means "A particle co-ordinating two (or more) words, phrases, or clauses, between which there is an alternative."

Mr Stephan: I'm glad you told us that.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: I think it is important. I notice the member for Gympie interjecting from a seat other than his own but, as a person who has spent more than a decade in this place looking at legislative

interpretation, he ought to understand that these things can be important.

The issue is that the use of the word "or" may not achieve the purpose that the Minister is looking for. It may denote that an inspector does not have to undertake all of these actions. By definition of the word "or", the clause could limit an inspector to undertaking only one of that list of actions per entry. I think the Chamber will be quite aware that the proper intention of the Bill is that an inspector should be able to undertake any or all of the powers listed in subclauses (a) to (g). In order to achieve that purpose, surely proposed new section 30F(1) could read—and I apologise because I am not a draftsman—"After entering a place under section 30C, an inspector may exercise any or all of the powers mentioned in subsection 2 only if . . ." and then, in subclause 2, remove the word "or" entirely. In plain English, I think that the meaning would then be crystal clear.

I believe that at the moment it is possible to read the clause down to the extent that only one of those powers could be exercised by an inspector on entry to any place. I know that the Minister will say that it is the intention that inspectors will be able to exercise any or all of those powers, but this is a problem in the drafting that needs to be amended at some stage. It must be fixed up in future instances.

Mr BEANLAND: Perhaps the member should refer to the appropriate dictionary—the *Macquarie Dictionary*. The drafting is necessary for the efficacy of the section. That does not mean that only one of those particular sections can be used. It might be that the inspector uses one or a number of them. I think it is okay as it is at the moment. I am quite happy with it the way it is. If we find out that there is a problem, we will address it in a "CLMP" Bill when some other matters will be looked at early next year. We will look at fixing it up then, if there is problem. However, I think it is okay.

Clause 126, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 127 to 140, as read, agreed to.

Clause 141—

Mr BEANLAND (4.31 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

"At page 86, line 5, 'after'—
omit, insert—
'before'."

This amendment corrects an error made when the Bill was drafted. The word "after" needs to be omitted, and the word "before" inserted.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 141, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 142 to 180, as read, agreed to.

Clause 181—

Ms SPENCE (4.33 p.m.): Given the change to the Scout Association legislation, I was wondering why the Scout Association is retaining the word "boy" in its legislation? It was my understanding that they were now called scouts. I would have thought that they would have lobbied the Minister to take this opportunity to make their legislation more gender neutral, given that it is being changed on this occasion.

Mr BEANLAND: Briefly, I understand that this is exactly what they asked for. I am certainly not in the business of telling various interest groups what terminology they should or should not use in their title. We understand that this is what they wanted.

Clause 181, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 182 to 199, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

Third Reading

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

PAPER

The following paper was laid on the table—

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Beanland)—

Department of Justice—Annual Report for 1995-96.

TOWNSVILLE ZINC REFINERY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 30 October (see p. 3658).

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—Leader of the Opposition) (4.36 p.m.): On behalf of the Opposition, I am delighted to be able to lend bipartisan support to the Townsville Zinc Refinery Bill. The Sun Metals zinc refinery is the largest Korean investment in Australia. When its capacity is ultimately doubled by the addition of Stage 2, it will be the largest zinc refinery in the world.

Construction is expected to start after the end of the wet season, probably in early April 1997. The 30-month construction phase will create average employment for 300 and a peak work force of 590. Employment during the operations phase of Stage 1 is estimated

at 350. Through the establishment of the Sun Metals zinc refinery at Townsville we are seeing a welcome and permanent boost in employment in north Queensland.

I note that the Premier has taken the credit for this major project. People such as Wayne Goss, Townsville Mayor Tony Mooney, former Minister Tony McGrady, and the management of Townsville Enterprise must be wondering what happened to all of the hard work they put into this project long before the Premier arrived on the scene. I was in Cabinet when a proposal came forward to deal with electricity prices in relation to this venture. That was a proposal brought by none other than the then Minister for Minerals and Energy. That proposal was supported unanimously by the Cabinet at that time.

Mr McGrady interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: That was on the honourable member's recommendation.

I do not wish to get into a squabble with the Premier over the credit for this important project. It is quite clear who was responsible. The management of Korea Zinc did the really difficult part. It put up the hard cash and it has put its faith in Queensland as a good place to invest—a good judgment. For that, the Opposition thanks it publicly today. In particular, we wish to thank Mr Chang Gurl Choi and his brothers for choosing Townsville and Queensland as the site for their first major investment outside of Korea. I also pay tribute to Mr K. C. Choi, the managing director of Sun Metals Corporation, for his tireless efforts in seeing this project through. I thank key advisers within Sun Metals Corporation—Dr Shad Linley, Mr Geoff Anderson, and Mr Michael Kennedy—for their courtesy in keeping the Opposition informed about the general progress of the zinc refinery project. We look forward to having regular contact with them.

The Townsville zinc refinery is part of Labor's broader vision for industrial development in Queensland. I have already made it clear publicly that, when back in Government, we will have an aggressive policy towards major projects such as this one. We see the cities of Townsville, Gladstone and Brisbane, as well as others, as having the potential to become major industrial centres in the Asia/Pacific region adding value to Queensland's vast natural resources. Under the right economic conditions, Queensland will be capable of processing much of the mineral wealth of the rich north west minerals province, the Cape York bauxite deposits and the output of other mines in the State. I was in

Mount Isa with the Honourable Tony McGrady on Saturday and Sunday when we had a briefing in relation to the Ernest Henry mine. We know the value of the north west minerals province and what it will mean for this State as it becomes very much the jewel in Queensland's mining crown.

In addition, phosphate fertiliser is likely to be produced here in Queensland and used on Queensland farms, displacing imported fertiliser and helping improve Australia's current account position. There is even potential for Queensland to be the location of a major petrochemical operation. The development of a range of manufacturing industries utilising the vast magnesite deposits in Kunwarrara holds enormous potential for the central Queensland economy. The multiple applications of processed magnesium such as refractory bricks, environmental management products and magnesium metal have large and expanding markets as technological development proceeds. I hope the present Government will maintain the support Labor provided to Queensland Metals Corporation in developing these industries. There are huge social benefits to be gained for central Queensland from the stable and diversely skilled employment base that will arise from the growth of these industries.

The Opposition, as the alternative Government, is also keenly watching the countdown to a decision by the Comalco company on whether or not it places the proposed \$4.5 billion alumina refinery in Gladstone or Bowen or opts for Malaysia. We are firmly on the record as being very supportive of that Comalco project, and we urge the Government to do everything within its power to bring that proposal to fruition. We supported it in Government, we support it in Opposition, and we again will support it when we return to Government next year.

I understand that the nature of negotiations on these projects is complex and that the interests of the State must be protected. But there is no doubt that a \$4.5 billion investment in Gladstone or Bowen or Weipa would add considerable strength to the economic structure of Queensland and position it well for further industrial development, particularly in more elaborate manufacturing. It is a tough world out there, and we need to grasp that proposal with both hands and make it a reality. I say to the Minister today that he has our bipartisan support to make that venture a reality.

I note the Government's recent announcement of its intention to promote the

development of the Surat Basin in south-west Queensland. Naturally, we would welcome any such development, and the previous Labor Government was active in exploring means of opening up that region. There are a number of impediments to such development, however, which the introduction of private interests may or may not overcome. I certainly hope that the Government is not focusing on the Surat Basin simply because it cannot claim the north west minerals province as its own initiative.

However, the Government's frequent advocacy of a large coal-fired power station in the area does not sit well with the likely future pattern of energy needs throughout the State. I am concerned that the decision to shift Eastlink further west, which will cost the Queensland taxpayer up to \$150m more than necessary, had more to do with providing a market for this parish-pump power station than any real concern about the impact of transmission lines on people's property. The Minister is aware of our commitment to Eastlink in Government. In Opposition, that commitment remains. We urge the Minister to become part of that national grid.

Investments of the type and scale of the Townsville zinc refinery offer major benefits for Queensland and Australia as a whole, the most central one being jobs, jobs, jobs. They also offer secure and rewarding jobs for young Queenslanders living in our provincial cities. The youth unemployment level in this State is already far too high, and it has been for some time. It is getting worse under this Government. I mentioned earlier in the week that an additional 12,200 Queenslanders have become unemployed since this Government came to office in February. These young people, secure in employment, will find it possible to maintain their family ties and to raise their own families in their home towns and cities instead of being forced to move to south-east Queensland in search of jobs. That is why these ventures are so important. Their spending power will boost our regional economies, making them more viable for other families who gain employment through the provision of support services. The entire skills base will be lifted, providing young Queenslanders with rewarding career paths in sophisticated manufacturing and service industries. We have to remember that Queensland has 3 million people scattered across a huge area. We need to have a degree of decentralisation to make this State work as effectively as it possibly could and should.

An enhanced skills base will also add to the attractiveness of Queensland as a

destination for further investment. The concerns recently expressed by the Chairman of Construction Training Queensland, Mr Walter Sommer, about the net reduction in the number of apprenticeships in his industry highlight the potential bottleneck that an inadequate skills base can create. Mr Sommer believes that there should be 725 more apprenticeships than currently exist if the construction industry is to maintain its capacity to operate at current levels of activity. If the skilled workers are not available, then the job cannot be done and investment will go elsewhere where the requisite skills do exist. This is a matter we have to be particularly concerned about. I urge the Minister to pursue that issue.

We need to ask: what are the conditions that will need to prevail to realise this vision for provincial Queensland? A key ingredient is the provision of efficient and internationally competitive infrastructure such as ports, rail, electricity, gas and water. Infrastructure is the key to our future, particularly from an investment point of view and in terms of jobs and growth. In all of those areas, infrastructure is the key. I know that the Minister will join me in hoping that the Korea Zinc project will act as a catalyst for further investment in Townsville to make it the pre-eminent base metal industrial centre of the Asia/Pacific region. That vision will not be realised unless north Queensland's infrastructure is substantially upgraded. Work is currently under way in expanding and upgrading the port of Townsville—something of which we are very supportive.

Mr McGrady: Hear, hear!

Mr BEATTIE: Indeed, the honourable member was on there—

Mr McGrady: Seventeen years.

Mr BEATTIE: He spent 17 years on the Port of Townsville Authority.

Mr Gibbs: An outstanding contribution.

Mr BEATTIE: Indeed it was.

The Government must now focus on ensuring that Townsville is provided with an efficient and effective rail service and a functional national highway connection and that the region is able to access energy at world competitive prices. The Minister knows that getting access to energy at world competitive prices is fundamentally important to that growth. I would have thought that gas would have been one of the major areas of industry which we would want to see in the north.

Mr Slack: My ministerial statement this morning—

Mr BEATTIE: I am aware of that.

Mr McGrady: With all due respect, Mr Beattie—as you know, in Government we were the ones who were talking about bringing gas to Townsville.

Mr BEATTIE: Indeed, and we will continue that strategy when we are back in Government next year.

Mr FitzGerald: 1998—come off it.

Mr BEATTIE: I beg your pardon! Ray Connor told me earlier it was going to be next year.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: No-one seems to want to own him today!

The Queensland Government has offered Korea Zinc a world competitive electricity price for its first five years of operation. As I indicated earlier, I was a member of Cabinet when that matter was discussed. If we are going to get these ventures here, that is the creative approach we have to take to attract investment to this State. That was a sound decision made by the Goss Cabinet. It made this venture possible; it made it a reality. Those are the sorts of courageous decisions Governments need to make, and the same courageous approach that was followed by the Goss Government at that time needs to be followed in relation to the Comalco refinery to make it a reality as well.

As I said, electricity pricing was a key factor in securing the project for Queensland. The State must now ensure that the economic and policy framework is right so that the market can supply Korea Zinc's future electricity needs. If the Townsville zinc refinery is to proceed to Stage 2 and if other projects like it are to go ahead, north Queensland will need a base load power station to generate electricity at internationally competitive rates. I stress that it has to be at internationally competitive rates. It is a tough world out there, as I said earlier. There are other opportunities. That is what we need to do. The Government plays an important role in determining whether this will occur, and it has to provide leadership.

Mr McGrady: And vision.

Mr BEATTIE: And vision. It is not good enough to have people running around north Queensland like chooks with their heads cut off, trying to look important for the *Townsville Bulletin*. What is important is that the Government makes the decisions that matter,

not politicians who want to put their head up whenever a camera is around.

The Minister for Mines and Energy is currently considering a report on the restructuring of the Queensland electricity industry. The Government's response to the report is being eagerly awaited by the industry and the Opposition, as it will determine the extent to which the private sector will invest in the Queensland energy sector, especially in north Queensland. Today, I attended a lunch at the Brisbane Club with members of the board of Mount Isa Mines. They were holding their annual shareholders meeting to which they invited both the Premier and myself.

Mr McGrady: Was the member for Springwood there?

Mr BEATTIE: No, that member was not there, but during that lunch, I talked to Brisbane's and Queensland's leading business community. They are very concerned about the future of the electricity industry and they are keen to see the Government's response to this report. I signal to the Government, in a non-political way, that the industry and the business leaders are waiting to know what it is going to do in relation to electricity. I urge the Government to not delay any longer. Business people who came to talk to me, who have probably never voted for my party in their life—with a bit of luck they will see the light and do it in the future—indicated that they believe there has been too much delay in the consideration of this electricity report and they believe that the Cabinet should be considering it and should be making a decision so that there is some certainty in the industry.

This report will also determine the extent to which Queensland will maintain its current competitiveness with other States which are jostling for new industrial investment. The Minister has just returned from a trade trip to India for which, as he indicated in this House on a previous occasion, he had bipartisan support. He attended the New Horizons launch in India, and I commend him for attending that, but he knows that overseas we are competing against not only other countries but also other States in Australia. It is very much the model that has been followed in the United States and other European countries. That is the model of the future.

I am aware that we are one nation, but we will be competitive with other States. For example—and the Minister knows this—Western Australia has become very aggressive in its operations in India. Indeed, when in Shanghai, the Premier was talking about the competitiveness of other States—

and I am not being unkind—and he said that we needed to improve our competitiveness in these areas. I share that view. We need to make certain that we are there and we are being competitive, and electricity and other infrastructure is the key to that.

The Government's recent announcement of two peak load power stations to be fired by liquid fuel but with a capacity for translation to gas does help to resolve the absence of local electricity supply capacity. The production cost of power through these stations, however, will be very high and industry is not likely to be attracted to buy their output, at least in the short to medium term. That is the point the Honourable Tony McGrady has been making, and I make that point again here today. There still appears to be a strong case for a base load power station in the north to assure potential industry investors of a reliable and approximate source of energy. In fact, it is fair to say that that is the key to it.

If the Government decides to install a large base load power station on the Darling Downs to export subsidised power to New South Wales, as was mooted by the Minister for Mines and Energy in the recent Estimates debate, the prospects of base load power in the north will be dashed. It is that simple. That is not a solution to the energy and power needs of north Queensland. Gone with it will be the legitimate hopes of Townsville and north Queensland for the development of a large and sustainable employment base for its citizens. I urge the Minister to have some discussion with the Minister for Mines and Energy to try to resolve this problem sooner rather than later.

The Government must not sell out north Queensland for the sake of saving face over its reckless decision to abandon Eastlink. New South Wales already has massive excess capacity and prices are cheap, so why should Queensland subsidise New South Wales electricity consumers by selling them electricity below the true cost of producing it? That does not make sense in anybody's language, and to do so would be an act of treachery to north Queensland. The Opposition calls on the Government to abandon this expensive folly before it goes any further.

Instead of interfering in the electricity market, the Government should allow buyers and sellers of electricity to negotiate directly and come to commercial terms. However, if the Government cannot resist getting involved, it should ensure that 600 to 700 megawatts of base load capacity is located near Townsville. It is that simple.

The second condition for the achievement of our vision for provincial Queensland, when we are back in office, is the establishment of a regional industrial waste facility in north Queensland. While the Government has been talking about this for some time, we have seen very little or no action.

Mr Slack: You had six years. We have had eight months.

Mr BEATTIE: I am happy for the Minister to outline in his reply exactly what he is doing, and if he goes down that course of action soon, he will have my support and the support of the Opposition. I can do no more than that.

We still await the revised guidelines for the private provision of infrastructure the Government has been promising for many months. The Environment Minister, Mr Littleproud, has been making the right noises about regional waste facilities; now it is time for some action, though having seen his performance in recent times, I will not be holding my breath.

That brings me to the third condition, that is, leadership by the Government. There are many ingredients that make overseas investment work, and leadership by the Government is one. The business community is begging this Government for some leadership and some real decisions. Again, at the MIM lunch today, that was one of the other key messages I received. People believe that this Government is directionless, rudderless and without leadership. The Government is intent on waging war with the CJC instead of getting on with the job of governing. The business community is begging this Government for some leadership and some real decisions. That is what they want.

I call on the Premier and the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—although there is probably more sense to just call on the Premier—to stop attacking the public's independent watchdog and concentrate on getting the Queensland economy moving again. The Opposition is willing to play its part by giving bipartisan support to major projects such as the Townsville zinc refinery, and Labor is also committed to aggressively promoting Queensland as a destination for investment and as a source of quality competitive products for markets around the world.

We will always be concerned to see that any environmental impacts are minimised, and I endorse the environmental agreement that has been reached between the Government and Sun Metals after the completion and

evaluation of a full impact assessment statement. That agreement gives some indication on how these matters can proceed.

Mr Stoneman interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: One of the things we will not be doing is sending that member anywhere because he is an embarrassment. It is essential that any mineral processing project located near the coastline bordering the Great Barrier Reef achieves the highest environmental standards, and we will want to be assured that licence conditions are being met at all times.

The passage of this Bill clears the way for the Townsville zinc refinery to proceed. The Opposition is pleased to be able to demonstrate to Korea Zinc and to the people of Townsville that it is committed to this important project, which began under our Government, now going ahead without delay, and it is pleased to demonstrate that it is committed to developing the Queensland economy by supporting projects which will yield jobs and other real benefits to the people of Queensland and which meet appropriate standards of environmental management.

In conclusion, I thank the Minister for his briefings on this matter and I put on the public record the bipartisanship which he has demonstrated in relation to this Bill and with which we have reciprocated. Right from the beginning, when the Minister signalled to us the need for this legislation, we made it clear that we would support him and that we would also be prepared to support this matter going through the Parliament as quickly as possible to make it a reality. The Minister has dealt with us in good faith. He is well regarded by the Opposition on these matters and we will be happy to deal with him on these and other matters to make certain that these major projects become a reality for this State.

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (5 p.m.): It gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise and support this Bill, which is supported by the entire Parliament and the overwhelming majority of people not only in Queensland but in Australia. This is a most significant day in the life of the development of this State, its progress and, if one likes, its capacity to move into the next century with some confidence that, once again, it is attracting investment of the magnitude that the Korea Zinc project has brought.

It is worth while mentioning that we are all going to have to condition ourselves to changing the reference to Korea Zinc to Sun Metals. That is the new company name, which

was developed in consultation with the people of north Queensland. In fact, it was developed through a competition within schools in the area. It is a most appropriate name.

I join with the Leader of the Opposition in congratulating the various people who have been involved in bringing this to fruition. In common with the Leader of the Opposition, on behalf of us all I am thankful for the confidence displayed by the chairman of Korea Zinc, Mr C. G. Choi, his brother Mr C. K. Choi, who is the company president, and another brother—who is somewhat indisposed at the moment—C. Y. Choi. That company, particularly the family operation, has developed the project under the local leadership of Mr K. C. Choi, who is not a relative of the other three, and the team he has around him. I will talk about that in a moment.

It is an enormous vote of confidence in the people of this State and its Government that such an enormous investment has been made thousands and thousands of miles away from home territory. Support has been given to the project over a number of years by people such as those at Townsville Enterprise, who are really the ones who must get the accolade for maintaining the rage, so to speak, and for making sure that this did not go away.

I also pay tribute to the former member for Mundingburra, Mr Ken Davies, for the part that he played. It was very significant in those early days, in the intervening time and, I suppose, in the dying days of the Goss Government. I do not want to get into a political slanging match about this, but the fact of the matter is that, unfortunately, the Labor Party did not hand over a tidy program. In many instances, it was back to go again. That is a fact of life, but I do not believe that we should diminish or demean the input that all parties have had. I acknowledge particularly Mayor Mooney, the Townsville City Council, Townsville Enterprise, led by Professor Ted Scott and Mr Richard Power, and the Chamber of Commerce, where Mal Missingham is the president. I acknowledge also all those people—who are too numerous to mention—who have been part and parcel of drawing together the commercial and social components of the community, particularly in the Townsville region. My involvement in this started before we came to Government. I must say that my involvement was not enhanced by consultation with the former Goss Government or any of its Ministers. Not once did they suggest a briefing.

Mr Beattie: He makes bipartisanship very difficult, doesn't he?

Mr STONEMAN: The Leader of the Opposition thanked the Minister and various people for briefings. Unfortunately, that was not forthcoming from the former Government to me, as the member in whose electorate the project and the refinery are to be sited. That is unfortunate. However, I accept that the Leader of the Opposition has now acknowledged the changed circumstances. That is as it should be.

Recently, I was fortunate enough to be able to travel to Korea. I believe that was a necessary exercise. I went there as the local member and the Premier's representative in north Queensland. I had a look at the project and was able to come back and talk with confidence about the development and the company that is going to be undertaking that development. On that trip I was accompanied by Mr Tony Krimmer, the Director-General of the Department of Economic Development and Trade, which is the lead agency in that particular project. Mr John Gilmour of the Department of Environment also was there. It is very important that the environmental components and assessment and understanding of the project be embraced by that department. For the three of us, it was a salutary lesson in the need to communicate with project operators and innovators. More particularly, we were able to look at the pros and cons of an operation as it might impact in our midst here.

I acknowledge the hospitality and the courtesy extended to us by the executives of Korea Zinc. Mr Shad Linley, who is a consultant to that company, travelled with us. He is a great character in his own right. He has a great deal of expertise and, obviously, has the confidence of his employers. More particularly, the local team with whom we were involved included Michael Kennedy, one of the directors, Shad Linley—as I said—and Paul Salmon. I also mention an unfortunate accident that befell Mr Eddie Boggiano, the environmental manager, who was formerly employed by the Queensland Government in Townsville. I wish him well in his continuing recovery, because he is a very important link in the chain of communications.

Our visit to Korea involved travelling to Ulsan in the south-east of Korea to look at the refinery, which is almost a quarter of a century old. It is operated by Korea Zinc in Onsan—another area in that region of Korea. We also looked at the industrial estate area of

which the Korea Zinc refinery and lead smelter is a part. It was quite a remarkable experience.

Today, I have here the gloves that were given to me by the management of the refinery. I will put them on to show members. I wore them for the whole day. On the back of them is a bit of grease from when I got out of the car. Honourable members can see that that is the dirtiest part of them. I went around the whole factory, the whole refinery and the port wearing those gloves. One would have expected that a lead and zinc refinery would have a lot of dust and so on associated with it. But after going up hill, down dale, up stairs, around rails and across rooftops, that is all the muck that accumulated on these gloves during the whole day. They have not been washed. I asked if I could bring them back, and they allowed me to do so. They are a great advertisement for that sort of refinery. I remind members that the new refinery will involve technology that is a quarter of a century newer.

I am sure that the Government will be harangued from the member for Everton about the environmental impacts. People such as Mr Jeremy Taeger, who constantly seeks to create misunderstanding and raise fears about the impact of this project, should sit down and talk to the people who know. I table these gloves for the benefit of honourable members opposite.

After going right through that whole refinery, I then came to the water outlet. After the water has been through the various bits and pieces, washing the zinc and everything, it finally comes out, runs into the river and then into the ocean. I was very interested to have a look at that water, because effluent disposal is a very important component of the Townsville refinery. That water looked clear. I asked them, "Is it clean?" They said, "Yes." I said, "Can you drink it?" They said, "Oh, well, yes." So I did. I drank it. I have a photograph of me drinking the water at the tail end of the zinc refinery in Korea.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr STONEMAN: I table that photograph for the benefit of the honourable member. He can have a look at it. I will sign it for him, if he likes. That water was marginally salty, but it was certainly no worse than water that I have tasted from bores in western Queensland.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr STONEMAN: I think my hair might have grown a little since then. It certainly has down the back.

The effluent, including the water from the Townsville refinery, will not go into the sea. None of it will. It will be recycled and used for irrigation. However, if it were to go into the sea, I would be totally at ease with the fact that it would have no impact at all on the environment anywhere—none whatsoever. Regardless of what the Jeremy Taegers of the world might like to say, if I can drink the water from the outflow of a 24-year-old factory, I think the community need have absolutely no fear whatsoever, particularly when one considers the new technologies that will be used at Townsville. I have seen film clips suggesting that the refinery is being built in wetlands areas. I believe that some people are trying to undermine not only the community in which they live but also the future prosperity of that community and this State. It bodes ill if we have to continue to put up with that sort of rubbish. The consultative process that has been undertaken through the officers of State Government departments and the company and the technologies that we will be able to experience are a credit to everyone. I particularly compliment that company's technicians for that.

Obviously, that very high-tech refinery had a lot of computerisation. At one stage, my colleagues and I were looking at the smokestack emissions relating to a particular area of the refinery. The level hovered on zero parts per million for some time. We decided that the gauge must have been broken. Suddenly, the gauge flicked to 1 to 1.25, back to 1, to zero. Obviously, something has to go up the smokestack, but the emission was very minimal. Korea has very stringent requirements and those demands in Korea will form part of what is required in north Queensland. As I said earlier, at that refinery there was absolutely no smoke or dust. The industrial estate was cleaner than virtually any single factory that I have visited in Australia. That huge industrial estate in Korea contained a multitude of refineries and factories and it was as clean as a whistle.

We visited the port to see the unloading procedure. The same system will be used in Townsville. There was absolutely no spillage or dust. Nothing was going into the water, unlike most Australian unloading facilities where one sees ore dropping into the water. We visited that port in our suits and white gloves, and one could have eaten off the floor of that port. That was remarkable and it is the case across the country. Korea is a remarkable country. We need to understand the enormous input Koreans have into ensuring that their

environmental outcomes are of the highest order. They have been successful.

People in my electorate in Townsville have been concerned because some suburbs are slightly downwind of the refinery. I am confident that there will not be a problem. However, we need to communicate that. I have taken slides and we need to set up a public relations system. I know that the company is undertaking that now. I will be delighted to help, because we also need to ensure that people understand what they are hearing and that they are comfortable with it. If concerns do emerge, we need to be able to embrace those concerns. I am confident that, in dealing with Sun Metals, the community will have nothing to fear.

This investment will be the catalyst for greater investment not only across north Queensland but also across Queensland and Australia. I do not think that we can overstate the confidence that this will bring to investors around the world. It will certainly have a flow-on effect for areas such as lead, phosphate and the gas pipeline that will potentially benefit the power generating facilities being planned for Townsville to enable them to go from peak load to base load stations. It is an enormous opportunity for the gas pipeline and the further opportunities that it provides. It may provide the opportunity for Comalco to move into Bowen. Bowen is like Gladstone used to be 25 or 30 years ago and it needs desperately to have a catalytic development. I would like to think that Comalco will continue to focus on a refinery there.

Developments such as this create an enormous amount of local employment. For people in the manufacturing area, the refinery is an enormous project which has to be built. All categories of professional people will be required to work at the refinery. That will bring greater prosperity to the area. There will more housing.

It is very interesting that so many Koreans do not understand Queensland or north Queensland. This project is giving them a particular point of focus on Townsville and north Queensland, so the whole region stands to benefit from people visiting to see what this country in which their own country has invested so much is like.

While I was in Korea, I was fortunate enough to visit the Mayor of Suwon City, Mr Sim. A sister city relationship is being developed with Townsville and I congratulate Mayor Mooney, his council and all those associated with developing that sister city relationship. That city is the administrative

centre for Kyonggi province. A sister State relationship is in the process of being developed with Queensland. It is most fortuitous that we have all of those links. I was taken to lunch in Kyonggi province by the vice governor, who showed great hospitality and great interest in Queensland. That province has 8 million people and an unemployment rate of 1 per cent. In fact, they are importing people from other countries for employment. That province has no natural resources whatsoever. It has no timber or metals and it has to import everything; yet it has an unemployment level of under 1 per cent. That is quite a remarkable exhibition of what can be achieved.

I do not want to take any more of the time of the House. I am very proud to have been a part of the Government that has brought this project to fruition in consultation with people at the local and Federal level. A great deal of cooperation has existed across-the-board. There has been a determination to successfully bring this project to the point at which we can pass legislation as one of the very final steps before the commencement of the operation becomes a physical fact of life. I congratulate the Minister and the officers of his department for the way in which they have maintained the progress. They brought it to fruition. I thank members on both sides of the House for the support that they are giving the people of north Queensland. We will make sure that that support is not misplaced and ensure that Sun Metals has a happy home for many years, and one on which we hope they will build in north Queensland.

Hon. G. N. SMITH (Townsville) (5.20 p.m.): I rise in support of the project and the legislation that is necessary to ensure the orderly progress of that development. This is the first major development in north Queensland since Queensland Nickel was built in the very early seventies, so it is a very significant event for Queensland. It is very significant for Townsville. It helps to redefine Townsville as the industrial centre and the centre of production in north Queensland.

I am very pleased that the Minister has recognised that this was a Goss Government initiative and that the former Minister, Mr McGrady, was very much involved in this project. I think that we need to recognise the role that Mr McGrady played because of the central issue of the facilitation of the electricity supply to this project. Undoubtedly, lots of other people had an input.

The fact of life is that there is very tight competition on an international and national

basis for these projects. On this occasion, the decision came down to whether to locate the project in Townsville or in Gladstone. Both sites offered certain advantages, and both sites had detracting features. Townsville's major advantage was its proximity to Mount Isa, which we hope will be the main source of supply of zinc ore for the plant.

Mr Stoneman: They are taking about 80 per cent now.

Mr SMITH: I will come to that. Undoubtedly, people have to recognise that Governments have to give way to some extent and that the plant does come at some cost to Government by way of concessions, in particular, electricity concessions. Nevertheless, the spin-off benefits have more than justified those concessions.

I have to say that I am quite delighted that this Minister has been charged with the responsibility of overseeing this project. Members on this side feel much more comfortable dealing with this Minister than the Premier or his Treasurer.

Mr Stoneman interjected.

Mr SMITH: I will ignore that. Nevertheless, the unsatisfactory situation remains in that State Governments throughout the country have to bear the costs of infrastructure in regard to getting these projects off the ground. The Federal Government is the major beneficiary of such projects by way of export income and it just seems to me to be quite wrong that Federal Governments are not prepared to assist to a greater degree than they have in the period that I have been in this Parliament. I think that in that regard there is an imbalance.

Of course, for many, many years a zinc refinery has been a prospect for Townsville—right back to the days when I worked for the electricity authority. Mount Isa Mines had undertaken a feasibility study for this project, which was updated regularly. Of course, the development associations were forever dusting it off. I have to say that one of the impediments to the project going ahead was the cost of electricity, which involved such schemes as Mount Isa Mines taking over the Collinsville Power Station and seeking agreement to transmit electricity over supply authority lines. All of those sorts of things were considered, but the benefits never quite added up. So it is really a significant achievement to get this project for Townsville at this time when competition is, in fact, tighter than it has ever been before. That takes a lot of sensible negotiations and give and take.

In common with the member for Burdekin, I give credit to the development agencies and, in particular, Townsville Enterprise—Richard Power with his enthusiasm and Ted Scott with his diplomacy. I think that they are a very good team. They worked in conjunction with the Townsville Port Authority, which the member for Burdekin did not mention. I think that the authority played a much greater role than did the Chamber of Commerce—not that I am criticising the Chamber of Commerce, but I think its role was very much a secondary role compared with that of other agencies—and, of course, the Townsville City Council played a role. The officers of the council certainly had a very big input. I believe that the State Government has worked well with the council and that there has been an exchange of information.

Very often, the professional officers of the Government do not get a mention. Because of my past association with DBIRD, which was involved in major developments, I know that the unsung heroes of the department are probably lurking in the background. They do the sums and they do the quiet negotiations. Quite frankly, without those people and their professionalism, we would never get these projects off the drawing board. So I give credit to them as well.

Mr Stoneman referred to Mr Davies, the former member for Mundingburra, who accompanied Mayor Mooney to Korea where they had face-to-face discussions with the principal of Sun Metals. I certainly concur with the member in that those face-to-face discussions probably gave the assurance that Sun Metals wanted. In fact, a recent article in the Townsville newspaper indicated that the people from Sun Metals were very impressed with the sophistication of Townsville City and that of the officers with whom they dealt. Of course, that includes the Government officers. So I think that a lot of people can take credit for this project.

From the psychological point of view, this project comes at a very important time for Townsville. In recent times, it has suffered setbacks such as the loss of the cement plant. Bulk cement is now shipped into Townsville, which certainly has meant that Townsville has lost a lot of jobs. In more recent times the copper refinery, which has always been seen as a symbol of Townsville's industrial standing, has retracted from very important value-adding areas and is now going to concentrate on producing copper ingots. The rod mill has disappeared.

Mr Stoneman: The meatworks.

Mr SMITH: That is true. One of the meatworks has gone. So this project comes at a time when it has the capacity to inject some confidence into the city, and I am certainly grateful for that.

The legislation is necessary to provide certainty to the developers. When developers are wanting to put forward half a billion dollars, one cannot expect them to do that without any certainty and, more importantly, an assurance that once a project is commenced, it is not going to be interrupted by some unforeseen event. So for that reason we have to recognise that special legislation will be required. I do not regard it as terribly complex legislation; it is sensible legislation. However, it provides a level of assurance.

Naturally, there will be some objection to the project from a range of people. Those objectors have a perfect right to voice their objections and they have a right to receive responses to the issues that they raise. I certainly do not support development at any cost. However, there has to be some give and take, otherwise no projects would get off the ground: developers would simply go elsewhere. In Queensland, we are able to offer resources, infrastructure, an educated and skilled work force, political stability and good international relations. As I said, Korea Zinc regards Australia, Queensland and Townsville as having all of those desirable attributes.

Some people have argued that the plant should have been placed in a more remote location. Sure, we could all argue that; we could all voice those types of views. I am sure that Mr Stoneman would probably agree—and I would agree—that it would be nice to do that. However, the reality is that a remote location adds costs to a project. When one considers how finely balanced some of these projects are, one realises that the additional construction costs and operating costs that would be incurred by siting the project in a remote location puts it out of the range of being a viable proposition. So to a large extent we have to live with it—but, as I said, not at all costs.

A member referred to pollution levels. Today, modern plants usually have containment areas. I was very impressed with one particular aspect of this plant, which is that during times of rain or storms the catchment area would be sufficient to catch all the first run-off, which presumably would contain any spilled pollutants. Of course, that water could be treated before it is discharged. I think that that ought to provide a fair bit of confidence to

those people who have concerns about possible run-off.

Mr Stoneman: In Korea, one of their main holding areas for some of the by-product and so on, you can drink out of it as well after that.

Mr SMITH: I heard the honourable member make that comment.

Mr Stoneman: It's very good.

Mr SMITH: I do not doubt it. The professional officers, the member for Burdekin, the mayor and others have seen plants in Korea using the new process which, of course, is very different from the old process. Perhaps there is not the same degree of concern about the new process. However, I suppose that the legacy of the old process lives on and one can understand why people question it.

I understand that the company has been very accommodating about the protection of the Aboriginal burial ground. It has agreed to cede some 44 hectares because previous investigations have identified a significant archaeological site in the sand dune area to the north of the smelter site. An impact assessment study has confirmed that the archaeological site extends into the sand dune area on the smelter site and no archaeological material was located outside the sand dune area. The site, known as the Sandfly Creek site, is considered to be archaeologically significant. It is the only known surviving Aboriginal burial ground in the Queensland coastal zone. Because of this significance, the dune area will be excluded from the development area of the smelter. Early on Korea Zinc agreed that it would consider any reasonable request to excise that area. In his second-reading speech, the Minister stated that it has been agreed that the site of approximately 44 hectares will be protected.

The matter of an enlarged water supply has arisen. It is unfortunate that the company did not identify immediately what its requirements were, because the installation of an enlarged pipe has put a burden on the Townsville/Thuringowa water board. That cost was not factored into the original Government package. I am not certain that that issue has been resolved totally. I have received a note from the Minister in response to a question, but it seems that there is still a question about who bears the cost. The Minister might like to comment on that.

The adjoining communities of Sandy Bend and Phantom Retreat have an expectation that they may be able to get water from the extended supply, and it would mean

a lot to those communities if that water was available. They do not expect to receive the water without cost, but it would be good if their needs could be accommodated.

Lastly, I turn to the very serious issue of the road. The Minister's consultations with the Townsville City Council have been long and considered. However, I believe that the question of road use has not been properly resolved. As I understand it—and Mr Stoneman made this point before—it may well be that if 80 per cent or more of the zinc concentrate comes from Mount Isa, perhaps the need for a special road from the smelter site to the port will be reduced. I concede that.

I understand that a company would not want to put itself into a position where it could essentially be held hostage to one supplier of ore, and that makes sense. Perhaps the agreement has been formulated so that if in fact negotiations with the potential supplier, Mount Isa Mines, do not go smoothly, the company can indicate other sources. I hope that does not happen. I hope that the refinery can be supplied 100 per cent, although that will probably never happen. However, if we get to the stage where a significant level of the concentrate is imported, I believe that there will be an obligation on the Government and the company to come to a sensible arrangement with the Townsville council to build a dedicated road and to take the impact away from the suburbs of Townsville.

Mr WELFORD (Everton) (5.35 p.m.): It is my pleasure to speak in support of this legislation. Of course, a number of issues have been raised by honourable members and, as the Opposition spokesperson for Environment, I want to address some of the issues relating to this major project which do impact on environmental considerations.

At the outset, I welcome investment in this country by investors from Asia. What the former Prime Minister said the other day is quite right: whether we like it or not, we are enmeshed in the economy of the Asia/Pacific region. It is in our national long-term interests to work closely with our partners in Asia in a whole range of areas, not least of which is projects like this one which will be of some benefit to Australia. Certainly, Townsville and the north Queensland region will benefit greatly from the project. The region has not had a major project for many years. Hopefully, this project will help to enliven the economy of the north Queensland region and bring to it greater diversity of economic activity.

The disparaging comments made by some members of the Government in relation

to members of the environmental movement do them no credit. The simple reality is that Jeremy Taeger and any other environmentalist in this State is entitled to address concerns as they see them in relation to any major project that comes to this State. They are entitled, as are all Queenslanders, to have those concerns taken seriously and addressed in the process of approvals that are given by Government. It is in relation to future approval processes that I think members of this Parliament ought to express some concern.

The fundamental element of this legislation is to set aside the requirement for an application to be made to rezone the site in terms of the uses proposed. That does away with third-party appeal rights that currently exist under local government and planning legislation—legislation which would otherwise apply to any other development by any other person, including Australians, within our State's boundaries. It is not the case that exceptions cannot be made to that rule. Exceptions can certainly be made to the rule. There are plenty of precedents where the Parliament has, through legislation, made provision for projects of the scale and importance of this project in terms of its potential economic benefits. However, it needs to be recognised that special consideration has been given. I have some concerns, not so much about this legislation in particular but about subsequent approval processes. In particular, I am concerned about the opportunity that the Queensland community will have to participate in those processes. I wish to ensure that, whichever Government is overseeing those processes, they cover all the issues of relevance to environmental and community concerns.

There are significant economic benefits as well as benefits of technology transfer which are to be welcomed. In particular, having travelled to Korea I am very familiar with the aggressive improvement in approach to environmental management which the Korean Government and Korean industry is now pursuing. The Korean Government is encouraging its people to travel throughout the world to source the very best technologies and practices in environmental management. Therefore, Korean industry will practise environmental management in a way that is ecologically sustainable—indeed, as we hope Australian industry does. There are enormous opportunities for Australian companies to engage with Korean investors in joint ventures and other activities, both on our shores and overseas.

As I say, this Bill needs to be approached with some caution. The legislation is, in effect, a ministerial rezoning in the sense that the Minister has proposed legislation which effectively rezones the site without the normal appeal processes being pursued. There has been some concern raised that this has occurred in the context of the current Townsville industrial land project which is designed to identify the future development of industrial land in the Townsville region. Certainly, there is an important role for Government to play in planning regionally for both industrial and urban development generally. We need to be conscious of the impacts which large scale development will have.

I note from the legislation that the Column 1 Purposes, which are as-of-right uses, include activities that go beyond smelting. The purposes include the reprocessing of waste products and power generation. Those two elements are significant and potentially substantial additional projects that are required, but in terms of this legislation they require no special planning approval.

However, those elements will potentially require further environmental impact assessment and further environmental licensing under the Queensland Environmental Protection Act. However, as I have already indicated, not only is the approval process in terms of third-party rights excluded in relation to rezoning; I draw to the Minister's attention the fact that under the Environmental Protection Act the rights for community participation in the allocation of licenses have yet to be proclaimed under that legislation. I ask the Minister to take that point on board and to encourage the Environment Minister to bring forward that process so that, in subsequent approval processes, the rights of the community are protected.

The environmental impact statement has addressed Stage 1 of the project, although this legislation appears to provide zoning approvals that go beyond the types of uses to which the EIS itself was addressing. So it does permit some major expansion of Stage 1 as of right in respect of the zoning approvals. As I said, at this stage there is no opportunity for public input into or public scrutiny of Government and departmental approval deliberations at the later stage of environmental licensing. To me, that raises some concerns. In saying that, I do not cast any aspersions upon the project proponent, the investor or the project itself.

I have a great deal of confidence that the technologies in environmental management are developing so rapidly that these sorts of projects can be adequately and realistically addressed in an ecologically sustainable way. However, it is the processes of Government decision making that need to be open to scrutiny, and it is that issue that requires the rights of third parties to be involved in those decision-making processes affecting EPA licensing down the track.

In the agreement with the company, under clause 6, there is also a provision for a further impact assessment study to be undertaken with respect to further stages of the development following the provision of a feasibility study in respect of Stage 2. The feasibility study is to be commenced within one year of the commissioning of the operation. Following that feasibility study, the Minister will have a discretion to either require or dispense with an impact assessment study, if he or she is satisfied that the further stage is not likely to cause a substantial increase in the risk of environmental harm.

I have already raised with the Minister my expectation that, in the event that that discretion were to be exercised either by himself or any other Minister of the Government at the time, I think it would be desirable that that discretion be exercised publicly and that the reasons for the decision to dispense with any further impact assessment study be made public and open to scrutiny. Currently, there is neither provision for that in the Bill nor in the agreement with the company—not that there needs to be any provision in the agreement. Since it is not in the legislation, I seek from the Minister an undertaking that that would occur.

In respect of emissions from the site, which is one of the other issues raised in public discussion relating to these matters, liquid waste emissions will go to a new treatment plant at Cleveland Bay to be operated by the Townsville City Council. The sludge wastes, including heavy metal contaminant from that treatment plant, will be returned to the site of the Townsville refinery, with an intention that that material is dealt with either on site or elsewhere through further refining and appropriate disposal processes down the track.

Also, zinc ferrite surplus will be disposed of to settlement ponds, pending the provision of a reprocessing plant, the technology for which is said to be already accessible to Sun Metals and which will presumably be put in place in accordance with the time limits given

in the commitments previously advised to the Government. The issue of why those reprocessing facilities were not required at the commencement of the project was raised. I understand that there is an opportunity to apply future and perhaps better technologies within the next couple of years. Elsewhere in the world, the company is already conducting such reprocessing plants and will no doubt learn from that experience over the next year or two, with a view to siting in Queensland the very best technology for reprocessing zinc ferrite. There is some rational justification for not requiring it immediately. Hopefully, we will benefit from the experience currently being gained from similar plants elsewhere.

The other emission is the air emission of sulfur dioxide, which is required to be maintained within specified limits. Those limits have been set in the context of some preliminary air shed studies being undertaken in the Townsville region. However, I understand that those studies are not conclusive. Although there is an expectation that the studies will come up to standard and be totally satisfactory in terms of the sulfur dioxide emissions that are likely from the site, it is a matter of slight concern that whichever Government is in office should make sure that these sorts of preliminary environmental assessments are comprehensive and complete before a project proceeds.

Notwithstanding the best of intentions by all parties involved, if it transpires that the emissions are subsequently found to exceed those levels that might be acceptable for that particular air shed or the carrying capacity of that particular region, we would be left in a very difficult situation. Air pollution is one of the most significant factors impacting on people's health and is one of the biggest problems facing cities in this country and elsewhere in the world in the present era. One would have preferred that the Government had put a little more effort into finalising the assessment of air shed studies in the Townsville region. We take on trust the current Government's intention that the studies that will be done subsequently will be sufficient to satisfy any concerns relating to environmental impacts.

It should be said that it is not just Korea Zinc and Sun Metals Corporation which are making a substantial investment in this project; the people of Queensland are also making a substantial investment in this project. The previous Government did a lot of work on this project through Cabinet to bring this project to the stage at which it is now. There is still a lot of work to be done. Construction is yet to be undertaken. Lots of consultation and approval

processes have yet to be finalised. However, it needs to be acknowledged that the Queensland people, through their Governments, have made a significant effort to bring this project to Queensland. In that sense, although the project is owned by Sun Metals, it is very much a joint venture between the people of this State and the foreign company which is coming here to undertake this enterprise.

When we were in office, the Queensland Government provided a 30 per cent discount on the royalties payable for any zinc which is value added in Queensland. In addition, we provided a range of other facilitating concessions and contributions to bring the project to fruition. I make no criticism of that contribution. I think that is entirely appropriate. However, the contribution needs to be recognised by all of us and taken into account in our assessment of what sorts of projects we truly want to bring to Queensland and what value we wish to derive from them. I speak not just in employment terms but also in respect of the range of ancillary social benefits that we seek to draw from any investment in this country.

I think I have addressed most of the issues that relate to environmental factors affecting this facility. As I said, there are both threats and opportunities arising from a project of this scale. It will need to be managed carefully. I have confidence that the project's proponents do genuinely seek to develop this project in a way that is ecologically sustainable and consistent, as the agreement requires, with best practice environmental management. But it will be the responsibility of the Queensland Government to work closely with Sun Metals and to work closely with the Queensland community to ensure that the very best technologies and practices are employed in this project so that we set in this State an example of what truly can be achieved with substantial economic development projects.

The real challenge for Queensland in the years ahead and into the next century is not just to undertake large-scale economic development in a glassy-eyed way, as members like the member for Burdekin would seem to do, but to undertake economic development which is economically, socially and environmentally of significant benefit to the people of Queensland and which demonstrates our capacity to undertake projects in an ecologically sustainable way. I support the Bill.

Hon. D. J. SLACK (Burnett—Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier) (5.52 p.m.), in reply: I thank the members of the Opposition and the Leader of the Opposition for their bipartisan support for this Bill. I also take this opportunity to thank those people who have been mentioned by previous speakers. In particular, I want to acknowledge K. C. Choi, the managing director of Korea Zinc Sun Metals, who is in the gallery, and the team from Korea Zinc Sun Metals that is in the gallery. I thank also the officers of my department who have worked through this project during the time of the previous Government and during the term of the coalition Government. Their contribution should be acknowledged. It has been quite substantial. Naturally, they have been involved in the negotiation process. I want to thank the Townsville City Council for its contribution. There has been a very good, cooperative contribution from all the parties involved to bring this project to fruition.

I note that the time is six minutes to six. The prime objective is to get the Bill through all stages prior to 6 o'clock. Therefore, I am unfortunately not able to address the issues raised by the various speakers.

Mr Welford: We're not going to speak to any clauses.

Mr SLACK: I understand that. I will respond in writing to the issues of a specific nature raised by the member for Townsville and other members.

The member for Everton raised the issue of clause 6.3 in the agreement titled "Condition to Further Stages". It states—

"An impact assessment study will be required for each Further Stage except where the Minister is satisfied in respect of a particular Further Stage that that Further Stage is not likely to cause a substantial increase in the risk of environmental harm because of a substantial change in"—

and it goes on to explain that particular matter. I accept the points raised by the member for Everton and can assure him that I or any future Minister would make such a decision in a public manner. Naturally, that decision applies only to minor issues. Any major issues will require the IASs that are referred to in the agreement.

Once again, I thank all honourable members for their contributions. I pay tribute to the members of both the previous Government and this Government who have been involved in this development for the

contributions that they have made. I acknowledge the contribution of people from Korea Zinc Sun Metals in bringing this historic legislation and agreement to fruition. I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 14 and Schedules 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

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

PAPER

The following paper was laid on the table—

Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport (Mr Veivers)—

Queensland Fire Service Superannuation Plan 1996 Annual Report.

ELECTION OF MR P. LUCAS

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (5.58 p.m.): I move—

"That the Parliament notes the election of Paul Lucas as the member for Lytton."

In doing so, I seek leave of the House to enable the member for Lytton to speak for 20 minutes.

Leave granted.

Mr SPEAKER: I now call the honourable member for Lytton. I advise members of the House that it is his maiden speech and would expect them to afford him the normal courtesies.

Mr LUCAS (Lytton) (5.58 p.m.): Let me say at the outset how proud and honoured I am to represent the men and women of Lytton in this House. In particular, I thank them for electing me as a parliamentary member of that great reforming institution, the Australian Labor Party.

The Lytton by-election campaign ran over a period of five months, giving me a unique opportunity to meet personally many of the thousands of decent, hardworking men and women of the electorate. Many years ago, Kim Beazley Snr lamented the loss of the cream of the working class from Labor

activism. I must respectfully disagree and say that it was my experience in the Lytton by-election that the working men and women of the electorate remained committed to the election of a Labor member and the progressive policies of Labor in Government. I can only say that both before the by-election and since I have never ceased to be delighted at the warmth and hospitality of the people of the bayside—the pensioners, the families, the battlers and the kids.

Besides my family and my faith, the other great institutional influence in my life has been my membership of the Australian Labor Party. I joined the Labor Party at 18, shortly after Bill Hayden's loss of the 1980 Federal election, and have since that time been nourished by the rich tapestry of the membership and policy dynamism of Australia's one great lasting political party. Throughout the history of this nation and this State, it has been Labor that has been at the cutting edge of change and innovation to improve the lot of the ordinary man and woman.

Let me record at the outset my commitment to the principles of unionism and the need for collective action by the weak and powerless to ensure a fair go and their just share for the fruit of their labours. The labour movement of the 1890s saw the need for it to participate in the parliamentary process to achieve the real gains it needed for a better society. In the 1990s, with increasing numbers of members in Parliament, like myself, being educated through university and no longer from the shop floor, it is vital that Labor maintains and strengthens its links with the trade union movement. It is the union base that distinguishes Labor from many of the world's other left-of-centre parties and ensures that our policies are based on egalitarianism and respect for the individual worth of all, rather than some paternalistic, good-natured gesture. If three words could sum up what I believe Labor stands for, it is "a fair go". I commit myself as a member of Parliament to fight for a fair go for the people of Lytton and the people of Queensland.

Some people in life are fortunate to have a privileged upbringing. I, on the other hand, am privileged to have had a modest upbringing where my parents taught me the values of honesty, hard work and respect for others. I thank my parents, Trish and Col, and my sister Anne, for their love and sacrifices that they made for me over the years. I also thank my now deceased maternal grandparents, Norah and Tim Lee, for giving me their love of their faith, and my paternal grandparents, Tom and Pat Lucas, for their

unswerving loyalty to Labor through the good times and the bad.

It is indeed a very great privilege to be chosen to represent the people by following in the footsteps of such a great member of Parliament as Tom Burns. Tom Burns is to me the quintessential Labor politician—a man always prepared to fight for the little people and the battlers, whether they be in the electorate of Lytton, in public housing or the bush. When campaigning in the by-election, person after person came up to me and told me what a great member Tom Burns had been, many telling me stories of how he had helped them in a way that always preserved their dignity and respect.

Tom Burns has represented the electorate of Lytton for the entire 24 years since its creation, and I am acutely aware of the very big shoes that I have to fill in representing his old electorate in this Parliament. Both Tom and Angela have been great teachers, and I place on record my sincere thanks and appreciation for their help and encouragement both before and since my election to this Parliament.

When Tom Burns made his maiden speech before this House on 12 September 1972, he gave his special thanks and appreciation to his campaign director, Darcy O'Dempsey. When Tom Burns retired, he was the father of the House. Darcy O'Dempsey outlasted Tom and also served as my campaign director. Darcy was Tom's campaign director for every single one of those 24 years. This must make Darcy O'Dempsey the father of all campaign directors. Darcy has not only been the driving force behind Labor campaigning in the Lytton area, but also for many years he has ensured that we, from the Labor branches in Lytton, have helped other branches of the party less fortunate than us in carrying the Labor banner during campaigns and on polling days.

I also wish to thank my loyal and hardworking band of campaign workers and volunteers for their commitment and support. Whether it be people who staffed the office day after day, like Barbara Colledge, or our life members, Harry Ballment, Lil Blinco, Topsy Chiverall and Arch Geary, who have been fighting the good fight since long before I was alive. These hardworking volunteers never get a cent for their effort, but the satisfaction and pride of having a Labor representative for them and their fellow bayside residents.

I also thank State Secretary of the ALP, Mike Kaiser, for his support and advice. Mike is not only a personal friend, but someone

whose political skills and advice, so amply demonstrated in the Lytton by-election campaign, that I have absolute faith and confidence in.

Of all the people to whom I owe a debt of gratitude, no debt owed is as great as that one that is owed to my wife, Sharon. Sharon, I thank you for the love, support and encouragement that you have given me, not only since we have been married, but in the 13 years that we have known each other. I also thank you for being a fantastic mother to our four children, Tom, Matt, Michael and Monica. Many people, both inside the political process and out, have warned me of the sacrifices that a politician's family must make in the course of his or her career. To you I say that I will strive to ensure that I never forget my fundamental obligation to my family.

As a practising but very imperfect member of my own religious denomination, I feel that it is important that I say a few words about the influence of religion in politics. Religious belief is an important but not a determinative factor in one's moral and ethical make-up. I reject those who claim moral or political superiority on the basis of their religious practice. I would hope that all of us, religious or not, realise our fundamental obligation to work for the improvement of the lot of the lives of our fellow men and women, regardless of their race, colour or creed. To paraphrase those words so eloquently recalled by Edmond Campion—

"Mr Smith went to Church.
He did it every Sunday.
Mr Smith went to hell.
For what he did on Monday."

Neville Wran, when once asked what the main priorities of his Government were, said, "Jobs, jobs, and more jobs". I could not agree more. There is nothing more dignifying than to give someone the opportunity to earn a living and to give him or her the pride of getting a pay packet and saying, "This is mine, I earned it, I will spend it on my spouse and family."

Just as the Federal Liberal/National Government wishes to remove the statutory commitment of the Reserve Bank to maintenance of full employment, so has this State National/Liberal Government pursued policies that have already had the effect of increasing unemployment. During the period of the Goss Labor Government from 1989 to 1996, Queensland's labour force grew by 202,000—some 202,000 additional Queenslanders being given the dignity of a job. Queensland, with 18 per cent of Australia's population, was responsible for

23.5 per cent of the increase in the labour force.

Under Labor, we had a Government that delivered on projects and brought jobs to Queensland. Labor secured the \$800m expansion of the Comalco smelter at Gladstone, resulting in significant value-adding benefits for the State and the country. Labor developed, in an integrated way, the Carpentaria/Mount Isa mineral province, with initiatives such as Government sponsored research and coordination of infrastructure, land use and environment planning. What has the coalition delivered? A freeze in capital works, policy paralysis and, at 10.1 per cent, the highest unemployment of any mainland State.

But Labor does not only have a commitment to the working men and women of Queensland. There are many proud achievements of State Labor in Government for those no longer in the work force. Lytton has many older people amongst its residents. These people have benefited from initiatives such as the Senior's Card and the Home Assist and Home Secure programs. Home Assist and Home Secure, operated in Lytton by the fine people of the Wynnum Blue Nursing Service, have helped many pensioners to have that extra security and the right to feel safe in their own homes.

One area crying out for reform of the law is that relating to coronial inquests. The Goss Government had started the process of reviewing the Coroner's Act and had announced the laudable intention to create an Office of State Coroner. As a practising solicitor, I was astonished at the shocking injustices perpetrated time after time by inadequate coronial investigations and hearings. The families of people tragically killed, whether by suspicious acts or gross negligence, are owed, at the very least, a proper and thorough investigation of the events leading to their loved one's death. The community also deserves a proper and thorough investigation, with a view to implementing changes in the law or systems of work to prevent such deaths or injuries from occurring in the future.

One has to look only at the pain and hurt suffered by the family of Mount Isa school girl, Peta Ann Devine, who had to endure three inquests to have her death properly investigated. I can also recall an inquest involving a death at the Brisbane Watch-house where the entire police staff, one by one, claimed, and were allowed, the privilege against self-incrimination and did not answer

any further questions after they were asked the initial question: were they on the staff roster on the night of the death?

I believe we need to overhaul our coronial system along the lines of that operating in Victoria. In that State, the primary role of a coroner is not to decide who will be charged with a criminal offence—that is the role of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The coroner's role should be to look at why the death occurred and to recommend action to prevent any recurrence in the future. To get to the bottom of the events, the coroner must have the power to fully take all the evidence, instead of allowing the blanket claim of privilege against self-incrimination.

Very serious consideration should be given to providing that the Coroner's Act, like the Criminal Justice Act and the Corporations Law, require that no incriminating answer shall be admissible in criminal proceedings, but require it to be answered in the inquest to allow the coroner to base his or her findings on all the evidence that is potentially available and come to a fair dinkum conclusion.

There are many working men and women in Lytton who, in recent years, have had to undergo massive change and dislocation in the name of workplace reform. The legal profession and the courts should be no different. I pledge myself to supporting initiatives to make our judicial system accessible, prompt and inexpensive. If it is good enough for a wharfie to be assessed by container movements, then it is reasonable to ask judges to ensure their courts operate in an efficient manner. The very important doctrine of judicial independence does not include independence from prompt obedience to the rule of law.

If I was given the choice of an electorate in Queensland that I would most wish to represent, then there is no doubt that I would choose the electorate of Lytton. The people of Wynnum, Manly and Lota are blessed by living adjacent to the beautiful Moreton Bay. One of the greatest strengths of the electorate of Lytton is its very strong community of interest. We have Moreton Bay on our eastern boundary providing recreation and enjoyment for young and old, and on the western boundary we have a green belt, though sadly decreasing, which helps us preserve our character as a local community which grew from the days of old Wynnum town.

I am sure that very few members of this place would be fortunate enough to have their electorates serviced by the multitude of community and service organisations that exist

in Lytton, all working together to keep the bayside the best place to live—a place where young and old, the workers and the retired, work, live and play together.

A classic example of the sort of commitment shown by our local community-spirited people is that of Mrs Nell Fletcher and her organisation, ARAD, the Aid and Recreational Association for the Disabled. For 27 years, ARAD and its band of volunteers have worked tirelessly, and without Government funding, to provide support, assistance and respite for physically and intellectually disabled people and their families. ARAD is but one of the countless community organisations that devote their time, work and love to making the bayside a better and fairer place to live for the whole community.

Adjoining a delicate marine ecosystem, the people of Lytton are acutely aware of the need to care for their environment, not only for now but for our children and their successors. Tom Burns was a great fighter for the bay. It was successive conservative Governments that were responsible for allowing coral dredging to occur on a large scale in Moreton Bay. I am proud of Labor's achievement in saving Green Island from dredging and negotiating with Queensland Cement and Lime to relocate to Gladstone by 1998. But that is not far enough. Having inspected Mud Island and seen the damage done by coral dredging, I believe that coral dredging should be banned immediately in the environmental interests of the bay.

Labor also has a proud record in declaring Moreton Bay one of Queensland's first two RAMSAR sites and declaring Moreton Bay a marine park. I call on the current Government to finalise the zoning plan in order to maximise protection for the bay.

Being adjacent to such a large city, and including a growing port complex, it is vital that we maximise the environmental protection for the bay. Every encouragement should be given to port industries to conduct themselves in a fashion that allows people, the environment and industry all to grow and prosper for the future. I said before that the greatest priority of a Labor Government should be jobs. I am concerned to ensure that the people of Lytton get their fair slice of jobs and business, particularly from the port area. I commend Ampol for both its community consultation initiatives and its attempts to source, as far as possible, a number of its supplies from the local community.

The Commonwealth Government promoted growth in suburban areas by locating the Australian Taxation Office in Chermside and Mount Gravatt. The State Government should play a similar role, particularly in encouraging bodies such as the Port of Brisbane Corporation and the Department of Environment to locate their offices in Wynnum, thus taking advantage of our excellent public transport links, skilled work force and the reduction of pollution and congestion resulting from inner-city concentration. This would also result in significant financial savings in reduced rent and overheads.

Finally, let me record my commitment to our State and nation's future—its youth. Being a parent of four young children, I am acutely aware of the benefits and responsibilities of living in a society where decency, honesty and tolerance have been practised for many years. Our country is all the better for its ethnic diversity and our common goals as Australians. Whether it be presenting awards at a school speech night to children from a non-European background, cheering our local girl Vicki Wilson, the Australian netball captain, or barracking for Cathy Freeman in the Olympic Games, the sum of our individual parts adds up to make the whole of our nation the greatest and most tolerant country on earth.

Lytton has always been an area that has been all the better for the interaction between children, young families and the more mature members of the community. Whilst served by many excellent local sporting clubs, it is my belief that we do have a lack of local activities for our young to participate in. We have excellent organisations, such as BABI—Bayside Adolescent and Boarding Incorporated—which provide support to our youth and play an invaluable role in advocating their cause locally. I intend to pursue projects such as lobbying for the establishment of a playground and recreation association centre to give our kids good, wholesome activities, particularly in holidays. I also intend to pursue my by-election proposal for the extension of Wynnum jetty to make it accessible for fishing in all tides as a particular benefit for those who cannot physically or financially get access to the bay for fishing and other recreation.

In closing, I again thank the people of Lytton for putting their faith and confidence in me and in Labor. I thank them for the warmth of the reception and support given to me and also, during the by-election, to the next Premier, Peter Beattie, and the next Deputy

Premier, Jim Elder. In six all but too short years, Labor changed Queensland fundamentally for the better. Throughout the Lytton by-election campaign, one factor constantly was driven home to me. It was the people of the electorate calling out for the return of Labor to Government in this State. I have no doubt that the Beattie/Elder Labor team will be returned to Government by the people of Queensland whenever the people of Queensland are given the opportunity to throw out this paralysed, disorganised rabble that passes itself off as the current Queensland Government.

For whatever such time the people of Lytton choose to have me as their elected representative, I promise to strive in this place to advocate the policies of a fair go for all Queenslanders and, in particular, those in Lytton, regardless of their race, colour or creed.

Motion agreed to.

NATIONAL PARTY BETRAYAL OF COUNTRY PEOPLE

Hon. R. J. GIBBS (Bundamba)
(6.15 p.m.): I move—

"That this Parliament condemns National Party Ministers for betraying the bush by ignoring the needs of the very people who voted for them and calls on the Government to start being a Government for all Queenslanders by providing services where they are needed."

This morning, members heard the Minister for Primary Industries report to this House, as he has in the last few days, in relation to the Queensland beef industry. Any member of this Chamber who saw the *Four Corners* television program a couple of weeks ago could not help being alarmed by the rapid decline of Queensland's and Australia's beef industry, particularly here in this State. I believe it is very relevant at this time to say that, in relation to the Minister's comments this morning about selling off the meatworks of Queensland, the reality is that, while there can be an arguable case for some rationalisation and change within the industry, the industry that he represents, particularly the people on the land, want two things. They want this industry maintained by both Australian and Queensland ownership.

I was sorely tempted to say something this morning, but I will say it tonight because, for the last couple of weeks, the Minister obviously has been practising his little line

about the taipan file and holding it in reserve. It is probably very appropriate tonight to say that it is understandable that he would use such reptilian terms, because for a long time the Minister has been known as the best old snake handler in this House.

The reality is that, in return for the rationalisation that will take place in this industry, it is estimated that jobs will be lost in the following regional areas of Queensland: in Ipswich, 250 jobs; in Toowoomba, 120; in Bundaberg, 20; in Townsville, 20; and in Cannon Hill, between 350 and 400 jobs, representing a total jobs loss of 800—800 more people on the dole heap in this State of Queensland. That is direct job losses only. It is estimated that, with a multiplier effect in those local communities, at least 2,500 jobs will be lost. With the coalition Government's closure of the employment programs across regional Queensland, and the Commonwealth Government's closure of similar programs, where are these meatworkers expected to find jobs? There are no Queensland Government labour market programs to assist them. This Government sacked the public servants who were specifically employed to help workers in those situations.

What is the consumer guru, Minister Beanland, going to say when the ultimate result of this decision is that Queenslanders, particularly those whom he claims to represent in rural areas of this State, will be paying more for their meat and eating the worst cuts as the best product will be shipped out overseas? This decision will affect all Queenslanders, from the dinner table to the price paid for beef and to the cut of beef that is available for purchase from the butcher or the supermarket.

This Government, which campaigned so hard at the last State election on matters including the lack of services in the bush, has had over nine months in which to live up to its promises—to deliver on its rhetoric. Instead, it has become the Government of the big city and big business and has received constant criticism from its traditional support base, the farming groups and small business. The people of regional and rural Queensland are reeling from the lack of action of this Government.

Specifically, as mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition this morning, up to 1,500 Metway, Suncorp and QIDC employees could be forced to join the dole queues because of the creation of the megabank. Despite constant questioning from the Opposition to the Treasurer in relation to these jobs, she has refused to give any guarantees that no

employee will be retrenched, compulsorily transferred or pressured to take forced redundancy from either head office or any branch. There are branches of Metway and Suncorp all over Queensland. If the megabank results in 1,500 sackings, it will have a major impact on regional Queensland.

I have spoken of the impact of the Queensland Abattoir Corporation. Combine these Government actions with the closure of regional health offices and the cutbacks in other State Government programs and one has a recipe for disaster for the economies of regional and rural Queensland. One of the most shameful actions of this Government was the closure of the labour market programs in Queensland. In particular, in Roma, Emerald and Mount Isa the Youth Employment Service was closed down. It was also closed in the regional cities, including Ipswich. The Self Employment Venture Scheme was shut down across the State. Key elements of the Community Jobs and Training Program were scrapped. This Government simply does not care for the unemployed or the disadvantaged.

This Government was extremely critical of the Labor Party for shutting down Magistrates Court offices. Before the last State election, the shadow Attorney-General stated with great fanfare that the coalition would open all Magistrates Court offices. This week, we have witnessed a sop to the people of Inglewood, Springsure, Millmerran and Mitchell. The reality simply is that the Government has gone soft on its promise as these areas will have a part-time court only.

As to the Department of Works and Housing—more houses are being built in the Gold Coast area at the expense of regional and rural Queensland apparently because of the waiting lists on the Gold Coast. It is simply more than a coincidence that the Housing Minister represents the electorate of Nerang on the Gold Coast. He is feathering the Gold Coast six-pack of conservative electorates at the expense of rural and regional Queenslanders.

An Opposition member: Shame!

Mr GIBBS: Family Services—and this is a disgusting shame—is in absolute chaos. Aboriginal Affairs was once a department, then a division, then an office and it is now to be downgraded yet again to program status within the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care. That latest proposal is a slap in the face for the many thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in country Queensland.

An area of great concern to me is the lack of services available to disabled youth who turn 18 years of age. Those young people have no further school opportunities, have limited access to educational programs, have limited access to respite care and become the full-time responsibility of the parents, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. One can well ask: where are the services for those young people in rural Queensland?

This week, we have witnessed the Government's lack of consultation with the peak farming organisations in relation to the tyre and fuel taxes. Even in relation to the arts and libraries, this coalition Government has shown its disdain for regional Queensland. Country kids will have to read the same stale and out-of-date books and will be turned off using their local libraries as a result of the cut of \$1m real per capita funding from public libraries. This Government cannot grandstand about literacy standards in the community if it is cutting funds to purchase books. That is a miserable act perpetrated by the Treasurer.

I draw the attention of Government members to a number of fairly prominent newspapers throughout Queensland that certainly could not be considered to be sympathetic to the Labor movement. If these were the words of Opposition members, a cynic could say that it was simply a case of political point scoring. An article in the *North Queensland Register* of Thursday, 17 October, was headed "Govt axes bush job scheme". It carried the subheading "Scheme had helped 5000 find work". The article states—

"The State Government has axed a Richmond-based scheme"—

Richmond is in the heart of their constituency—

"designed to provide ongoing employment for rural workers.

The six man committee which oversees the operation of the Richmond Rural Placement Scheme was advised last week by letter that its annual funding allocation of \$70,000 was no longer available.

...

Committee member, John Wharton, Runnymede Station, Maxwellton, said the scheme which started in 1981 had helped more than 5000 people find work."

Axing that scheme is a pretty disgusting and shabby effort on behalf of a party that claims to represent a rural constituency.

The *Townsville Bulletin* carried the headline "Sheldon gets a roasting from business heads". When the Treasurer attended a Budget breakfast in Townsville in September, the chairman of that function, Townsville Chamber of Commerce president, Mal Missingham said that the Government was starving the north of funds for infrastructure such as roads, railways, water and sewerage. The article quotes him as saying—

"You have disregarded and dismissed the region that gave you Government."

An article in the *Goondiwindi Argus* headed "Lies, style and politicians . . ." gives members opposite the best baking that it has seen. It states—

"Sorry to keep on harping about these lying bloody politicians, but boy oh boy, they give us a pain in the comics.

Lies, lies and more lies."

Day after day the coalition is breaking promises that it gave in the lead-up to Mundingburra and the lead-up to the election last year. It has let down its rural constituency. On behalf of the alternative Government, I say to people in the bush: keep heart and have faith because when we are back there next year we will not disappoint you.

Mr PALASZCZUK (Inala) (6.27 p.m.): I second the motion moved by the honourable member for Bundamba. Queensland Labor understands rural Queensland. The last Labor Government worked hard to ensure that people in rural areas received the same standards of services as enjoyed by all Queenslanders. However, as the motion states, the disillusionment that exists in rural Queensland towards the coalition Government continues to grow. With each visit I make to rural Queensland I detect increasing levels of resentment at the way the National Party Government is failing to provide the value-added industries and flow-on employment that rural Queensland is calling for.

The letter sent to the Premier by the mayors of seven western towns calling on the Government to live up to its election promises and deliver jobs and services is a clear indication of rural discontent. Alarm bells must be ringing in National Party headquarters in Brisbane when mayors from rural areas are forced to take such drastic measures to get the message across. I can appreciate the expectations that exist in those areas following years of crippling drought. They deserve better

and the National Party Government is ignoring their pleas for help.

The unhappy truth is that rural Queenslanders have been forgotten by the city-based and coast-based National Party. If it were not for the Labor Party Opposition getting out and listening to rural Queensland and fighting for them in Parliament, there would be a cotton growing industry on the Cooper. Ministers on that side of the House are happy to sit in their plush offices in the city and not get out into the rural communities. It might do them the world of good to get into a car once in a while and drive through the rural communities and talk and listen to the people and come back to the Parliament to make some decent representations on their behalf.

If it were not for the Labor Party Opposition getting out there and listening to rural Queenslanders and fighting for them in Parliament, the roo shooters and dealers would be facing massive increases in fees. If it was not for the Labor Opposition getting out and listening to rural Queenslanders, the cattle producers of north Queensland would be paying a massive 700 per cent increased loading fee at the port of Karumba. In that regard the Minister for Primary Industries should make representations to the Minister for Transport in relation to the current negotiated fee of \$2.80, because the loading fee for ore per tonne was to be 66c. If he arrives at that fee for the cattle producers and adds that to the 80c that they were paying, he will then have a realistic level. I suggest that the Honourable Minister for Primary Industries make those representations to the Minister for Transport.

If it were not for the Labor Opposition listening to rural Queenslanders, rural producers would be stuck with massive, new, illegal tyre and oil taxes. Let me pose these questions to members opposite: how will that scheme be constituted, administered, funded and audited? Where in rural Queensland will exist the infrastructure to collect and store waste oil and used tyres so that the pollution problem can be addressed? How did the Government arrive at those costs for industry if it has not calculated the dimensions of the problem? Why will the tax be used to clean up hospital waste in south-east Queensland?

Finally, let us have a close look at the impact that the lifting of the toll on the Sunshine Motorway will have on rural Queensland. Every man, woman and child living in rural Queensland will have to contribute \$120 towards the lifting of the toll on the Sunshine Motorway. For example,

Charleville, which has a population of 3,000 people, will make a contribution of \$360,000. Members could take the population figure of every town in rural Queensland, multiply it by \$120 and come to the contribution that each rural town will be making towards the lifting of the toll on the Sunshine Motorway.

Honourable members, this is not a Government for all Queenslanders; it is a Government for its own. Rural people are the forgotten people. Labor in Government will extend a helping hand and be there to help rural communities. Labor intends to look after people no matter where they live. I ask those people who have always voted for the Nationals, "Are you better off with that support? Do you vote for the Nationals out of habit?" Habits are addictive! As rural people have found out with the Nationals, habits are not useful.

I urge all honourable members to support the motion moved by the honourable member for Bundamba.

Hon. T. J. PERRETT (Barambah—Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry) (6.32 p.m.): I move—

"That all words following 'this Parliament' be deleted and that they be replaced with the following—

'recognises the special needs of the bush and reaffirms its commitment to continued restoration of rural services and infrastructure.' "

Primary industries represents almost \$6 billion a year in production to this State and provides jobs, directly and indirectly, for 21 per cent of Queenslanders. This coalition Government has a firm commitment to providing the conditions in which primary industry and rural and regional communities can thrive.

We have begun the long task of restoring services and infrastructure that were trashed in six and a half years of Labor rule. That is why the Labor Party received such a bashing at the last election. There were huge swings against Labor. Labor took the knife to the principal vehicle for rural service delivery, the Department of Primary Industries. It gutted DPI's research and extension services and made redundant 692 experienced and loyal DPI staff—essential field staff, horticulturalists, stock inspectors, agronomists and other important advisers have gone. To make matters worse, Labor borrowed \$7.7m to make those people redundant and left the coalition to pay back the loans.

The coalition is meeting the challenge of rebuilding the DPI. To demonstrate to the House what it has done through its rebuilding program, I have some documents which I seek leave to table.

Leave granted.

Mr PERRETT: I hope that the Opposition spokesman and also the member for Inala take the time to read that material.

This Government has put the focus back on service delivery. It has taken DPI back to the bush. This Government is about rebuilding DPI's research and extension services. It is committed to assisting rural industries to become more efficient producers and marketers of food and fibre. Already, the Government has created 166 new DPI jobs in research and extension services, most of them based in rural and regional areas. Producers in rural communities are already starting to benefit from these appointments.

The coalition's first Budget increased DPI's funding—the first real increase since the term of the previous coalition Government in the late 1980s. However, we at DPI have gone even further in this Government's short time in office. In the interests of primary industries and as part of a five-year plan, we have set out the DPI's business priorities for the next 12 months. They are a form of contract between the DPI and the primary industries which was agreed to after extensive consultation.

We have also introduced the institute system of primary industry research and extension—a scheme that Labor looked at but could not manage to introduce. Those nine institutes will not be costly new buildings but partnerships between DPI and industry to bring about a more coordinated and better directed research and extension service.

The Government has also battled on behalf of the producers in rural communities, which have been battered by years of drought and Labor's lack of real concern. DPI is a partner in a coalition scheme to create an advisory council for rural women—a group that could bring their concerns to the Government with one strong, united voice.

The coalition came into Government with more than 40 per cent of the State drought declared. I am pleased to say that the changed seasonal conditions have reduced that figure to 22 per cent. However, it is still a tragedy. This Government took new measures to help primary producers and rural communities to cope with drought. We are now working on some initiatives to help them recover from it. We introduced a system of

forward freight subsidies to move stock from drought-affected properties and we extended the eligibility period for restocking after revocation of the drought declarations. We also increased the distance that stock can be taken for agistment. The coalition Government decided to bear the full cost of rail freight for fodder and other relief supplies going to producers and communities in drought-affected areas. The DPI also baled 370 tonnes of fodder hay off its south-east Queensland research stations and sent it to drought-affected areas.

The coalition Government went to the Federal Government with a drought recovery package and won for the farmers and graziers a major share of an \$81m package, which was announced this month. Yet Labor has the hide to say that the Minister for Primary Industries has deserted the bush! For six years, people in the bush were treated with contempt by the former Labor administration. For six years, the Labor Government relished the task of cutting rural programs and services. Now members of the Labor Party have the gall to stand in this Parliament and berate the coalition Government with allegations that it is deserting the bush.

Since this Government has been in power, it has diligently set about repairing the damage that Labor thrust upon rural residents. Let it be very clear: it is only now that this coalition Government has come to power that services in the bush, such as those provided by the Department of Primary Industries, are returning to normal.

Hon. D. E. McCAULEY (Callide—Minister for Local Government and Planning) (6.36 p.m.): I second the amendment moved by the previous speaker. I am very pleased to see that the member for Bundamba is back to his normal nasty self that we in this place have all come to know and love. However, I find it very difficult to accept that this man, who worked so hard to get the title of "Chardonnay kid" and the former "Minister for long lunches", should now be the patron of the bush—the saviour of the bush. I find it very difficult to accept that that is a mantle that he wears easily. However, when I look at the other members opposite to see who else could take over that responsibility, I realise that at least the member for Bundamba knows that to have an affinity with the bush, one needs more than RMs and an akubra hat. Some of the other members opposite seem to think that that is all they have to do—put them on and they will be accepted by the bush. It is not as easy as that.

In fact, the member for Inala could tell the story about when the Government announced the building of the Comet Dam and that it was going to flood Rolleston. He thought, "I will save these people." He jumped in his hire car and drove out to Rolleston and said to the people, "I am here to save you. I am here to help you." They asked him, "Who are you?"

Mr PALASZCZUK: I rise to a point of order. The Honourable Minister is misleading the House. I did not meet with people and say that I was going to save them from the dam.

Mrs McCAULEY: The member should let me finish my story.

Mr PALASZCZUK: I was working with the Minister for Natural Resources.

Mrs McCAULEY: I have not finished yet. I have got only four minutes left in which to speak. Those people asked the member, "Who are you?" He told them who he was and then they said, "Clear out." So the member had to get back in his car and go back to Brisbane.

People in rural areas are welcoming the money that this Government is going to pour into water infrastructure in this State—\$1 billion over 15 years, which will be very, very welcome. I can tell members that the previous Labor Government was not noted for its dam building. Nothing in the bush is anything without water, and that is one of this Government's major priorities. It will build the water storages that are needed to keep the bush viable and to keep it producing export income for this State.

I refer to an article in today's *Queensland Country Life*, which is hot off the presses. It is written by the President of the United Graziers Association, Larry Acton, who is a gentleman, a man of the bush, and a very sincere and charming man. He stated—

"The Queensland Government has done much to generate an improved economic environment for the State's rural sector.

The Premier, Treasurer and Primary Industries Minister placed drought policy back on the agenda and there are several thousand families who will continue to receive the Drought Relief Payment because of their efforts.

The dredging of Karumba Port and the recognition by the Transport Minister that it is essential to keep costs down reinforces the philosophy that business to Asia must be fostered."

Mr Acton goes on to state—

"The reviews of land valuations and rentals by the Natural Resources Minister are also on the right track. The list goes on."

That is a comment, hot off the presses today, from a man who should know. He is paying tribute to what this Government is doing for rural communities.

A good example of what this Government is doing is happening in my own department. We have produced total management plans for water infrastructure for ATSI communities in the north. There is no doubt that there are a lot of problems in that area, and there always have been. However, the way in which to tackle the problems is to do the planning properly and then put in the money. My department has prioritised expenditure for new works and recurrent costs for water infrastructure for those communities. The department will now move in, prioritise those works, put that money in and see things happen. It is no good just throwing the money at the problem; we have to make sure that those people are able to maintain their services—their septic systems and their water. That is a very major initiative, and it is one of which I am very proud.

There is a host of other things as well. Let me tell the House about the \$600m water and sewerage infrastructure package for local governments which is the most significant boost provided to councils in a generation. This doubles the infrastructure subsidy from 20 per cent to 40 per cent. It means that, for all new water and sewerage facilities throughout the State, the Government will pay two-fifths of the cost. Councils throughout the State are gearing themselves up for this. This is back to basics and it is very good stuff. Included in that funding is a \$150m infrastructure package for smaller rural and remote communities.

We have not forgotten rural people, and that is most important to them. I was very proud to go to Croydon a few months ago to look at the dam which cost \$2m. It is only a very small community, but it cannot do anything without water.

Time expired.

Mr SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton) (6.42 p.m.): I thank the previous speaker for her acceptance of the fact that the Queensland Labor Government did more for the bush than her Government has. The Rural Living Infrastructure Program was a mainstay of our rural policy, although the honourable

member for Callide has claimed credit for it, which does her no good.

I wish to speak on behalf the cattle industry of Australia about the outrageous proposal that the Minister for Primary Industries outlined to flog off the Queensland Abattoir Corporation. The fact is that the plan to flog off the fourth biggest processing industry in this State to multinational mates of the National Party is an all too familiar sign of the Government. Every time it gets its hands near any public enterprise, the old ideology takes over: what can we flog off to big business? The Government has obviously bowed and scraped to companies such as AMH—a most treacherous company.

Mr PERRETT: I rise to a point of order. There is no plan to flog the meat industry off to multinationals.

Mr SCHWARTEN: Who does the Minister think will buy it—Santa Claus? That shows just how out of touch the Minister is, as did his statement this morning that there will be no job losses. When one of the main players is knocked out of the beef processing industry, what does the Minister think will happen? Sheds will be closed and improvements in technology will mean that more and more meatworkers will have to go on the dole. The Minister will be responsible for that. He is bringing in a grubby mob like AMH, which is backed by KonAgre, an internationally discredited United States company that employees Mexican kids and is held up for ridicule internationally. It is the same in the Philippines. The Minister wants these sorts of people to get our great beef industry.

It is not just that the issue is too hard. I know that the Minister does not have much mental capacity, but even he should be able to work out that this industry is worth hanging on to. I can tell the Minister that the Government does not own this industry; it belongs to the taxpayers of the State. The Government is the mere custodian of the industry. I say here and now that the Government will pay dearly at the next election if it tries to flog off the industry. However, that is not a sufficient deterrent. The truth is that any State industry is repugnant to the Government. It cannot help itself. Whenever it sees a State asset, it has to flog it off. This action will do the Government no favours at the next State election. The people in the bush will not forget how the Government has treated one of our great State industries.

This morning, the Minister was pandering to the nonsense that somehow or other a

better and more efficient industry will be created by centralising one or two companies. That is not going to help our international industry at all. It certainly will not enable our producers to get a better deal in the international markets, especially when our beef is being pirated, as the *Four Corners* program showed.

Rural fire brigades is an issue that is dear to my heart. One would think that the Government would at least get that right for rural Queensland, but no! Last year, the Labor Government spent around \$8m on rural fire brigades. The present Government has allocated only \$6m. The Government wants the volunteers who work in all of our electorates to go back to the days of using wet bags. The truth is that the Treasurer knows full well that the kitty needs about \$10m. The funding should have increased by \$2m, but it has gone down by \$2m. When we came to Government, there was not a single new pumper in the bush. All the discards from the urban fire services were being used. It was the Labor Government which provided over 300 new pumpers, yet the Government has the hide to tell us that it is somehow in touch with its bush clientele. What a lot of rot! Unless the Government fixes that issue, it is in for a hell of a flogging at the next election. The volunteers will walk off the job.

Time expired.

Mr SPRINGBORG (Warwick) (6.47 p.m.): The amendment moved by the Honourable Minister for Primary Industries and seconded by the Minister for Local Government and Planning is certainly worthy of support by the Parliament because its fundamental premise is the restoration of Government services in rural areas which have been stripped away by the people who sit in Opposition and who sat in Government for six years from 1989 to 1996. This debate tonight is probably motivated by the Leader of the Opposition, who has become known in the bush as "I will not close your railway lines Beattie".

I understand that when the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Inala drove west of Ipswich the other day to find Barcaldine, it took them about a week because they did not have a clue where they were going. The member for Inala saw his first cow and thought that it was a kangaroo. The member for Bundamba is about as relevant to the bush as fish are to nuclear physics.

I will run through a few things which the National/Liberal coalition has done since coming to Government in February this year. I

notice that the honourable member for Bundamba tried to run down the major steps taken by the Government this week, which were the——

Mr Gibbs: I fixed up the wine industry for you.

Mr SPRINGBORG: I must admit that the honourable member did do a pretty good job of that.

Mr Gibbs: What about all those nights I carried you out of the local hotel when you got drunk.

Mr SPRINGBORG: The former Minister believed in the industry and he had a self-interest in the industry.

The Inglewood Courthouse was reopened this week. The honourable member for Bundamba played that down and said that it was only a part-time court. Formerly, the courthouse did about 50 hours of court work per year and it was mostly a part-time courthouse. Since that time, it has been converted to a QGAPP office, which I must admit was a reasonable initiative of the former Government. However, this restores the full range of services to the courthouse.

Another piece of legislation passed in the Parliament today, the Consumer Law and Other Justice Legislation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill, allows people in northern New South Wales, for example, to participate in societies or associations in Queensland. That is particularly important for the betterment of our show societies. The Bill also allowed for teleconferencing, which took into consideration the distances which are experienced by rural people.

Only the other day, the Premier, the Minister for Primary Industries and other State rural leaders were successful in obtaining a \$80m drought relief package from the Commonwealth. That is another major initiative of the Government which is worth commendation. That is what this Government is about. That package will be of great benefit to people in rural areas, particularly those who have experienced a great deal of drought over the last couple of years.

The allocation of 242 extra Department of Primary Industry staff will restore about one-third of the people who were ripped out of rural areas by the former Government during its six years in office. Regional health took away the local ownership of our hospitals and health services. Instead of one Brisbane, there were about 13 Brisbanes. The Honourable Minister for Health is establishing 42 district councils across the State, which will return the

ownership of health services to rural communities and ensure a better health service for rural people.

Funding to the Rural Regional Arts Development Fund has been increased. I know that people in my area will share the benefits of that increase over the coming year. In addition, there is a \$4 billion capital works package. Almost one-half of that package is earmarked for regional areas. When that package is put in place, it will create a major benefit for regional and rural areas of this State. That is another feather in the cap for the National/Liberal Party coalition. It is certainly something from which I will benefit in my electorate, as will many members on both sides of the House.

As I have plainly outlined to the House tonight that in the eight months in which this Government has been in office it has done much to advance the status of rural people. We are starting to listen to rural people again. Sure there are problems. There will always be problems. Any Government worth its salt will be able to move in a contemporary environment and address those problems. I am listening to what people have to say.

We have put in place the Water Infrastructure Task Force. We have \$1 billion to invest over the next 15 years. We are hoping to attract some more money so that we can do more to promote, develop and drought proof those areas. That is a major initiative of this Government—one of many. We have implemented a regional roads package, which will address many of the black spots in the State. The motion moved by the Opposition is a nonsense. The Government's amendment is worthy of support.

Time expired.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 42—Ardill, Barton, Beattie, Bird, Bligh, Braddy, Bredhauer, Briskey, Campbell, D'Arcy, De Lacy, Dollin, Edmond, Elder, Foley, Fouras, Gibbs, Hamill, Hayward, Hollis, Lucas, McElligott, Mackenroth, Milliner, Mulherin, Nunn, Nuttall, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Purcell, Roberts, Robertson, Rose, Schwarten, Smith, Spence, Sullivan J. H., Welford, Wells, Woodgate *Tellers:* Livingstone, Sullivan T. B.

NOES, 43—Baumann, Beanland, Borbidge, Connor, Cunningham, Davidson, Elliott, FitzGerald, Gamin, Gilmore, Goss J. N., Grice, Harper, Healy, Hegarty, Hobbs, Horan, Johnson, Laming, Lester, Lingard, Littleproud, McCauley, Malone, Mitchell, Perrett, Quinn, Radke, Rowell, Santoro, Sheldon, Simpson, Slack, Stephan, Stoneman, Tanti, Veivers, Warwick, Watson, Wilson, Woolmer *Tellers:* Springborg, Carroll

Resolved in the **negative**.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

GRIEVANCES

Proposed Palm Beach Community Health Care Centre

Mrs ROSE (Currumbin) (7 p.m.): Tonight I again raise in this House the desperate need for a community health centre to be built in Palm Beach. Tonight I have with me a sample of the hundreds and hundreds of cards I have received from concerned residents over the past months appealing for the construction of the centre to begin. The cards say "Enough is enough" and "I support the urgent construction of a community health centre at Palm Beach".

Yes, enough is enough! The land for the new health centre was purchased in January this year—that is right; in January. That was when the purchase of the land was arranged by the then Health Minister, Peter Beattie. He came down to Palm Beach and he and I went to the site and discussed the importance of the community health centre to the people of the southern Gold Coast. That centre would include a desperately needed dental clinic. Southern Gold Coasters have been disadvantaged for years because the only dental clinic they can access is at Southport, which can be up to nearly an hour's drive during peak hours. Many of the people who need to access the dental clinic are the elderly, and they are forced to spend up to half a day travelling backwards and forwards for one dental treatment.

Some of the other services to be available at the health centre would include: community health, family and children's health, youth health, women's health, aged care and health promotion. Although Community Health is currently delivering some of these services out of the leased premises at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Cypress Terrace, it is anxiously awaiting the construction of the new facility which would include the dental clinic.

Tonight I appeal to the Minister to please begin work on our health centre. The two old run-down houses that were on the site have now been demolished and removed, but I know that that was because the squatters could not be kept out. I appeal to the Minister: when are we going to see some action from this Government? When are we going to see work begin on the health centre?

Honorary Ambulance Officers

Mr BAUMANN (Albert) (7.02 p.m.): I wish to bring to the attention of the House the valuable work honorary ambulance officers contribute to the operations of the Queensland Ambulance Service. Honorary ambulance officers are an integral and valued part of the Ambulance Service in the role they play in delivering patient care, particularly in rural and remote areas of Queensland.

Both the Government and the Honourable Mick Veivers are totally committed to the improvement of emergency service delivery to all people throughout Queensland. As part of this commitment, I am pleased to advise that the Honourable Minister will continue to strongly support honorary ambulance officers. Honorary ambulance officers provide vital support for full-time ambulance staff and in rural areas deliver service when full-time officers may not be available.

The personal commitment of these people who become honorary ambulance officers is highly commendable. All such officers receive appropriate training from the Ambulance Service. However, this training is done in their own time. They are required to complete semester one of the Associate Diploma of Applied Science (Ambulance), and it is good to see that many choose to proceed on to further semesters of the associate diploma. Not only does the individual honorary officer provide a valuable community service, but at the same time future career prospects for the officer are opened up with honorary ambulance service being one of several pathways for entry into the QAS as a full-time officer.

There is no doubt that honorary ambulance service provides the QAS with a highly skilled pool of potential ambulance officer applicants. Of a recent student intake, 11 per cent of the 710 applications were from honorary ambulance officers, who in turn represented 22 per cent of the first 100 successful applicants on the order of merit list. The majority of other successful applicants came from some patient care background, such as nursing.

This Government and the Minister recognise the dedicated efforts of the honorary ambulance officers throughout the State and will continue to encourage suitable members of the community to apply for honorary ambulance officer positions in rural communities to assist in the provision of pre-hospital emergency care.

Time expired.

Health and Dental Services, Rockhampton

Mr SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton) (7.04 p.m.): Over the last few weeks I have listened carefully to what the Minister for Health has been telling us in this place. I have also followed closely in the media the reports that he has made that our waiting list problems in this State are over, that something has been done to fix them up. That is contrary to the reality of what is occurring in my office—and the offices of many of my colleagues—where almost weekly I hear tales of woe from people who simply cannot access health services and dental services in this State.

I refer in particular to a Mr Bill Hickson, who is 76 years of age. On 30 August last year, he attended at the base hospital and was put on a waiting list to see a specialist, which occurred on 30 September this year. He attended at that particular specialist, was found to have prostate cancer and subsequent to that was told that he would have to wait one to two years for any sort of procedure to fix his particular problem. As his wife pointed out to me, "I know you will do whatever you can for the best for Bill and try to get him in earlier, as he will surely die if he has to wait much longer." Those are the feelings that his wife has, and it is totally at odds with what Mr Horan is telling us in this Chamber time after time—that we do not have any waiting list problems, that he has fixed them up. The two-year wait for this particular operation on this elderly gentleman is surely a disgrace.

With regard to the dental clinic—I am advised that there are over 500 people waiting on a list in the Rockhampton Mercer Street centre. Today I was contacted by a lady who heard Mr Horan say to the people of Queensland that the waiting list problem was over. She rang the particular clinic and was told that, even though she had waited six and a half months, she still had another 12 months to wait.

Time expired.

Training for Rural Firefighters

Mr MITCHELL (Charters Towers) (7.06 p.m.): The sheer effort and dedication of our volunteer firefighters within the Rural Fire Division is matched only by the sheer number of volunteers. More than 46,000 people throughout the State volunteer their time to fire prevention and suppression in our rural and remote areas. The efficient and effective

training of these volunteers is a priority of the Honourable Minister for Emergency Services, Mick Veivers. Training for volunteers is based on a train the trainer scheme where selected volunteer officers are trained to instruct, passing on the lessons to brigade members.

In the past there has been a shortage of full-time officers within the Rural Fire Division, accompanied by a lack of training documentation. In line with this Government's commitment to the improvement of emergency service delivery throughout the State, the Rural Fire Division now has a permanent staff of eight training officers. The eight officers are located throughout rural and regional Queensland, with the training coordinator in Brisbane being responsible for the development of training policy standards and resource material. Training officers at Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Maryborough, Caboolture, Toowoomba and Ipswich are responsible for coordinating training among volunteers and developing the train the trainer network.

A professional approach to developing appropriate training methodologies has been established. A divisional training plan, the Volunteer Training and Educational Program, has been developed which is the blueprint for all volunteer training. It provides guidelines for instructors to train volunteers in the appropriate skills to ensure increased operational efficiency and safety, both individually and collectively as a brigade. Training resource packages have been developed for the basic firefighter modules, and these are now being distributed throughout the State. An interim package for the more advanced course aimed at brigade operational managers is also being developed.

In line with this Government's commitment to the provision of improved emergency service delivery throughout the State—

Time expired.

Racism

Mr ROBERTSON (Sunnybank) (7.08 p.m.): This morning I tabled a notice of motion calling on the Prime Minister and the Premiers and Chief Ministers of all Australian States and Territories to use the unique opportunity that tomorrow's COAG meeting would have provided to make a unanimous and unequivocal statement calling on all Australians to stand as one against those who intentionally or otherwise seek to divide our

nation by their ongoing insensitive and offensive attacks on fellow Australians of Aboriginal and Asian descent.

Although the COAG meeting has been deferred, it would have provided the first opportunity since the now infamous speech of the member for Oxley that all of Australia's political leaders would have gathered together, and I believe it would have been incumbent on our leaders to use this opportunity to call for a halt to a debate which is encouraging acts of racial vilification and violence against fellow Australians of particular racial origin.

No-one expected this debate to go on as long as it has. I am sure all members had hoped that the attention of the media and the public would have moved on to other matters by now. But this has not occurred, and to the great distress of many Australians the debate has deteriorated to the point that citizens and visitors to this country are increasingly suffering overt acts of racial vilification and hatred. The current debate has gone way beyond the question of what Australia's immigration intake should be. No-one suggests that the level of immigration should not be the subject of scrutiny and informed discussion, but there is no justification for allowing any such debate to get so out of control that the physical safety of citizens is compromised.

Recently, over 5,000 Australians gathered in King George Square to express their very deep concern at the re-emergence of overt racism prompted by the utterances of a number of misinformed and irresponsible individuals. It was a rally of unity and a celebration of the contribution that indigenous Australians and those who have chosen to call Australia their home have made to this nation. We are all nation builders. No matter where we may have come from—whether that be Europe, Africa, America or Asia—we are all Australians and have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

I ask this Parliament to recognise these fundamental rights and to call on Australia's political leaders to enshrine these rights in a statement which provides leadership and direction to the Australian community—a direction which takes us forward as a compassionate, caring and multicultural nation.

Time expired.

Giant Rat-tail Grass

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (7.10 p.m.): I take this opportunity to highlight some of the problems facing the rural community. I listened

to the member for Rockhampton talk about how Labor looked after the rural community. I suggest to him that when in Government his party did not do much at all in that regard. A case in point is giant rat-tail grass. The former Government undertook no research whatsoever into that matter. I want to highlight to the House the problems that this weed causes.

Giant rat-tail grass is an aggressive weed that sets large quantities of fine seed throughout the year. It invades pastures and competes with most other desirable pasture plants. It is unpalatable to stock when mature. Seeds are spread very easily. The beef industry has taken some steps to try to control this weed with the use of sprays and the use of wicks, but at times it gets up into the fairly steep country and under those conditions it is very, very difficult to control. Seeds can be spread by vehicles and farm machinery, especially slashers, and by movement of stock and other animals. Seeds are spread when hay is transferred from one property to another. They are also spread by cattle when they drink water, whether it be from troughs or watercourses. This weed is taking over in the areas in which it is growing. It is only because of the expertise that is being developed by the—

Time expired.

Whale Watching

Mr NUNN (Hervey Bay) (7.12 p.m.): The people of Hervey Bay are dumbfounded by the antics of the coalition, which is fractured and fragmenting. The Minister for Environment and Heritage is doing his best to castrate the whale watching industry and has been roundly criticised by the Minister for Tourism and Small Business. The Premier promised he would take a personal interest in the matter and sent the Minister for Tourism up to calm the natives.

The Hervey Bay *Independent* Newspaper reported today—

"Environment Minister Brian Littleproud has been criticised by a fellow minister for failing to consult the local industry before issuing five new whale watch permits for Moreton Bay.

Speaking at a breakfast organised by the Hervey Bay branch of the Liberal Party, the Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry, Bruce Davidson, said he was 'pretty disappointed' with Mr Littleproud.

'I can't believe Brian Littleproud would have approved those five whale watching permits in Moreton Bay without consulting with the whale watching industry up here.

'It was pretty poor that there was a lack of consultation . . . and I know the Premier is aware of it.'

That is good stuff.

He hit town and was asked by ABC radio what he thought should be done about the whale watching industry. He said, "Look, I haven't been briefed on the matter." I have to ask why he was not briefed on the matter he had been sent to Hervey Bay to fix up. After all, he sits next to the Environment Minister in Parliament and, indeed, he sits behind the Premier. For God's sake, do these people not speak to each other? They are on the same side, I think.

The same day, on local television news, the Tourism Minister was asked the same question and he said, "I have voiced my views on this matter in Cabinet." Even though he had not been briefed on the whale watching situation, he was able to express a view in Cabinet. My guess is that the Minister for Tourism, when asked for a comment on the Hervey Bay whale watching industry, was able to say, "Don't ask me, I don't know."

The members of Mr Borbidge's Cabinet are reminiscent of Dad's Army. If that lot are the general and the lieutenants, God help the troops!

Time expired.

Re-use of Waste Water

Mr LAMING (Mooloolah) (7.14 p.m.): Firstly, I wish to mention some seemingly unrelated facts about re-use of waste water. The small township of Landsborough in the Sunshine Coast hinterland is in urgent need of sewerage. The option to release even highly treated effluent into the Mooloolah River has met with substantial opposition downstream at Mooloolaba and Kawana.

The Caloundra/Maroochy strategic waste water management study has recently reported that indirect potable re-use of waste water is now the favoured option of treatment in that region. Ewen Maddock Dam is located quite close to Landsborough and is currently off line for household water supply.

It is coalition policy to provide for an increase in water and sewerage capital subsidy base rates for local authorities from 20 per cent up to 40 per cent for new works.

Small communities, hopefully such as Landsborough, will access a \$150m 10-year assistance program and additional assistance will also be provided for effluent re-use infrastructure and technological innovation.

This unique set of factors is about to be capitalised on as the Caloundra City Council is poised to make history. That council is keen and is about to embark on a pioneering project of sewerage Landsborough and treating the waste water by micro-filtration to a standard that will allow indirect potable re-use via Ewen Maddock Dam.

I congratulate the Caloundra and Maroochy communities on opting for a re-use preference. I commend the Caloundra City Council for taking the bold step of planning for it. I remind honourable members that it was a coalition Government that provided the extra subsidy on these expensive capital works that can make this project possible. I am sure that the Departments of Natural Resources, Forestry and Local Government will now play their part in bringing this scheme to reality. It is not just the people of Landsborough, Mooloolaba and Kawana who will appreciate this. Such a project will delay the building of another dam in the hinterland and the building of another ocean outfall on the coast; and such a project could well be a first for Australia.

Thanks to a coalition Government, Queensland leads the way once more. I look forward to all relevant Government Ministers giving their support to the project.

Time expired.

Nilsson Corporation Pty Ltd

Mr PEARCE (Fitzroy) (7.16 p.m.): Nilsson Corporation Pty Ltd—previously known as Darling Downs Finance and Land Pty Ltd—with David John Nilsson as managing director, entered into a contract to purchase some 8,000 acres of rural land at Clairview on the coast in central Queensland in the early 1990s. The company wanted to establish a major resort on this property similar to developments in the Whitsundays.

To facilitate this vision, the company had 14 acres rezoned commercial for roadhouse, motel, caravan park and shop purposes. The company then applied to have approximately 100 hectares of adjacent land rezoned rural residential—five-acre lots. This was approved by the Broomsound Shire Council, but was a major concern to the then Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning. The land was never rezoned.

To carry out the rezoning applications, the company had to raise capital in 1992. To do this, in late 1992 the company sold six unregistered five-acre lots depicted on a rural residential concept plan to six people from Nauru for about \$70,000 per lot. The plan contained a total of 60 five-acre lots. These lots do not exist and are still not shown on the rates book of the Broomsound Shire Council. The money received from the sales was banked in a Nauru bank under the name of D.J. Nilsson and subsequently withdrawn and entered into the company's books as a loan to the company by the director, David Nilsson.

In order for the lots sold to the Nauruans to come into being, the company had to spend approximately \$120,000 per lot on providing service infrastructure. In 1995, the commercial zone was subsequently backzoned to rural and the rural residential rezoning application was withdrawn as the company was directing its efforts into establishing a coastal service town on the Bruce Highway at Clairview. Under these conditions, it is highly likely that the lots can never be created.

Inquires have been made of the Broomsound Shire Council by a Nauruan purchaser regarding that land at Clairview. The purchaser has been advised by the council that the land does not exist on its rates book.

Crime, Cairns

Mrs WILSON (Mulgrave) (7.18 p.m.): The past few weeks have seen two of the most horrendous crimes perpetrated in the Cairns/Mulgrave area. Two young innocent victims now lie in hospital beds in Townsville and Brisbane, and both have fought for their lives as a result of the attacks perpetrated upon them. The town has been in shock, as has been the rest of the State.

Young Tjandumurra O'Shane, just six years old, was doused in petrol and set alight while innocently playing in the schoolyard during his lunch hour. Tjandumurra was fighting for his life at the Burns Unit of the Royal Brisbane Hospital for the first few days and in the last few weeks he has undergone skin grafts and is gradually healing. Every day sees him a little better, but he has a long way to go and much pain to bear.

With his cousins, I visited Tjandumurra at the hospital during the first week he was there. Although we were unable to see him due to the danger of infection which he then faced, I spent time with members of his family who were staying in a flat at the hospital. If there is

a positive anywhere in all of this, it is the love and support that Tjandumurra is receiving from those around him—his family, the medical staff and hospital staff generally and, of course, the community at large. The response by his school community and other schools in the area has been quite incredible. His hero, the athlete Cathy Freeman went to his bedside that day also. Although Tjandumurra could not see her, he felt her presence. I note in today's press that Jacko plans a visit also.

Last weekend, a Tjandumurra O'Shane benefit concert was held in Gordonvale to raise money to assist the family. This was a concert which brought local bands together, with band members giving their time freely to raise funds for the family. This has been repeated in a number of places. Thanks go to Terry Doyle and his band of entertainers, who organised the event.

This little boy will bear the scars both physically and emotionally all his life; scars brought about by a person who must be severely dealt with. The message to go out to the community must be the message that Australians, and certainly Queenslanders, will not stand for this sort of action by anyone.

Cleis Norbury, an 18-year old Bayview Heights teenager, also fought for her life a few weeks ago in Townsville.

Time expired.

Timber Industry

Mr DOLLIN (Maryborough) (7.20 p.m.): As I predicted in this House on several occasions, the Honourable Minister for Natural Resources, Mr Hobbs, and the Honourable Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry will sign the Howard Federal Government agreement for the retention of 15 per cent of native forests prior to 1750 with some flexibility. I believe that a Cabinet decision has been made that that will go ahead. This is contrary to what those Ministers and the Federal member for Wide Bay, Warren Truss, promised the timber industry over and over again in the lead-up to the last State election. They promised that this agreement would be consigned to the waste paper bin.

Even their own supporters within the industry have had enough of their broken promises and their inability to make decisions. An article in the *Maryborough Chronicle* dated 6 November headed, "Uncertainty in timber industry", states—

"The hardwood timber industry is fast losing confidence in political parties of all

persuasions over the regional forest agreements (RFAs) process, according to Tiaro's Dale and Meyers Sawmill co-owner John Meyers.

Mr Meyers said the present Coalition State Government said before it was elected that it would scrap the 15 per cent forest lock-up proposal when in power.

'They were going to throw it out after the election but here we are months later and they are about to sign an agreement which could end up being better or worse than the original proposal,' he said.

'They are afraid of it. I believe they will drag this out for years because they are reluctant to be involved in it at all.'

Last week, State Cabinet approved the undertaking of regional forest agreements (RFAs) in Queensland in co-operation with the Commonwealth Government and all major stakeholders.

Queensland Natural Resources Minister Howard Hobbs said the process would assemble the full range of forest economic, social, environmental and heritage values and, based on those assessments, a decision would be made on the most appropriate allocation.

Mr Meyers said if every part of Queensland was going to have a different allocation, 'no-one will know where they stand'.

'The Maryborough district could end up with no allocation and the Rockhampton area could end up with 60 per cent, who knows?'

He said that caused uncertainty in the industry and employees weren't sure of their futures."

Time expired.

Kirwan Hospital for Women

Mr TANTI (Mundingburra) (7.21 p.m.): Honourable members will recall that I have previously raised the matter of grossly wrong and alarmist statements by the member for Mount Gravatt in relation to the Kirwan Hospital for Women. It is now timely to update honourable members on the state of play at Kirwan. The vacancies at the Kirwan Hospital for specialist obstetric and gynaecological staff are rapidly being filled. The House is already aware that the offer made to the new Director of Obstetrics and Gynaecology has been accepted. The new director will be Dr Eric Green, formerly of Adelaide's Modbury

Hospital, who will commence work at the hospital in the first week of 1997.

Similarly, the House is aware that Dr Peter Kraus, formerly of Windsor, Sydney, has been appointed as staff specialist. Dr Kraus is currently a staff specialist at the Nepean District Hospital in Penrith. I also welcome Dr Kraus to north Queensland. Further to this, I am now in a position to advise the House of the third appointment of Dr David Watson of the Cairns Base Hospital, who has also been appointed to the position of staff specialist. These appointments are proof of the Government's commitment to Kirwan.

Prior to these appointments, the district has had no difficulty filling the vacant positions with locum staff. There has been very little disturbance to date of scheduled appointments for women, and the neonatal service has not been affected at all. In addition, an offer has been made in respect of the last vacant position. We may be within days of seeing obstetrics and gynaecology fully staffed. We are now looking forward to a bright future for Kirwan. All of this adds to the pressure on Mrs Spence to unreservedly apologise to the women of north Queensland. She should have the guts to do so.

Grazing Industry

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (7.22 p.m.): This week saw a sell-out of a major rural industry, the grazing industry, with the State Government selling off or divesting itself of public-owned abattoirs, which are the fourth-largest meat processors in Australia. The result will be 800 jobs lost Statewide, with 700 that are on the floor in any one day. As well, this will ensure that the grazing industry, and especially small producers, will be held to ransom by foreign-owned processing companies—American-owned and Japanese-owned companies. Not only do they dominate the abattoir industry, but they also undertake vertical integration with their own feedlots and properties to process their own beef. This means that Australians will be left out. They will be squeezed out of the industry. That will be the result of this deliberate decision by the State Government to give total control to foreign companies.

Abattoirs provide a service to the grazing industry and to many other aspects of rural industries. Graziers have always had somewhere to process their beef and stock, even when it was drought-affected stock. Truck loads and train loads of drought-affected stock used to be taken to Cannon Hill to be

processed. Now, if there is no service industry, there will be no alternative but a bullet, because processing will not and cannot be guaranteed. Government owned abattoirs have always ensured a fair deal for graziers in relation to weights, bruising and condemnations. We cannot guarantee that with foreign-owned companies.

The Bundaberg abattoir is typical of this service. A total of 28 jobs could be lost from an area where there is 20 per cent unemployment. Last year, 15,311 cattle, 20,000 pigs, some lambs, and even goats were processed there. Where will they be processed now? The closest place is Gympie, 200 kilometres to the south. To the north, where do they go? It is at least 350 kilometres to Rockhampton. Many graziers will be without a service.

Time expired.

Cooloola Sunshine Institute of TAFE

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore) (7.24 p.m.): This week, members have heard of some of the important achievements occurring throughout TAFE Queensland as an outcome of Minister Santoro's initiative. As the member for Maroochydore, I would like to add to these achievements by outlining what is happening within the Cooloola Sunshine Institute of TAFE. Since the delivery of the 1996 Budget, the Cooloola Sunshine Institute of TAFE has witnessed a growing demand for its courses. This has seen an increase in a range of programs, including retail travel, fine arts, architectural technology, applied science, construction, fashion and office administration.

Community and industry demand for and acceptance of these expanded courses is the result of a number of initiatives occurring in the institute. These include—

greater flexibility in the delivery of courses—delivery which will be further enhanced in 1997 with the introduction of flexible delivery centres at Gympie and Nambour;

a revitalised advisory structure, with the establishment of an institute advisory council—the result of a new TAFE initiative instigated and launched earlier this year by the Minister;

enhanced institute/business/community links, with the appointment of three training services officers, who are developing a number of high-level training programs to meet the specific needs of business and industry; and

an extensive Capital Works Program of \$20m, which will lead to the expansion of the Mooloolaba centre and the establishment of a new campus at Tewantin, construction of which is expected to be completed by December 1998.

Community, business and industry support has been a catalyst for a number of other achievements and projects at the institute, ranging from the development of a mentoring program for the institute's retail students to the enrolment of more than 100 trainees as a result of the work of six institute employees who are assisting employers to deliver custom-designed training. As members can see, the institute is progressing at a great pace, and by capitalising on these outcomes the coalition is seeking ways to work better with staff and business communities. This will cater for future growth in the vocational education and training needs of the diverse communities serviced by the institute.

National Competition Policy

Mr ROBERTS (Nudgee) (7.27 p.m.): Under National Competition Policy, contracting out is promoted as being a panacea for many of the so-called ills of the public sector. However, I happen to be one of the people who believe that the public sector can deliver services in an efficient and cost-effective manner. One of the interesting concepts with which employees are constantly being confronted is a proposition that it always seems to be cheaper and more efficient to get someone else to do their work. I recently came across an instance in SEQEB where a local manager presented figures to the employees which demonstrated—and I use that term loosely—that even if they worked for nothing, it would be cheaper to employ contractors to do their work. This madness has to be stopped. If we believed half of the nonsense that is being peddled about contracting out, we would all go home and pay someone else to do our work for us.

Some interesting international studies have cast doubt on much of the dogma supporting contracting out. One academic study in the UK suggests that savings of up to 20 per cent were achievable. Those figures have been relied upon by the Industry Commission here in Australia. However, a more recent comprehensive study by the UK

Audit Commission suggested that cost savings were more in the order of only 7 per cent. At that level, the feasibility of contracting out becomes marginal as productivity measures in the work force are more than capable of meeting that level of improvement. There is no doubt that contracting out makes sense in particular circumstances. However, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that adopting an across-the-board application of that policy is bad policy making that will lead to lower standards of service and quality, job losses and ultimately increased costs to consumers.

John Paul College Awards Evening

Mr WOOLMER (Springwood) (7.29 p.m.): Thank you very much for your indulgence, Mr Speaker. I rise tonight to pay tribute to the teachers, staff and students of what is commonly regarded as the John Paul College family. On Tuesday evening, I had the distinct pleasure of attending the John Paul College awards evening held in Brisbane at the Entertainment Centre. That venue has been used by the school for the past two years because the auditorium at the school cannot fit in the over 2,000 people who attend the awards evenings.

Mr FitzGerald: You were there.

Mr WOOLMER: Yes, I did attend.

I particularly congratulate the principal, Mr Ces Munns, and his wife, Noelene Munns, for the hard work that they have put into that fine institution over the years. I congratulate also the current Chair of the Board, Mr Dan Gorman, and his predecessor, Harry Coleman, for their vision and foresight in establishing what is now undoubtedly one of the finest private schools in Queensland. I pay tribute also to Enid Bradley Spencer who has been on the board of the school since its formation in 1978. For some many years now Enid, who I think is now 83 years of age—

Time expired.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer—Leader of Government Business) (7.30 p.m.): I move—

"That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 a.m., Tuesday, 26 November 1996."

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 7.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**951. Mr L. McPherson**

Mr BARTON asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (8/10/96)—

With reference to conflicting reports from him and the National Crime Authority regarding on going investigations into Gold Coast assets owned by the estate of recently deceased Sydney crime figure Len McPherson—

- (1) Who gave him the information that an investigation into McPherson's assets was presently being conducted by the NCA under a code-name of Sugar?
- (2) When did he receive this information?
- (3) Why has the NCA denied that their investigations are dealing with McPherson's assets rather they are directed at his general criminality?
- (4) How does he explain the conflict between his statements and those of the NCA?
- (5) Is there any action pending from operation Wallah that may involve McPherson's Gold Coast assets?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96):

(1) This information was provided by the Manager (Investigations) of the Brisbane office of the National Crime Authority to the Detective Inspector, Fraud and Corporate Crime Squad. That investigation was not code-named 'Sugar', but carried out under the general reference of that name.

(2) This information was provided by the Acting Commissioner of Police on 18 September 1996 in response to Question on Notice number 732.

(3) The original question specifically requested information concerning the 'ill-gotten gains' of McPherson. For this reason the answer provided specifically referred to the assets of McPherson. However, the NCA investigation was directed at McPherson's general criminality, but as with all such investigations, proceeds of crime issues follow as a natural consequence.

(4) The perceived conflict has been explained in the answer to the previous question. The important issue here is that as the NCA had charged McPherson with offences prior to his death, they are the only agency capable of pursuing any conviction based forfeiture applications.

(5) No action can be taken against McPherson's assets from Operation Wallah or any other investigation unless charges were laid prior to his death. As such only the NCA or, having regard to the nature of the charges, the Australian Taxation Office, are in a position to take action.

952. Criminal Justice Commission, Attachment of Police Officers

Mr LIVINGSTONE asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (8/10/96)—

With reference to the significant number of serving police officers that are currently attached to the Criminal Justice Commission—

- (1) What is the current number?
- (2) Is it intended to leave the same full strength of police attached to the Criminal Justice Commission; if not, how many will be withdrawn?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96):

(1) 79 police officers were assigned to the Criminal Justice Commission as at 1 October 1996.

(2) There is no current proposal to vary the Criminal Justice Commission police strength.

956. Police Stations and Watch-houses

Mr BRISKEY asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (8/10/96)—

With reference to capital works at Queensland Police Service stations and watchhouses—

(1) Why has the Queensland Police Service abandoned plans to build (a) a \$2m replacement police station and watchhouse at Dunwich, (b) a \$3.504m replacement police station and watchhouse at Cleveland, (c) a replacement \$900,000 watchhouse at Pormpuraaw and (d) a replacement \$700,000 watchhouse at Roma?

(2) What was the greater demonstrated need for a replacement district headquarters and watchhouse at Gladstone, as opposed to the abandoned facilities at Dunwich, Cleveland, Pormpuraaw and Roma?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96):

(1) In 1995 the previous government introduced an Accelerated Capital Works Program for the purpose of stimulating the construction industry. This program sought to introduce projects that were not originally identified in the 1995/96 Capital Works Program but which could be brought forward. With the exception of Cleveland, the projects referred to were not listed in the 1995/96 Budget Papers but were identified as projects that could be brought forward. This decision was based on a financial priority as opposed to operational priorities. As such, these projects did not reflect the Queensland Police Service's highest priorities.

Nevertheless, the projects are still reflected in the Queensland Police Service's Forward Capital Works program.

Dunwich was one such project that was brought forward in the Accelerated Capital Works Program but has since been deferred in favour of projects with a higher operational priority.

Cleveland has not been abandoned and remains a priority for the Queensland Police Service. Negotiations are proceeding with Council regarding the acquisition of a suitable site. Once these issues are resolved planning will proceed for the replacement Cleveland Police Station and Watchhouse.

Investigations have been undertaken to determine whether the Pormpuraaw Watchhouse should be replaced or upgraded. It is currently an element within the Police Service's Centralised Watchhouse

Upgrade Program, which forms part of the Capital Works Program.

Plans for a new watchhouse in Roma have not been abandoned. Investigations have determined that a new watchhouse is required. The cost of this facility is such that it has been removed from the Centralised Watchhouse Upgrade Program and now appears as a line item in its own right on the Capital Works Program.

(2) A replacement district headquarters and watchhouse at Gladstone have always been identified as a higher operational priority than Dunwich. However, a number of significant issues are being addressed in a predesign study before Gladstone can be progressed. All other projects are receiving due attention as detailed above.

957. Ministers and Ministerial Staff, Government Vehicles

Mr HAMILL asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts (8/10/96)—

With reference to her responsibility for Ministerial office expenses—

- (1) Which members of Ministerial staff are entitled to a Government vehicle as part of their conditions of employment?
- (2) How many vehicles are allocated to Ministerial offices for the use of Ministerial staff and how are these vehicles distributed among Ministerial offices?
- (3) How many vehicles are allocated to Ministers for official and electorate use and what is the total number of such vehicles used by Cabinet Ministers?
- (4) What is the anticipated cost of sales tax for (a) Ministerial and (b) Ministerial staff vehicles in 1996-97?

Mrs Sheldon (7/11/96):

(1) Ministerial Staff in the positions of Senior Policy Adviser, Senior Media Adviser or their equivalent are entitled to a car as part of their conditions of employment.

(2) There are 41 vehicles allocated to Ministerial offices for the use of Ministerial staff and are distributed as follows :

- Office of the Premier—5
- Office of the Deputy Premier—3
- Office of the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Racing—2
- Office of the Minister for Economic and Trade Development—2
- Office of the Minister for Sport, Recreation and Emergency Services—2
- Office of the Minister for Transport—2
- Office of the Minister for Employment, Training & Industrial Affairs—2
- Office of the Minister for Minerals and Energy—2
- Office of the Minister for Primary Industries—2

Office of the Minister for Health—3

Office of the Minister for Education—2

Office of the Minister for Environment—2

Office of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice—2

Office of the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care—2

Office of the Minister for Public Works and Housing—2

Office of the Minister for Local Government—2

Office of the Minister for Small Business and Tourism—2

Office of the Minister for Natural Resources—2

(3) There are 18 Chauffeur driven vehicles, 5 electorate vehicles, giving a total of 23.

(4) The anticipated cost of sales tax for

- (a) Ministerial vehicles is \$42,366.00 and,
- (b) Ministerial Staff vehicles is \$46,014.00.

958. Guidelines Regarding Provision of Infrastructure by Private Sector

Mr FOURAS asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts (8/10/96)—

With reference to the statement by the Under-Treasurer, Doug McTaggart of the need to further promote the opportunities for the private sector to become involved in infrastructure provision—

- (1) Why have the guidelines for private sector provision of infrastructure promised by the Under-Treasurer to be made available in August been delayed?
- (2) When will these guidelines be made available?

Mrs Sheldon (7/11/96):

(1) The objective is to provide the private sector with a clear framework for its involvement in public sector infrastructure delivery in a manner which ensures that the Government achieves the best possible outcome for the public in every instance. To achieve this outcome, the policy development process must necessarily involve:

extensive consultation within the public sector to ensure that the particular needs of the broad range of service areas within Government are fully addressed;

appropriate steps to ensure that the framework is consistent with other key policy initiatives currently under consideration by the Government, including the State Strategic Plan, the State Economic Development Strategy, the recommendations of the Commission of Audit; and

following agreement by Government agencies on the draft framework, extensive consultation with private sector stakeholders, commencing with the Infrastructure Association of Queensland members of the joint Government/private sector working group established to oversee development of the guidelines.

(2) The guidelines will be made available for wider consultation following firm agreement on their form and content by the joint Government/private sector working group.

959. State Budget, Advertisement

Mr HOLLIS asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts (8/10/96)—

With reference to a budget advertisement placed by the Government in the Peninsula Post on 12 September which stated "No increase in average tax per person"—

Will she explain for the benefit of the many Redcliffe residents who have contacted me complaining of her increased and new taxes, how she arrived at the statement "No increase in average tax per person"?

Mrs Sheldon (7/11/96): Consolidated Fund collections of taxes, fees and fines are estimated to be \$4,364 million in 1996-97. Once the impacts of underlying price increases and population growth are taken into account, ie. collections are calculated on a real per capita basis, the average tax burden is estimated to be \$1,294.63 per person.

This represents no real change from the 1995-96 average, in real per capita terms, of \$1,294.64 per person.

In contrast, the average tax burden in real per capita terms increased from \$929.76 in 1989-90 to \$1,294.64 in 1995-96. That is, the average State tax bill paid by Queenslanders increased over this period by an average of 5.7% in real per capita terms each year.

961. Acacia Ridge Police Station; Mount Gravatt Police Station

Mr ROBERTSON asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (8/10/96)—

- (1) What numbers of operational police are rostered on duty at the Mount Gravatt Police Station and the Acacia Ridge Police Station?
- (2) What were the numbers at each of these stations for each month since July 1995?
- (3) What is the current number and nature of available vehicles for each shift at each of these police stations?
- (4) What is the rank of each of the officers at these stations?
- (5) What is the current police to population ratio in the areas covered by each of these police stations and what were the ratios in July 1995?
- (6) Why has he broken his election promise by refusing to build a new police station in the Sunnybank electorate in his Government's first term of office?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96): It should be noted that Upper Mount Gravatt Police Station is a District Headquarters and that, with the exception of general duties personnel, officers from other organisations

listed below operate throughout the Upper Mount Gravatt District.

(1) The following numbers supplied are averages for any 24 hour period since July 1995.

Upper Mount. Gravatt Police Station:

General Duties

6:00 am to 2:00 pm—3

7:00 am to 3:00 pm—3

2:00 pm to 10:00 pm—5

3:00 pm to 11:00 pm—2

10:00 pm to 6:00 am—5

In addition to the above, a supervising sergeant is drawn from District resources and operates during afternoon and night shifts.

Upper Mount Gravatt Juvenile Aid Bureau

7:00 am to 3:00 pm—1

8:00 am to 4:00 pm—2

2:00 pm to 10:00 pm—2

Night work—One officer is supplied each month to perform duty with a CIB member on the regional night wireless vehicle.

South Brisbane District Traffic Branch

7:00 am to 5:00 pm—4

10:00 am to 8:00 pm—3

2:00 pm to 12:00 am—7

3:00 pm to 1:00 am—3

South Brisbane District Inquiry Office

8:00 am to 4:00 pm—3

2:00 pm to 10:00 pm—2

South Brisbane District Criminal Investigation Branch

6:00 am to 2:00 pm—2

8:00 am to 4:00 pm—6

2:00 pm to 10:00 pm—4

4:00 pm to 12:00 am—2

10:00 pm to 6:00 am—2

The shifts and staff numbers at the South Brisbane District Criminal Investigation Branch are averages over the total period. In recent months a 1800—0200 shift has been worked on Friday evenings by 2 personnel to ensure an overlapping of shifts during busy periods.

Upper Mount. Gravatt Scenes of Crime

7:00 am to 1:00 pm—1

8:00 am to 4:00 pm—2

2:00 pm to 10:00 pm—1 (the officer performing this shift remains on call until the following morning)

Metropolitan South Regional Crime Unit:

7:00 am to 1:00 pm—2

8:00 am to 4:00 pm—4

2:00 pm to 10:00 pm—2

The Metropolitan South Regional Crime Unit consists of personnel who are seconded on a six monthly basis from other establishments within the Metropolitan South Region. The unit has no allotted positions.

Acacia Ridge Police Station:

12:00 am to 8:00 am—2

8:00 am to 4:00 pm—3

4:00 pm to 10:00 pm—2

4:00 pm to 12:00 am—2

(2) Numbers of operational police have generally remained constant at all establishments listed since July 1995. From time to time numbers do, however, fluctuate due to leave, training, etc.

(3) The details of shifts, number of vehicles and outline of duties are supplied in respect of the Upper Mount Gravatt police station:

6:00 am to 2:00 pm—one police car for uniform patrol

7:00 am to 3:00 pm—one police car for uniform patrol

2:00 pm to 10:00 pm—two police cars for use by uniform patrol and supervisor

3:00 pm to 11:00 pm—one police car for uniform patrol

10:00 pm to 6:00 am—two police cars for uniform patrols

The Upper Mount Gravatt Juvenile Aid Bureau has two unmarked cars for all shifts.

South Brisbane District Traffic Branch

7:00 am to 5:00 pm—one police car and one motorcycle for patrol and radar

10:00 am to 8:00 pm—one police car and one motorcycle for patrol and radar

2:00 pm to 12:00 am—two police cars and two motorcycles for patrol and radar

3:00 pm to 1:00 am—one heavy special purpose vehicle

South Brisbane District Inquiry Office:

8:00 am to 4:00 pm—two vehicles for uniform and hospital inquiries

2:00 pm to 10:00 pm—one vehicle for uniform and hospital inquiries

South Brisbane District Criminal Investigation Branch

6:00 am to 2:00 pm—one unmarked car for CIB duties

8:00 am to 4:00 pm—two unmarked cars for CIB duties

2:00 pm to 10:00 pm—two unmarked cars for CIB duties

4:00 pm to 12:00 am—one unmarked car for CIB duties

10:00 pm to 6:00 am—one unmarked car for CIB duties

The Upper Mount Gravatt Scenes of Crime has two unmarked vehicles for all shifts.

The Metropolitan South Regional Crime Unit has two unmarked vehicles for all shifts.

The Acacia Ridge Police Station has two marked patrol cars for general duty policing.

(4) Upper Mount. Gravatt General Duties

Senior Sergeant, in charge—1

Senior Sergeant, operational—1

Sergeants, operational—10

Senior Constables, operational—7

Constables, operational—17

Upper Mount. Gravatt Juvenile Aid Bureau

Detective Senior Sergeant, in charge—1

Detective Sergeant—1

Detective/PC Senior Constables—3

Detective/PC Constables—2

South Brisbane District Traffic Branch

Senior Sergeant, in charge—1

Senior Sergeant, operational—1

Sergeants—5

Senior Constables—12

Constables—8

South Brisbane District Inquiry Office

Senior Sergeant, in charge—1

Sergeant, supervisor—1

Senior Constables—5 (includes one part-time member)

Constables—6 (includes one part-time member)

Upper Mount Gravatt CIB

Detective Senior Sergeant—1

Detective Sergeants—2

Detective/PC Senior Constables—9

PC Constables—4

Upper Mount. Gravatt Scenes of Crime Office

Sergeant, in charge—1

Senior Constables, operational—5 (includes one part-time member)

Constable—1

Metropolitan South Regional Crime Unit

Detective/PC Sergeant—1

PC Senior Constables—4

PC Constables—4

Acacia Ridge General Duties

Senior Sergeant, in charge—1

Sergeants—3

Senior Constables—7

Constables—14

(5) Upper Mount. Gravatt Division

Year	Police	Population	Ratio
July 1995	40	53,427	1:1,335.67
July 1996	39	54,395	1:1,394.74

Year	Acacia Ridge Division		
	Police	Population	Ratio
July 1995	23	46,477	1:2,020.74
July 1996	26	48,313	1:1,858.19

(6) The Government is not refusing to build a new police station in the Sunnybank electorate. The construction of a police station at Calamvale remains on the Queensland Police Service's Ten Year Capital Works Program.

962. Courts Service Strategy

Mr WELLS asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (8/10/96)—

With reference to the newsletter of the Catholic Prison Ministry Tikkun wherein it refers to being consulted by the Department of Justice regarding the Courts Service Strategy for the Courts for the next 15 years—

- (1) Was the Queensland Justices and Community Legal Officers Association consulted as part of this process; if not, why not?
- (2) Was the Justices of the Peace Council consulted in their statutory role under the Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declaration Act; if not, why not?
- (3) Was the Sunshine Coast Volunteer Justices of the Peace (Qualified) Group, who were until recently operating out of the Maroochydore Magistrates Court, consulted in the process; if not, why not?
- (4) What plans has the department to expand the JP Volunteers in the Magistrates Court system, including the provision of a room and facilities, similar to that provided to the Court support services?
- (5) As plans were well established to commence JP (Qual) Volunteers in all major Magistrates Courts in Queensland, including the Brisbane Magistrates Court, will he outline the future role of community JPs in the Courts Services Strategy for the next 15 years, and on what bases had this been determined?
- (6) What group of JPs or individual JPs has either he, his office or the Department of Justice consulted in this Court Services Strategy?
- (7) What advice has been given by departmental officers in relation to the services that can be provided by community JP (Quals) in the Magistrates Courts system in Queensland and what positions do these officers hold in the department?

Mr Beanland (12/11/96):

(1) No. At the time consultation was taking place with various organisations in Queensland the Queensland Justices and Community Legal Officers Association was in a difficult position as its affairs were being administered by a provisional liquidator. This was an unfortunate situation because this government seeks to work with the association. However, it was not appropriate to consult with them at a time when the

association was not in the position to reflect the views of its members.

(2) Yes. An officer from the Courts Division met with the President of the Justices of the Peace Council to discuss the strategy.

(3) Yes. A member of the JP Volunteer Group from Maroochydore, Mr Neville Jackson, was present at the meeting with the President of the JP Council.

(4) Recently I introduced into this parliament the Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations Amendment Act. The amendments to the Act are designed to maintain the status quo while the Queensland Law Reform Commission considers the present system in which Justices of the Peace operate. It would be inappropriate to generate plans to extend the JP Volunteers program until the Law Reform Commission has finished its work.

(5) Again it would be inappropriate to make such long term plans until the Queensland Law Reform Commission has reviewed the role of Justices of the Peace in Queensland.

(6) As I indicated previously the President of the Justices of the Peace Council was consulted on this matter and along with 34 different private, government, and quasi government organisations.

(7) The powers and authorities of Justices of the Peace (Qualified) have been spelt out in several issues of the Justice Papers and staff of the Justices of the Peace Branch reaffirm these powers and authorities to any enquirer. The extent to which community Justices of the Peace (Qualified) exercise their powers and authorities varies from one community to another; but there has been no direction by any Departmental officer to change the existing arrangements.

964. State High Schools, Enrolment

Mr ARDILL asked the Minister for Education (8/10/96)—

- (1) How many State high schools in Queensland have less than 300 students enrolled?
- (2) Where are these schools located?

Mr Quinn (6/11/96): (1) & (2) There are 21 state high schools in Queensland with less than 300 students enrolled. These schools are located throughout the Capricornia, Darling Downs, Metropolitan East, Metropolitan West, Northern, North Western, Sunshine Coast, South Western and Wide bay regions of the Department of Education.

965. Transport and Main Roads Department, Corporate Services Sections

Mr ELDER asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (8/10/96)—

With reference to his claim that there were no extra costs involved in the separation of Main Roads from the Department of Transport, even for such items as the establishment of new executive offices, printing of new stationery or creation of additional positions—

What measures has he put in place to ensure that the Corporate Services Sections in both the Departments of Transport and Main Roads, which are apparently half the size of the former Queensland Transport Corporate Services Directorate, will not begin to grow back towards their original size?

Mr Johnson (7/11/96): I have been advised that there were one-off costs incurred in the establishment of the Departments of Transport and Main Roads. These costs related to the determination of the mechanics of deamalgamation, the establishment of separate departmental identities, and necessary changes to business systems.

The Corporate Services functions of the two departments have been either split or shared. The decisions made to split services have been taken because they offer a driving role for the new departments which may mean operating differently from the past. The decisions made to share services have been taken because opportunities exist to achieve greater efficiency and a reduction in costs. Therefore the comparison of the sizes of the two departments' Corporate Services functions in relation to the former Queensland Transport may be misleading.

The deamalgamation of Corporate Services was guided by a clear protocol, signed by the respective Directors-General, which stressed cooperation and commitment to ensuring the success of the deamalgamation and the future success of both departments. The focus of Corporate Services in both departments is adding value to the business units to enable them to meet their objectives. The assessment of relevance to, and best value for, business units will be monitored through the benchmarking of services in the public and private sector. Where formal service agreements are in place for shared services, the 'buyer' can exercise their authority in ensuring value for money services are received.

The recent funding constraints in themselves ensure that the departments cannot afford to expand their Corporate Services areas. Mechanisms in place to further ensure the departments Corporate Services do not inappropriately grow in size also include:

Resources employed in corporate services are managed through a separate program, with clear deliverables and funding allocations,

The benchmarking of services will be used to monitor performance and judge best value,

A process of determining fair prices for services will be used to monitor costs borne by business units, and

Program evaluation will formally examine the effectiveness and value for money issues.

966. Police Resources, Townsville

Mr SMITH asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (8/10/96)—

- (1) What is the current position regarding the Police Beat services in Townsville as according

to reports, there were highly successful trials of Police Beat services in Toowoomba and at West End and they are expected to be expanded to Townsville?

- (2) How many positions have been called for Townsville?
- (3) When are they likely to be filled?
- (4) What areas will be covered by Police Beats and how were they selected?
- (5) Over the last 12 months what have been the total number of police committed to Central Business District patrols in Townsville, particularly through the Flinders Mall Police Shopfront?
- (6) What were the total number of hours of commitment to these patrols, and how does this compare with police CBD patrols in comparable centres, such as Cairns and the Gold Coast?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96):

(1, 2, 3 & 4) As part of proposals to expand Police Beat services to other areas, three beat areas were nominated for Townsville, these being North Ward, Garbutt and Aitkenvale. These areas were chosen following a detailed analysis of calls for service within the greater Townsville area which was conducted in mid 1995. Six additional senior constable positions were advertised in the Queensland Police Gazette for the beat positions but expansion of the project was deferred following the change of Government, pending a reassessment of policing priorities. As part of that assessment, it was decided to defer further consideration of the project until 1997/98, in order to accord higher priority to other initiatives in 1996/97. These initiatives included the Police Staffing Plan which will provide increased operational policing services to the community through the provision of extra police officers and ongoing civilianisation of the service to release police for operational duties, and the establishment of the North Queensland Campus of the Queensland Police Academy which was opened on 20 October 1996 with an initial intake of 40 recruits as part of the Government's commitment to increase police strength to 2,780 by the year 2005.

(5) Since the official opening of the Flinders Mall Shopfront on 21 April 1995, two police officers have been permanently located at that establishment. These officers are responsible for the general policing of the Central Business District of Townsville with a primary focus on beat patrolling.

These officers are supplemented from time to time with other personnel for the purpose of target patrolling.

The Shopfront's strength also includes a permanent administrative officer.

(6) Both police officers in the Shopfront work a standard 40 hour week.

The establishments for all Shopfronts throughout Queensland are identical. These may be supplemented, however, at the discretion of Regional Assistant Commissioners to meet the demands of local circumstances.

970. Class Sizes

Mr BREDHAUER asked the Minister for Education (8/10/96)—

With reference to information recently provided by him on class sizes in Queensland—

Will he provide a breakdown on a region by region basis of class sizes above the recommended levels as at the February effective enrolment returns in 1995-96?

Mr Quinn (6/11/96): Classes above target size—

Region	1995	1996
Sunshine Coast	206	212
Metropolitan West	339	328
Metropolitan East	367	268
Darling Downs	100	69
South Western	8	12
Wide Bay	121	124
Capricornia	110	134
Northern	128	123
North Western	29	8
Peninsula	102	76
South Coast	351	290

972. Asbestos in Government Buildings

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing (8/10/96)—

With reference to problems of asbestos in Government buildings in Rockhampton—

- (1) Has there been an audit carried out of all publicly-owned buildings, especially schools, to determine the presence of asbestos and the health risk associated with its presence; if so, what is the result of this audit, i.e. is there a priority list for the treatment of this problem?
- (2) If not, when will such an audit be carried out?
- (3) Are there personnel from Q-Build trained to manage asbestos identification and removal at a regional level and are these employees currently working on an asbestos removal program?
- (4) What is the budget for asbestos removal and problem management in the Capricornia region?
- (5) What schools in Rockhampton have been identified as having asbestos problems and when will these problems be addressed?

Mr Connor (7/11/96):

- (1) Approximately fourteen (14) asbestos audits comprising of 268 publicly-owned buildings have been carried out in the local Rockhampton area. Four (4) schools have been audited in the local Rockhampton area. Results of the 14 "audits" carried out are detailed in the Building Management Plan (BMP) which is held on each site. The BMP is held by the Client Department's Nominated Officer.
- (2) Audits are progressively being carried out.
- (3) Q-Build employees working on the Asbestos Management Program have been specifically trained by experienced staff. These personnel are not

trained as asbestos removalists, they are trained to manage contractors who undertake removals.

(4) Funding for asbestos removal and problem management in the Capricornia Region is the responsibility of each department as part of the Annual Maintenance Program and is on an as needs basis.

(5) There have been no asbestos materials classified in the Immediate ("asbestos problems") category in Rockhampton schools audited. Asbestos containing materials found in schools are to be managed as recommended in the Building Management Plan.

973. Regional Libraries, Book Stock

Mr FOLEY asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts (8/10/96)—

With reference to the Government's slashing of funds for purchase of book stock for regional libraries from \$2m in 1995-96 to \$1m in 1996-97—

- (1) How many books will be unable to be purchased as a result of this \$1m budget cut?
- (2) Did she consult with regional libraries and local Government authorities prior to cutting this grant for book purchase; if so, with what libraries and regional authorities did she consult and what was their feedback to her?
- (3) What possible justification could there be for this savage cut affecting regional Queenslanders?

Mrs Sheldon (7/11/96):

(1) The previous government increased baseline funding for local governments for public libraries by an additional \$2.0m as a new initiative in 1994-95. During the budget process this year, all existing initiatives were reviewed. The 1996-97 allocation of baseline funding for public libraries will be \$14.380m. This represents only a marginal reduction on previous years and not the \$1m suggested.

(2) A review of the public libraries grant scheme has already commenced. The review is examining the effectiveness of Queensland Government support for the continued development of public libraries. There is a Treasury representative on the review committee, and representatives of both local government and regional libraries. A process of regional consultation will culminate in a report for my consideration, which I shall receive early in 1997.

(3) It has been necessary for the government to bring the budget under control, and it would be unrealistic to expect the Arts portfolio to be exempt from that process.

975. Police Resources, Gold Coast

Mrs ROSE asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (8/10/96)—

With reference to his statements that extra police will be forthcoming to the Gold Coast Region—

- (1) How many extra police will be allocated to the Gold Coast?

- (2) How many of these additional police will be allocated to Coolangatta?
- (3) How many extra civilian staff will be employed by the police on the Gold Coast and in Coolangatta?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96):

(1) The Gold Coast District has an authorised strength of 480 police officers. The actual strength of the District as at 1 October 1996 was 463 police officers. The next graduation of 117 officers from the Queensland Police and Emergency Services Academy will take place on 29 November 1996. A total of 13 First Year Constables will be allocated from this group to perform duties within the Gold Coast District. Allocations of First Year Constables are made on a District level only.

(2) This financial year the overall strength of the Service is to be increased by 139 police positions. While a final decision in regard to the distribution of these additional positions has not yet been made, operational policing and direct service delivery to the community remain priorities for the Service and will be considered in the determination of appropriate allocations. Accordingly, the Gold Coast District will be allocated a proportion of the total number of available positions in line with the respective operational needs of Districts across the State. The Regional Assistant Commissioners have the discretion to determine the most appropriate allocation of staff within the divisions in their regions. The impact of any increases as a result of this allocation is unlikely to be felt prior to June 1997 due to the time involved in recruiting and training additional officers.

(3) The implementation of the civilianisation program is proceeding in the 1996/97 financial year with the distribution of Communication Room Operators in Regional centres to be effected in mid April 1997. This distribution will include the placement of 8 Communications Room Operators within the Gold Coast District Communications Centre at Broadbeach and will enable the release of police officers from these support roles back to operational duties. At this time it is not proposed to place additional civilian positions within the Coolangatta division.

978. Education Department, Maintenance Allocation

Ms BLIGH asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing (8/10/96)—

With reference to the \$55m maintenance allocation for the Education Department, currently held and expended by Q-Build—

- (1) Will these funds be transferred to the Education Department during 1996-97?
- (2) Will individual State schools be untied from Q-Build for maintenance and building requirements during 1996-97?
- (3) What effect will any transfer of funds to education, and the untying of schools from the current requirement to use Q-Build, have on the staffing and workloads of Q-Build?

- (4) Will any other departments be untied in 1996-97?

Mr Johnson (7/11/96):

(1) Maintenance funds have been quarantined for individual Departments including the Department of Education for 1996/97.

(2) No.

(3) Not applicable.

(4) No.

979. Power Supply, Daintree Region

Mr WELFORD asked the Minister for Environment (8/10/96)—

With reference to the proposal by the Minister for Mines and Energy to construct a large scale program of highly subsidised power lines through the Daintree Region of Far North Queensland—

- (1) Is he aware or has he been advised of any adverse impacts of such power lines on world heritage values or local endangered species; if so, what are those impacts?
- (2) Who will commission and who in Government will oversee the environmental impact assessment process?
- (3) What is the timetable, and what arrangements are in place for public participation for the EIS process?
- (4) What action will he take to stop this taxpayer funded destruction of the environment?

Mr Littleproud (6/11/96):

(1) The Minister for Mines and Energy has announced that he will be seeking "in principle" Cabinet approval for the proposed powerline prior to an environmental impact assessment study being undertaken.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority has provided advice to me of possible environmental impacts of extending grid electricity north of the Daintree River. However, this advice was given before the Authority was provided with any information about the proposed extension. The environmental impact assessment announced by the Minister for Mines and Energy will provide the means for identifying and addressing potential impacts.

(2) The Far North Queensland Electricity Board will be the agency responsible for overseeing the environmental impact assessment process under section 29 of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971. The environmental impact assessment process will be undertaken accordance with the policies and administrative arrangements put in place by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and will involve extensive consultation with advisory groups (including State, Federal and local government agencies, environment and community groups and affected property owners).

In particular, the environmental impact assessment process will require FNQEB to undertake the following processes—

prepare a detailed terms of reference in consultation with the advisory groups;

commission an independent consultant to undertake and prepare a draft environmental impact study in accordance with the terms of reference;

publicly release the draft environmental impact study report and allow advisory groups to comment on the report;

finalise the environmental impact study report based on submissions (which determines whether to proceed with the line and, if so, the preferred route); and

develop an Environmental Management Plan (covering the construction and operational requirements of the project) to minimise the environmental impacts

(3) These details will be determined and announced following consideration of the Cabinet submission to be presented by the Minister for Mines and Energy.

(4) See above.

980. Jinibara State School

Mr HAYWARD asked the Minister for Education (8/10/96)—

With reference to the estimated 1997 student population of 400 at Jinibara State School—

- (1) When will Block D construction commence?
- (2) Will this construction be completed before school starts in 1997 to cater for anticipated school enrolment growth?
- (3) What further commitment will he make in ensuring the provision of appropriate and adequate classroom accommodation to Jinibara State School students given the demographic estimates provided?

Mr Quinn (6/11/96):

(1) Construction commenced on 24 September 1996.

(2) The contractor has programmed the work to meet the commencement of the 1997 school year, excepting certain unforeseen events such as prolonged wet weather.

(3) Demographic analysis indicates that the anticipated enrolment for the start of the 1997 school year will necessitate the provision of an additional two classrooms. Planning is now in progress to provide a relocatable classroom building in addition to the construction of the permanent block.

982. Asbestos in Schools, Mount Gravatt Electorate

Ms SPENCE asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing (8/10/96)—

With reference to the asbestos removal program initiated by the previous Government—

- (1) What schools in the Mount Gravatt Electorate have been inspected for asbestos?

(2) When were the inspections carried out and what was the result of these inspections?

(3) What action is he instituting to address the findings of the inspections?

Mr Johnson (7/11/96):

(1) Five (5) audits have been completed to date.

(2) The inspections were carried out from September 1995 to June 1996. Results of "audits" carried out are detailed in the Building Management Plan (BMP) which is held on each site. The BMP is held by the Client Department's Nominated Officer.

(3) Action has or is being taken that is consistent with the results of the Building Management Plan (BMP).

983. Extended Drug Package

Mr PEARCE asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport (8/10/96)—

With reference to the new Extended Drug Package, formerly known as the Remote Area Drug Package, which is intended to allow selected and specially trained Queensland Ambulance Officers to use certain drugs, through consultation with a doctor, in areas where they are at least thirty minutes from medical care—

- (1) What is the current status of the Extended Drug Package in regional Queensland, in particular, Central Queensland?
- (2) How many selected and specially trained officers are there in the region, in particular, those who are IV trained?
- (3) What training programs have been put in place to ensure that rural based Queensland Ambulance officers are given every opportunity to upgrade their skills in this area?

Mr Veivers (7/11/96):

(1) The Remote Area Drug Package is a program which allows an ambulance officer in isolated locations to administer drug therapy under the instruction and direction of a medical practitioner. The Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) has approved the new Extended Drug Package in principle and has written new clinical policies to cover the administration of the drugs. A training program is currently being developed which will allow the regions to upgrade the skills of their officers.

The Remote Area Drug Package, which is the predecessor to the Extended Drug Package, will remain operational until the introduction of the new program.

(2) The Central Region of the QAS has sixty (60) officers trained in the provision of IV fluid resuscitation. These officers operate under the medical direction of their local medical practitioner who is responsible for the program. These officers are deployed at selected rural stations in the Central Region.

(3) The provision of the Extended Drug Package is dependent on the support of the local medical practitioner. The medical practitioner plays a critical

role in training the officers and thereafter acts as one of a number of contact medical practitioners for the ambulance officers to obtain approval before the administration of any additional drugs. Where the program has the support of the local medical practitioner, the QAS will ensure all officers in rural locations will be given every opportunity to participate in the program.

984. Complaints of Domestic Violence Against Police Officers

Mr CAMPBELL asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (8/10/96)—

With reference to a recent case where a New South Wales policeman murdered his wife in Bald Hills, Queensland and with respect to the Queensland Police Service—

- (1) Does the Police Service maintain records of the number of complaints regarding domestic violence made against Queensland Police Officers; if so, how many police officers have been involved in domestic violence in their own domestic situations?
- (2) Do these police have special training and undergo specific domestic violence programs?
- (3) Are police, who have a history of personal domestic violence allowed to respond to domestic violence situations; if so, why?
- (4) Has the Queensland Police Service considered implementing the Duluth (USA) model or the very successful model of handling domestic violence in Aruncy, Massachusetts, USA where there has been no domestic violence murders in over 9 years?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96):

(1) The Queensland Police Service maintains a Complaint Management System database which identifies all complaints made against Queensland police officers. The system does not, however, differentiate between complaints made against Queensland police officers who are perpetrators of domestic violence and complaints made against police officers responding to incidents of domestic violence.

All Domestic Violence Orders issued against police officers are brought to the attention of Assistant Commissioners and disciplinary action is taken against the officers where justified. Officers who are respondent spouses in Domestic Violence Orders are not permitted to possess either privately owned or Service weapons.

The Assistant Commissioners maintain records of those officers who are named as respondent spouses in Domestic Violence Orders, however, these records are not kept in a form which allows ready statistical retrieval.

(2) There are no mandatory domestic violence programs in place for Queensland police officers who are perpetrators of domestic violence. Queensland police officers and their spouses may receive counselling from Human Services Officers

and can be referred to external domestic violence programs.

(3) A police officer who is named as a respondent spouse in a Domestic Violence Order is not permitted to possess weapons. In many cases this results in the officer being redeployed from operational duties. Officers who are respondent spouses and continue in operational roles may be directed to attend domestic violence incidents. The Queensland Police Service expects its officers to act professionally at all times without regard to their personal situations. Officers who allow their personal circumstances to interfere with their professionalism may be subject to disciplinary sanctions.

(4) The Queensland Police Service has, for some time, been involved in the development of a response to domestic violence which draws from successful overseas models including the Duluth and Quincy models. The essential element in these models is the provision of a coordinated, multi-agency response to domestic violence.

Strategies to improve liaison and cooperation between the courts system, domestic violence support and referral service and the Queensland Police Service are included in the Queensland Police Service Domestic Violence Strategic Plan.

The Queensland Police Service is already participating in coordinated responses to domestic violence, including a pilot project in Townsville. Negotiations with other government departments, the Brisbane City Council and community groups are taking place to establish a similar approach to domestic violence in the greater Brisbane area.

Other elements of the Duluth and Quincy models have been considered and adapted to the legal framework which applies to Queensland. Of most relevance to the Queensland Police Service is the 'pro-arrest' policy frequently adopted in United States' jurisdictions. While the Duluth model highlights the desirability of arresting a domestic violence perpetrator, Queensland law does not permit the arrest of perpetrators as a routine measure. However, it is Queensland Police Service policy that where sufficient evidence of a criminal offence is available against a perpetrator of domestic violence that criminal proceedings are taken against that person and this may involve the arrest of the perpetrator.

986. Woolcock Street Roadworks Project, Townsville

Mr SMITH asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (9/10/96)—

- (1) Will he indicate what timeframe is planned for the Woolcock Street roadworks project in Townsville, specifically when will tenders be called in view of announcements that work is supposed to start in December?
- (2) Will he also advise on programming for the completion of the northern approaches works, which are to link the Woolcock Street project via Ingham Road and Duckworth Street?

- (3) More importantly, will these timeframes conform with those announced by the previous State and Federal Governments?
- (4) Will he give an undertaking regarding the missing link on Woolcock Street from Dalrymple Road through to Duckworth Street as this will be a State Government responsibility and requires a firm commitment as a follow-on to complete this important network?

Mr Johnson (7/11/96):

- (1) The Federal Government announced funding approval of \$21.49 million for the Woolcock Street and Duckworth Street projects in Townsville.

I have recently confirmed State Government funding for this Townsville roads package, and I understand the funding contribution from the Townsville City Council is in the final stages of an agreement.

Tenders for the bridgeworks and associated precast concrete bridge components were called on 28 September 1996. Subject to the normal tender assessment processes, the concrete products manufacturing will commence in December 1996, and works under the bridgeworks contract will start in January 1997.

- (2) This total Townsville roads package will be delivered under a number of separate contracts.

Dates for Calling Tenders

- a. Bridges over Louise Creek and the rail spur—Sept. 1996 (called)
- b. Drainage works in Duckworth Street—Oct. 1996
- c. Woolcock Street (Duckworth Street—Bohle)—Nov. 1996
- d. Duckworth Street (Dalrymple Road—Ingham Road)—Nov. 1996
- e. Woolcock Street (Duckworth Street—Hugh Street)—June 1997
- f. Ingham Road (Mather Street—Bohle)—Nov. 1997
- g. Shaw Road (Bruce Highway—Hind Road)—Nov. 1997

- (3) Following the recent funding approvals by the Federal and State Governments, these projects are programmed for completion by December 1998, in accordance with the commitments of the previous Federal and State Governments.

- (4) The extension of Woolcock Street between Dalrymple Road and Duckworth Street will be constructed to a four-lane divided road and will be funded by the State Government, with a contribution from Townsville City Council. As indicated above, tenders for these works are expected to be called in June 1997 and construction is scheduled to commence in October 1997 at an estimated cost of \$7.8 million.

987. Winton-Hughenden Rail Line

Mr ELDER asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (9/10/96)—

- (1) How regularly are services operating on the Winton to Hughenden line and what are the levels of patronage for those services?
- (2) What level of community service obligations is involved in supporting any services on the Winton to Hughenden line and what are the maintenance costs associated with that line?

Mr Johnson (7/11/96):

- (1) A scheduled service is provided from Hughenden to Winton and return once a week. The normal loading on this train is approximately 200t trailing load, whereas a full train could haul around 800t trailing load.

Livestock trains are provided on an as-required basis and 12 extra trains were run up and down during the period 1 January to 10 October 1996.

- (2) The CSO requirement to support the services between Winton and Hughenden on this line section for the 1994-95 financial year was \$1.34 million.

At this stage, minimal maintenance is being undertaken on the line section, and for the line to remain open, the following costs will need to be incurred:

Up front: \$3.0 million

On going: \$2.1 million per annum (CSO payment)

989. Transport Minister; Election Promise to Jilalan Railway Workers

Mr MULHERIN asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (9/10/96)—

With reference to the combined railway union meeting held at the Sarina Bowls Clubs on 24 March 1995 at which he, then the Coalition's Shadow Minister for Transport, promised running crews at Jilalan that if the Coalition won Government he would guarantee them an 8-hour shift—

Will he honour his election promise?

Mr Johnson (7/11/96): Since that meeting at the Sarina Bowls Club, Queensland Rail and unions have been involved in continuous negotiations on a Traincrew Agreement. These negotiations involved state and local union officials and key QR managers.

The Agreement embraces a range of productivity initiatives, in return for substantial remuneration incentives. This Agreement will enable Queensland Rail to meet the challenges of the future. Part of the Agreement involves working shift up to 11 hours for Two Driver Operations, and 8 hours 45 minutes for Driver Only Operations, and when a Driver is rostered with a Driver's Assistant.

The package was taken to all traincrew employees across the State. These employees voted overwhelmingly, by secret ballot, to accept the proposal. Given this situation and the financial benefits accruing to Traincrew from this Agreement, it is unlikely that Traincrew at Jilalan or other depots would wish to revert to 8 hour shifts, and the subsequent loss of income and other improved conditions.

990. Undurba Preschool, Speech Therapy Services

Mr HAYWARD asked the Minister for Education (9/10/96)—

When will speech therapy services for Undurba Pre School students commence?

Mr Quinn (6/11/96): During 1995 Undurba State School was serviced by a therapist for one full day per week over the whole year. When Jinibara State School was opened in 1996 all schools in the Pine Rivers area were made aware that they would be required to forego some service to enable the servicing of the new school, as there was no additional time available. The situation was brought to the attention of the appropriate principals' cluster on 5 December 1995. Consequently, at the beginning of 1996 it was decided that Undurba State School would drop from one full day (8:30am to 4:30pm), to six hours (8:30am to 2:30pm).

Schools in the Pine Rivers area are involved in prioritising the speech pathology needs of students. The speech and language pathologists respond to these needs. This is a necessary process as therapists in the Sunshine Coast Region have carried caseloads of over 300 clients. This figure is outside the acceptable limit and is simply not manageable. The prioritisation is undertaken by the key contact people in the school with support from the therapists. Priorities for the schools are clarified at the beginning of each term.

The principal of the school made a decision to utilise the therapist in the primary section of the school, particularly the special education unit where there were students who had speech needs identified in their individual education programs. The preschool was to receive the services of the advisory visiting teacher for communication.

The provision of this service has never ceased, however there has been some interruption to its delivery, as a result of the untimely resignation of the therapist, on 6 September this year. Several steps have been taken to fill this vacancy:

(a) Eight applicants from an applicant pool assembled in June this year were contacted and each indicated that they had found other employment.

(b) The Queensland therapist locum register was contacted but was not able to supply a suitable applicant.

(c) Arrangements are under way to advertise the position in newspapers. The Department will proceed to recruit a suitable applicant as soon as possible.

991. Ipswich Hospital

Mr HAMILL asked the Minister for Health (9/10/96)—

With reference to the redevelopment of the Ipswich Hospital—

- (1) What is the total cost of this project?
- (2) What is the total contribution to be drawn from the recurrent hospital budget to meet the Government's new "capital charging scheme"?

(3) Over what period will this capital charge be paid?

(4) What was the actual spending of the Ipswich Hospital in 1995-96?

(5) What is the estimated spending of the Ipswich Hospital for 1996-97?

Mr Horan (8/11/96):

(1) \$75 million.

(2 & 3) The Coalition is committed to modernising and upgrading health care facilities; its capital works budget represents real outlays for real projects with achievable deadlines. By redeveloping facilities in this way, the Coalition will achieve value for capital investment, and improved outcomes for both patients and taxpayers.

The Coalition's new and redeveloped hospitals will run at considerably higher levels of efficiency and patient service. Queensland Health will not shirk its responsibility to deliver the best possible health services at the lowest possible cost to the Queensland taxpayer. The approved capital funding framework reflects this.

The only capital charge which will apply will be that to cover Labor's unfunded commitments: where your Leaders, Messrs Beattie and Elder, overcommitted the capital works fund by \$1.2 billion. This capital charge is the cost of preventing the collapse of Queensland's hospital infrastructure, the collapse which would have followed from the bankruptcy of the fund.

(4) \$47.241 million.

(5) Information on hospital estimated 1996-97 budgets, including the Ipswich Hospital estimated 1996-97 budget, will not be available until 1996-97 budget processes have been completed. Districts (and facilities/hospitals within Districts) are currently in the process of analysing budget details provided to them by Corporate Office. Estimated facility/hospital budgets will be determined after this analysis is complete and negotiations with the Director-General on performance targets are concluded. Districts will also access funds from the Surgery on Time and similar strategies as the year progresses.

992. Rural Fire Brigades

Mr LIVINGSTONE asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport (9/10/96)—

With reference to recent complaints from rural fire brigades that they are underfunded and as a result, fear their effectiveness to fight bushfires will be impeded—

(1) Why is the 1996-97 Coalition Budget for rural fires less than that set by Labor in 1995-96?

(2) Does he agree with rural firefighters that underfunding in the 1996-97 Budget will mean less fire protection in rural Queensland?

(3) Given this underfunding, does he now expect that rural fire brigades will turn to local authorities so that they can properly fund their activities?

Mr Veivers (7/11/96):

(1) The budget for the Rural Fire Division of the Queensland Fire Service (QFS) for 1996-97 is \$6.364M. The Division's budget has not been cut. The current budget continues to be comprised of the agreed base funding, the Bushfire Audit initiatives and an allocation from the Department of Emergency Services indexed \$10M new initiative provision. The Division's base funding increased by 3.2% compared with 1995-96, from \$2.716M to \$2.803M.

(a) The initiative funding resulting from the Bushfire Audit and approved by the previous Government is scheduled for reduction over a five year period. The previous government approved a reduction in this financial year from \$3.09M to \$2.64M.

(b) The previous year's budget also included funding of \$0.860M by way of an election promise of the previous Government. This initiative was intended to provide:

(i) \$0.74M for the provision of new rural firefighting appliances.

(ii) \$0.07M for the provision of new communications equipment to rural fire brigades.

(iii) \$0.05M for the provision of protective clothing for rural firefighters.

Funding for the first year of this initiative (1996/97) was provided by Treasury from the Consolidated Fund. The Department of Emergency Services was directed by the previous Government to fund this initiative in 1996/97 FY from the Department's internal initiative fund (Tobacco Tax). As the funds from this source had already been fully allocated, the former Government's election promise could only be met by cutting other initiatives to which funds had already been committed. In other words, the former Government's election promise was in effect unfunded for the 1996/97 FY.

(c) The previous year also included a once-off amount provided by the Commissioner, QFS from the urban fire budget.

(2) I do not agree that there will be less fire protection in rural Queensland. It is pertinent to note that the funding for the Rural Fire Division for this year is higher than the funding provided over four of the six years during which the previous Government held office. This year will see general equipment, such as pumps and knapsacks valued at \$1M, provided to brigades.

Fire protection is dependent upon more than just equipment. The permit to burn system employed over the last four decades will continue, as will training to the volunteer fire wardens and volunteer brigade members.

(3) Legislation to enable local authorities to strike a rural fire levy was enacted in 1994 and over 30 local authorities already have a levy in place. It is up to each local authority to determine through consultation with the local District Inspector and the rural fire brigades whether a levy should be imposed, how much the levy should be and the disbursement of the levy money.

The Rural Fire Division has recently introduced a classification system which will help in the categorisation of each rural brigade into one of three categories. The classification system also recommends the type and quantity of equipment for a brigade of each classification. The Division is using this classification system to more equitably distribute equipment funds and it is probable that brigades in truly rural areas of Queensland are now receiving a greater share of the available funds. Now that this guideline has been introduced I encourage all councils to liaise with their local District Inspector to better determine how the needs of the local brigades can be met.

993. Ambulance Subscriptions; Fire Levy

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport (9/10/96)—

With reference to the Queensland Ambulance Service and the Queensland Fire Service—

(1) Will he guarantee that there will be no other increases other than CPI increases in the ambulance subscriptions during 1996-97?

(2) Is he currently considering increases to ambulance call-out charges to be implemented early in 1997 or will he unequivocally rule out such increases?

(3) Will he guarantee that the fire levy will not be increased other than by a CPI or less figure during 1996-97?

Mr Veivers (7/11/96):

(1) You will be aware that a review of the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) is currently being undertaken with a report expected in the near future. This will also address the issue of QAS subscription rates and, until the report is received and considered by the Government, I am unable to comment further in regard to QAS subscription rates.

(2) This review will also consider the QAS fees for provision of ambulance services to persons not covered by a current ambulance subscription and, until the report is received and considered by the Government, I am unable to comment further in regard to QAS fees for provision of ambulance services.

(3) Increases on the fire levy for the 1996/97 period have been set at no more than 3.3%. This is in line with CPI increases. There will be no increases above this figure for the 1996-97 period.

994. Fire Station, Hervey Bay

Mr NUNN asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport (9/10/96)—

With reference to the Coalition promise made to the people of Hervey Bay that a 24-hour fire station would be provided when the Coalition took Government—

(1) Why has this promise not been kept?

(2) Does he intend to keep this promise; if so, when does he intend to keep it?

- (3) What is the expected date of commencement of the 24-hour station?

Mr Veivers (7/11/96): In response to the specific questions made by Mr Nunn, I can advise as follows:

Both the Torquay and Pialba Fire Stations currently provide a 24-hour fire and rescue service to Hervey Bay. Torquay has a total of 14 career firefighters, who provide an immediate response between 7.00am and 11.00pm and 10 auxiliary firefighters to cover the remaining 8 hours. Pialba is staffed by 10 auxiliary firefighters.

The Queensland Fire Service has adopted a flexible staffing strategy employing auxiliary and permanent firefighters. This strategy matches resources to workload patterns in a way that ensures Hervey Bay is provided with a service meeting national and international standards of service delivery.

Growth projections for Hervey Bay suggest that an increase in the level of service delivery may become necessary at some time in the future. However, at this stage it would be premature to change staffing arrangements at Torquay Fire Station.

995. Shaws Road, Townsville

Mr McELLIGOTT asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (9/10/96)—

With reference to the improvement of the Thuringowa Drive—Dalrymple Road intersection and the sealing of part of Shaws Road which has led to a massive increase in traffic volumes and given that there have been some 40 accidents, some fatal, on the unsealed section of Shaws Road—

Will he give a firm undertaking that completion of Shaws Road will be given priority and will he give a timetable for completion of the work?

Mr Johnson (7/11/96): The construction of Shaws Road to a bitumen-sealed standard, extending from the Bruce Highway to Hind Road (an extension of Dalrymple Road) is scheduled for construction during 1998. Tenders are expected to be called in November 1997.

The recent State Budget provides funding for the design of this project during 1996/97. Design has commenced and will be completed by June 1997.

The project is currently programmed for completion in the second half of 1998.

The actual timing of the project will be reviewed in June 1997, at which time options for advancing the works will be considered.

996. Diesel Electric Locomotives

Mr ARDILL asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (9/10/96)—

Will he take action to correct a design fault in the new 2800 class diesel electric locomotives, whereby when a beast is struck by the locomotive at running speed, the cowcatcher fails to throw the beast to the side of the train, and instead, allows it to pass under the train leading to damage to the air system, and in

the case of passenger trains, to other serious damage?

Mr Johnson (7/11/96): The design of the cowcatcher on the new 2800 class diesel electric locomotives is the same as existing QR locomotives, which means the cowcatcher is approximately 100mm above rail height. Animals such as kangaroos and small cows can squeeze under the cowcatcher and generally no air equipment is damaged.

However, any beast, including kangaroos, that strike the front of the locomotive (headstock), where the air connections for coupling to the adjacent locomotives are located, is likely to cause damage. If pipes are broken, the driver can still take action to apply the brakes of the train. Loss of train air will bring on the train brakes. The new 2800 locomotive is more susceptible to this damage due to the mounting arrangement of the cocks. In addition, the beast tends to roll along the side of the locomotive, where other air equipment is susceptible to damage.

The design of the 2800 locomotive did not take into consideration the high occurrences of beast strikes. It has also been suggested that the locomotive's reduced noise level offers less warning to cattle. Older QR diesel locomotives are less susceptible to damage due to the use of more robust cocks, mounted flat against the face of the headstock and, in general, higher up. Many still have buffers fitted which offer protection, but a program to remove buffers has been in force for some time now as they are considered unnecessary, and a safety issue. The 2800 locomotive headstock design is similar to electric locomotives.

QR is currently reviewing the design of future 2800 class locomotives, and modifying the existing locomotives. Modifications include stronger cocks, improved mounting and added protection, and has included the requirement for beast strike protection.

997. Prostitution Laws

Mr BARTON asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (9/10/96)—

With reference to the Special Operation Task Force to monitor identifiable trends in prostitution related activities, particularly where they relate to advertising in regional newspapers and attempts to circumvent existing legislation and noting that advertising is still wide spread (including in free suburban newspapers) (9/10/96)—

- (1) What staff are attached to this unit?
- (2) What trends has this unit identified?
- (3) How effective has the Police Service been in addressing breaches of the laws on prostitution?
- (4) What action is intended by the Police Service to address difficulties identified in policing current prostitution laws?
- (5) Does he intend to introduce amendments to the current prostitution legislation in the near future; if so, what will be the basis of those amendments?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96):

(1) The Special Operations Task Force is presently staffed by eight police officers and one staff member.

(2) The main trend identified by the Task Force has been the closure of known large brothels. With particular reference to advertising in regional newspapers, certain trends have been identified. The bulk of prostitution advertising is now drafted to give the appearance of single person operations, in compliance with current legislative requirements. These advertisements are not normally overt in relation to prostitution services. Advertisements are also being placed in the Natural Therapies section of some newspapers.

(3) The Queensland Police Service has actively enforced the current legislation relating to prostitution and, where breaches have been detected, appropriate action has been taken. During the period February 1993 to June 1996, some 190 persons were charged with a total 715 charges by the Special Operations Task Force.

(4) & (5) I have already indicated my intention to review the prostitution laws and I will keep you advised as to progress.

999. Police Resources, Maryborough

Mr DOLLIN asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (9/10/96)—

With reference to an increase in the funded strength of police numbers for 1996-97 of 139—

When does he intend to realise his commitment during the 1995 State Election that the Maryborough Police District needed another 88 police officers?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96): The Coalition Government has given an undertaking to increase the strength of the Queensland Police Service by 2780 police officers over the ten year period commencing from the 1995/96 financial year. This increase includes an additional 800 police officers in the three year period from 1996/97 to 1998/99. This financial year the overall strength of the Service is to be increased by 139 police positions.

While a final decision in regard to the distribution of these additional positions has not yet been made, operational policing and direct service delivery to the community remain priorities for the Service and will be considered in the determination of appropriate allocations. Accordingly, the Maryborough Police District will be allocated a proportion of the total number of available positions in line with the respective operational needs of Districts across the State.

1001. Police Beat Shopfront Program

Mr BRISKEY asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (9/10/96)—

With reference to the outstanding success of the Police Beat Shop Front Program introduced by the Labor Government in 1993, and his intention to bring

the total number of permanent shop front locations in Queensland to 25 by 30 June 1997—

(1) As this figure is substantially lower than the Labor Government's intention of 32 permanent and 14 relocatable shop fronts by the same date, does this mean the Coalition Government does not share the public's appreciation of these facilities; if so, why?

(2) What alternative measure does he propose to put in place to provide the Queensland community with the policing services they would have received had Labor's proposals been given full effect?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96):

(1) The Coalition Government has continued to support the Police Beat Shopfront Program and has provided funding of \$1.4m per year, an amount equivalent to the level of funding allocated by the previous Government.

Nevertheless, the recurrent costs involved in operating and maintaining these facilities have continued to escalate with the increases in the number of permanent shopfronts. Accordingly, the escalation in recurrent costs has impacted on the Service's ability to establish more shopfronts. Consequently the budget allocation of \$1.4m will only allow three shopfronts to be opened in the current financial year.

I would also point out that as more permanent shopfronts are opened, there is a decreased demand for the portable shopfront modules. I am advised that the requirement for portable shopfront modules and Police Beat is under review with the intention to remove portable facilities from service as from 1 November 1996 in line with changing requirements. It is anticipated that funds realised from the disposal of the vans and modules should be sufficient to complete an additional shopfront by June 1997.

(2) With respect to alternative measures I draw your attention to the crime prevention initiatives contained in the Coalition Government's Law and Order Module and in particular to the range of community based policing initiatives .

Central to the philosophy of the Law and Order Module is an active, practical encouragement of the community to help devise local crime prevention strategies and policies. The framework to implement this policy will be a statewide network of Police and Community Councils. The Councils will encourage submissions from local people, consider local crime-fighting strategies and discuss priorities in conjunction with local police.

This Government is funding the development of a School Based Policing Program which, in effect, will place operational police performing policing duties within selected school communities.

Beat Policing will be enhanced to improve access to policing services by local communities.

The key purpose of these new programs will be to supplement current crime prevention strategies and community policing initiatives such as the Police Beat Shopfront Program and form part of the whole of Government approach to crime prevention.

1002. Health Department, Funding of Non-Government Organisations

Mrs EDMOND asked the Minister for Health (9/10/96)—

With reference to the non Government organisations that receive funding from his department either as grants or subsidies—

- (1) How much did they each receive in 1995-96?
- (2) How much will they each receive in 1996-97?
- (3) Will he list all organisations which were defunded in 1996-97?

Mr Horan (8/11/96): (1)-(3) See parts (1), (2) and (4) to my Answer to Advance Question on Notice No. 9 asked during Estimates Committee G process by the Opposition.

1003. Public Art

Mr FOLEY asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts (9/10/96)—

- (1) What action is the Government taking to support and promote public art?
- (2) Is the Government aware of the need to ensure that public art is a component of public works such as Government buildings and facilities?
- (3) Is the Government aware of the potential for generating employment for Queensland artworkers through ensuring that works of art are included in public projects such as the Cairns Convention Centre?
- (4) What funding is the Government providing in 1996-97 to support and promote public art?
- (5) In what specific public projects during 1996-97 is the Government planning to fund public art?

Mrs Sheldon (8/11/96):

- (1) In line with Coalition arts policy, the Office of Arts and Cultural Development (OACD) is developing for my consideration a Designing Environments Strategy to clarify the State Government's position on public art in relation to:

legal and administrative arrangements for the engagement of artists on major public works projects;

the purchase and commissioning of artworks in public parks and buildings;

ongoing management and maintenance of artworks on site;

project management issues and 'best practice' models;

the use of cultural activities and artworks to make public precincts safer, more friendly, more community responsive, and more attractive places to spend time in;

the protection of artists' copyright and intellectual property rights in this context; and

the delineation of the responsibilities of state and local government in the planning, development and ongoing management of public art projects and programs.

The Designing Environments Strategy will seek to maximise the development of public art as an industry here in Queensland. Public art is now widely recognised as a high profile aspect of cultural activity that generates employment, encourages cultural tourism and triggers economic growth. It also assists major centres such as Brisbane and smaller communities such as Cooroy or Gordonvale to define their distinct regional identity.

As part of the implementation of the Coalition's Arts Policy, the OACD has also recently commissioned ten cultural sector professionals to produce position papers (in the form of journal articles) which address Public Arts from their own

particular professional perspective. These papers will provide a valuable source of data for the Designing Environments Strategy as well as fostering awareness and debate about Public Art. These commissioned papers when published will not only inform the bureaucracy and Government, they will inform the arts, design and construction industries as well as the broader community.

Each year, the state government commits significant sums of money to art and cultural activities in the public domain. Funding is generally available to arts organisations or community groups for artists' fees for public art and collaborative design projects, however, on occasions funds have also been made available to individual artists to develop their own work in public sites.

(2) Yes. As well as administering funds for public art and providing advice to the Department of Public Works and Housing in relation to the Government's own projects, the OACD has recently supported seminars, workshops and lectures on public art in Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns.

(3) Yes. The procurement of artworks for the Cairns Convention Centre was project managed by OACD client, Queensland Artworkers Alliance (QAA). I was recently pleased to offer a significant increase in operational funding to QAA and next year the Government will be consolidating this organisation's ongoing success through a multiyear funding agreement. This will ensure the excellent work of the Queensland Artworkers Alliance and especially its artist employment program are expanded.

(4) In 1996-97, the Department of Public Works and Housing has made specific provision for public art in new buildings (see 5). I will shortly announce allocations under the Arts Development Program which was established to support arts activities including public art projects submitted by communities, Local Government and individual artists.

(5) In 1996/97 the Government will proceed with the development of 75 William Street in Brisbane City. This public sector project has \$200,000 earmarked by the Department of Public Works and Housing for the inclusion of public art. The commissioning process envisaged will be consistent with the one used for procuring the artworks for 111 George Street, the success of which has been acclaimed by both industry and the media.

1004. Fleay's Wildlife Centre

Mr FOURAS asked the Minister for Environment (9/10/96)—

With reference to his ongoing plans for Fleay's Wildlife Centre on the Gold Coast—

- (1) What were the results of his discussions with the National Trust and the management of the Currumbin Bird sanctuary regarding their acquiring or assuming responsibility for Fleay's?
- (2) Is the national Trust still in consideration as a possible manager of Fleay's?
- (3) What were the results of his discussions with the children of Dr Fleay regarding the future ownership and management of the centre?
- (4) When will a consultant be appointed to review the management of Fleay's?
- (5) When will the consultant be required to report?
- (6) What funding has been allocated for this review?
- (7) How does he account for the \$400,000 above receipts it cost the taxpayer to run Fleay's last year (a breakdown of this figure would be helpful)?
- (8) What was the level of receipts in 1995-96?

Mr Littleproud (6/11/96):

(1) The situation at Fleay's Wildlife Centre was one ignored by Labor. Preliminary discussions were held with the National Trust acknowledging the complementary nature of the similar organisations. Although the Trust has expressed interest in the management of Fleays Wildlife Park, no commitments have been made in this regard. In keeping with the wishes of the park's benefactor, the late Dr David Fleay, Fleays Wildlife Park is a declared Conservation Park under the Nature Conservation Act 1992. It can therefore not be sold or disposed of. It is the Department's intention to review the overall operations of Fleays Wildlife Park, with a view to reducing the commitment of taxpayers dollars to the park's operations.

(2) Expressions of interest have been sought to engage a management consultant to undertake a full review of the running of Fleays Wildlife Park. It is expected that the successful consultant will put forward recommendations to improve marketing and management structures to maintain the uniqueness of the Park while improving its competitiveness and viability. No individuals or organisations are being considered as possible managers of Fleays, and no commitments will be entered into prior to the consultancy being finalised.

(3) The Minister met with members of the Fleay family, including his daughter, sister and wife, as well as with park staff and volunteers to discuss the review of the Fleays Wildlife Park operations. At that meeting, the family was given a commitment that

ownership would remain with the State of Queensland and Fleays Wildlife Park would remain the responsibility of the Department of Environment.

(4) Expressions of interest for a management consultancy closed on Friday 11 October 1996. It is anticipated that the successful consultancy will be appointed soon.

(5) The consultancy brief states that work will commence upon the signing of a consultancy agreement with the Department. It is anticipated the study of Fleays Wildlife Park operations will take 6-8 weeks to complete.

(6) It is expected that the consultancy will cost between \$30,000 and \$40,000.

(7) The \$400,000 allocated above receipts is comprised of a \$200,000 contribution towards salaries and wages and \$200,000 in operational funding (for animal food, veterinary care, wildlife rescue and release and animal hospital costs).

(8) Receipts in admissions, food and souvenir sales and donations were approximately \$630,000 in 1995/96.

1005. Contaminated Land

Mr D'ARCY asked the Minister for Environment (9/10/96)—

With reference to his answer to Question No. 772 I asked on notice—

- (1) What were the levels found at Bielba, Culgoa, Currawinya, Diamantina, Girraween, Idalia, Sundown, Thrushton and Welford National Parks for the following contaminants (a) arsenic, (b) chromium.,(c) lead, (d) mercury, (e) copper, (f) zinc, (g) aldrin and (h) dieldrin?
- (2) Where were these contaminants found on each of these national parks?
- (3) Why were the occupants of Lochern, Currawinya and Sundown National Parks the only staff blood tested as a result of these tests?
- (4) Which other national parks will be investigated in 1996-97 to ensure these workplaces are safe for staff?
- (5) If the national park study has shown that other houses in rural areas may also be contaminated to levels warranting investigation, what has he done to alert rural property owners to this?
- (6) Does he intend to use his powers under the Contaminated Land Act 1991 to notify rural property owners of the potential contamination in and around their homesteads and outbuildings; if not, why not?
- (7) Has he personally approached the Health Minister over this matter; if so, what was the outcome of these talks?

Mr Littleproud (7/11/96):

(1)

Park Contaminants	Arsenic As	Chromium Cr	Lead Pb	Mercury Hg
Culgoa National Park (dip site only)	50	<10	<10	<10
Currawinya National Park	<10-690	10-2300	<10-37000	<0.2-9
Diamantina National Park	<10	20	30-1200	<0.2
Expedition Range National Park (Bielba Base)	0-<10	0-10	60-510	0-1.3
Girraween National Park	<10	<10-10	50-320	<0.2
Idalia National Park	0-50	0-50	230-32000	0-<10
Sundown National Park	<10-1300	10-30	20-610	<0.2-4
Thruston National Park (sheep dip site only)	53-110	not done	not done	not done
Welford National Park	<10-1000	20-30	10-310	<10
	Copper Cu	Zinc Zn	Aldrin	Dieldrin
Culgoa National Park (dip site only)	10	80	.03	78.8
Currawinya National Park	<5-430	30-37000	<10	<.01-3.4
Diamantina National Park	20-75	310-7400	<.05-.04	.145-1.8
Expedition Range National Park (Bielba Base)	0-1600	not done	not done	
Girraween National Park	<5-60	270-850	<.005	<.005-.023
Idalia National Park	0-80	370-3100	0	.13-49
Sundown National Park	10-140	220-9500	<.01-.06	.05-41
Thruston National Park (sheep dip site only)	not done	not done	.01-.145	.58-14
Welford National Park	5-70	50-5100	not done	0.3-132

Results expressed as milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) in the AS 1289 prepared samples.

Varying number of samples were taken from each site—soil, dust & paint samples from residences, workshops & old stock dip sites..

(2) Contaminants were located in the vicinity of old stock dip and stock spraying sites, workshops where these chemical contaminants were stored, and in and around residences where pesticides were used.

(3) Medical advice provided to the Department indicated that blood testing of employees at the other National Parks was not required.

(4) The following national park sites will be investigated in 1996-97: Princess Hills base (Lumholtz National Park), Moorinya and Homevale. In this regard the Coalition Government is continuing to address this issue, which is more than can be said for your Labor Government.

(5) Medical and scientific advice was sought from the Environmental Toxicology Branch of the Queensland Department of Health in the investigations. The officers found that there were no significant health problems associated with the level of contaminants found in the survey.

It is likely that many rural and urban homesteads throughout Australia suffer in some degree from contaminants of various forms. The indications from the national park study are that in some houses the level of some contaminants in localised areas may be within the level requiring investigation.

In regard to paint lead contamination, a major and joint Commonwealth/ State program was put in place two years ago. Brochures are generally available at hardware stores and point outlets advising of the potential risk associated with renovating older houses which may have lead paints.

(6) If any warning in the future is required it would be issued through the Department of health as the lead agency in these matters. The Queensland Department of Health has participated in the review and has not provided this Department with any concerns in relation to long term health risks.

The main concern for rural property owners in regard to contamination by these chemicals is with stock dip sites. The management procedures incorporated in the Contaminated Land Act 1991 are in place to deal with dip sites in rural areas.

Queensland Health provide information to the general community regarding the management of older buildings painted with lead based paint.

The Rural Health and Safety Advisers from the Division of Workplace Health and Safety, Department of Training and Industrial Relations provide advice and information to rural communities on workplace issues relating to hazardous substance usage on rural properties.

The Queensland Farmers Federation employ Health and Safety Field Officers who provide assistance to rural communities on issues relating to farm chemicals.

(7) Given the above, no.

1006. Hospital Funding; Elective Surgery Waiting Lists

Mr MILLINER asked the Minister for Health (9/10/96)—

With reference to Royal Brisbane, Princess Alexandra, Prince Charles, Royal Children's, Cairns Base, Townsville General, Mackay Base, Rockhampton Base, Toowoomba Base, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Maryborough Base, Gold Coast and Nambour Hospitals—

- (1) What extra funding was allocated for each hospital to specifically address elective surgery waiting times?
- (2) What funds were spent on over-time for nurses and doctors and ancillary staff at each hospital to facilitate the extra operations undertaken to reduce the waiting lists?

Mr Horan (8/11/96):

(1) On 1 July 1996, the Coalition announced the commencement of its strategy to enhance elective surgery services in Queensland public hospitals. Surgery on Time is backed by funding of \$36.2 million in 1996/97. This funding is delivered through a number of programs, schemes, and allocations, including the Waiting List Backlog Program (WLBP), the Hospital Access Bonus Pool (HABP), and the Day Only Procedures Program (DOPP). Funding for 1996/97 from the WLPB allocated to each hospital is detailed in Table 1. HABP (\$10.5 million) and DOPP (\$2.642 million) funding is available by bid to all Health Service Districts to bid for available funds. Bids for the DOPP funds are currently being assessed. Further initiatives include:

\$56,000 per site to address the shortage of operating theatre nurses in public hospitals in Queensland, through the employment of perioperative nurse educators in each of the ten (10) Surgery on Time hospitals for 1996/97,

\$52,000 per site has been provided to employ Elective Surgery Coordinators in each of the ten (10) participating hospitals for 1996/97,

approximately \$5,000 per site (in ten (10) sites) will support the further installation of the Elective Admission System (EAS) by December 1996,

theatre information systems in the ten (10) participating hospitals as well as Redcliffe Hospital and the Mater Misericordiae Public Hospital, at a total cost of \$2.4 million,

a \$1 million minor works program (total funds provided to each site being detailed in Table 2), and

special funding to address critical demand management issues at five hospitals, Royal Brisbane, Gold Coast, Townsville, The Prince Charles, and Cairns Base Hospitals (funds provided to each site being detailed in Table 3).

Table 1

Waiting List Backlog Program	
Hospital	1996/97 Approved Funding
Bundaberg	\$360,000
Cairns	\$2,100,000
Gold Coast	\$1,630,000
Mackay	\$900,000
Maryborough	\$600,000
Nambour	\$1,923,113
The Prince Charles	\$1,100,000
Princess Alexandra	\$2,500,000
Rockhampton	\$1,000,000
Royal Brisbane*	\$2,500,000
Royal Children's	\$246,000
Toowoomba	\$900,000
Townsville	\$2,500,000

* An additional \$2.0m provided for replacement equipment plus \$0.5m for enhanced throughput of clinical services.

Table 2

Minor Capital Works Bids	
Hospital	Total Funds Provided
Cairns	\$60,039
Townsville	\$94,563
Rockhampton	\$121,824
Nambour	\$77,106
Royal Brisbane	\$74,000
Princess Alexandra	\$232,714
Gold Coast	\$41,500
Toowoomba	\$155,100
Ipswich	\$85,438
Total	\$942,284

Table 3

Hospital	Use	Critical Demand Management		
		Deliverables	1995/96	Full Year
Royal Brisbane	Open 2 x 30 bed wards	Reduce cancellations to 2/month Reduce waiting list by 230	\$1,300,000	\$5,100,000
Gold Coast	Open 30 beds	Additional 10,000 bed days/annum	\$417,534	\$1,277,163
Townsville	Recruit Urologist	Eliminate urology waiting list	\$277,000	\$908,699
The Prince Charles	Additional Category 1 Activity	Additional 6 Category 1 patients treated per week	\$560,000	\$2,500,000
Cairns Base	3 additional staff in Emergency Dept.	Waiting times improved	\$40,000	\$300,000
Total	90 additional beds 4 additional medical staff	Additional throughput Additional bed days	\$2,544,534	\$10,085,862

(2) The payment of penalties reduces the cost effectiveness of any program, and should be avoided. A program which incurred large overtime payments would suggest inefficiency and waste. Surgery on Time aims to see additional activity absorbed into the normal business day. I am pleased to advise the House that, for most sites, this has been achieved. Only emergency procedures (which are performed outside business hours) have incurred overtime.

1007. School Guidance Officers, Mount Gravatt Electorate

Ms SPENCE asked the Minister for Education (9/10/96)—

With reference to the 18 additional guidance officers provided for in the 1996-97 Budget—

- (1) Which schools in the Mount Gravatt Electorate will receive extra guidance officer time in 1997?
- (2) How much additional guidance officer time will they receive?
- (3) When will the Government achieve its election promise of doubling the number of guidance officers in State schools?

Mr Quinn (6/11/96): (1), (2) & (3) In June 1996, State Cabinet approved the employment of an additional 200 Full-time equivalent (FTE) support personnel, with a total budget of \$20 million over the next three financial years. These personnel are to be employed so that the Department of Education can increase the number of specialised support staff, including guidance officers, available to support children with behaviour difficulties and other special needs in Queensland state schools.

The FTE numbers were converted to a notional salary allocation and the Metropolitan East Region was allocated 10 personnel in 1996-97; 10 for 1997-98; and 9 for 1998-99. This is a total of 29 positions over the next three years.

A collaborative process involving Principals and School Support centre personnel, from the Metropolitan East Region, was used to determine what type of support staff were required to fill the new positions. A number of options were available (eg. Psychologists, guidance officers, behaviour management teachers, youth workers, community advisers and social workers). The final allocations were made in consultation with various groups throughout the region.

In 1996-97 [Stage 1 allocations], the Metropolitan East Region chose to appoint a variety of support personnel, including Behaviour Management Support Teachers, Community Advisers and Teacher Aides, to assist children in schools. However, no guidance officers were requested in this first stage. In Stage 2 (1997-98), it is proposed that three additional Guidance Officers, with a behaviour intervention and support focus, will be employed. A further three Guidance officers are proposed to be employed in the final stage.

With respect to schools in the Mount Gravatt electorate, the Honourable member would be aware that final staffing allocations for 1997 have not been

determined at this time. I would be happy to advise of 1997 support personnel staffing allocations, for schools in the Mount Gravatt electorate, when this information becomes available.

1009. Workers Compensation Board; Kennedy Report

Mr PURCELL asked the Minister for Training and Industrial Relations (9/10/96)—

- (1) Did the Workers' Compensation Board adopt misleading injury classifications in order to over-represent the occurrence and nature of "sprain/strain" injuries and "back injuries" as commented on in the Kennedy report?
- (2) Does the Workers' Compensation Board not adopt scientific injury classification guidelines such as those used by WorkSafe Australia?
- (3) What percentage of "back injuries" referred to in the Workers' Compensation Board data for the 1995 year are made up by each of the following types of injuries (a) upper back injuries, (b) vertebrae fractures, (c) spinal cord lesions, (d) spinal nerve injuries, (e) musculo-ligamentous back injuries, (f) disc injuries, (g) spinal stenosis, (h) spondylolysis and (i) spondylothesis?
- (4) Does the Workers' Compensation Board's grouping of all such injuries under one classification and attributing a demeaning description to it of "back injury" reflect its own agenda to eliminate compensation for this type of injury and common law claims in general?
- (5) How much money does the Government estimate has been spent through management time and expenses in pursuing its own agenda to eliminate common law claims?

Mr Santoro (7/11/96):

(1) The Board does not use misleading injury classifications. The injury classification system developed and used by the Board for claims was introduced on 17 February 1984.

(2) The Worksafe system, released in December 1990, is very similar to the Board's classification system. To ensure national consistency of statistics, the Board plans to upgrade the classification system to be more in line with the Worksafe system. This classification change will occur when the planned new claims management computer system is developed within the next three years. Currently the Board's compensation injury data is converted by the Government Statistician into the Worksafe Australia injury classification codes for the purposes of evaluating and producing statistics on Queensland workplace injuries.

(3) Of the 19,836 statutory back claims lodged during 1995/96:

- (a) 4.23% were upper back injuries
- (b) 1.09% were fractures.

Of the 1,217 common law back claims lodged during 1995/96:

- (a) 1.73% were upper back injuries
- (b) 3.45% were fractures.

The remaining categories requested are not able to be extracted. However, an injury classification breakdown for all statutory and common law back claims for 1995/96, in terms of injury location and nature, is attached.

(4) No

(5) The Government does not have an agenda to eliminate common law claims.

1010. Optical Services, Gladstone Electorate

Mrs CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Health (9/10/96)—

With reference to optical services to Gladstone for public patients which are critical and as visiting optometrist, Dr Noble, has ceased visiting the city and residents must travel to Rockhampton or Bundaberg for services and as Dr Noble is now sick and has no locum—

What plans are in place to renew an optical service to the Gladstone region given the urgent needs of residents and particularly older residents with regular optical needs?

Mr Horan (8/11/96): The loss to Gladstone of Dr Noble's private practice, now some time ago, is of serious concern to me.

Accordingly, negotiations will be held with the successful tenderer for the proposed co-location of a private hospital in Gladstone regarding the provision of ophthalmology services. However, I realise that this may take some time and so I have directed my Department to immediately advertise the private practice opportunity presented by Gladstone.

As regards public services, there will be no reduction in the travel and accommodation assistance available to Gladstone residents travelling to other centres.

1013. Queensland Health, VERs

Ms BLIGH asked the Minister for Health (9/10/96)—

With reference to the reorganisation of staff in Queensland Health and savings measures outlined in the Program Statement—

- (1) How many staff from former Regional Health Offices and Central Office have accepted VERs to date?
- (2) What was the average length of service for early retirees concerned?
- (3) How many further VERs have been budgeted for in 1996-97 and when does the department expect to finalise these?
- (4) Will he list all positions which have been advertised as a direct result of the reorganisation since February 1996 and at what level are these positions?
- (5) Which of these have been appointed?

Mr Horan (8/11/96):

(1) VER numbers to date are 24 for Corporate Office and 47 for Regional Offices. These figures account for Regional Directors as Regional Office staff.

(2) The average length of service for these retirees was 16.6 years.

(3) There may be a small additional number of VERs as staff take up positions within the new Corporate Office structure. These will not be a major cost to the Department as it is anticipated that equivalent positions will be abolished and salary savings will compensate Queensland Health for the costs incurred.

(4 & 5) I refer you to the *Government Gazette* and the *Health Services Bulletin*. To what extent each of the vacancies appearing there are a direct result of rebuilding Queensland Health is debatable; the process required to separate this out would be unduly onerous in terms of staff resources. A number of the vacancies during the period occurred as a result of normal staff turnover. I am advised that all rebuilding vacancies will be filled by Christmas this year.

1014. Lake Eacham Regional Nursery

Mr BEATTIE asked the Minister for Environment (9/10/96)—

With reference to the slashing of funds for the Lake Eacham Regional Nursery in the recent State Budget—

- (1) What operational funding is available for the nursery in 1996-97?
- (2) What full-time equivalent staff numbers have been allocated to the nursery in 1996-97?
- (3) What numbers and classification of staff have been lost from the nursery in 1996 and for what reasons?
- (4) How does he see (a) the education work of TREAT being continued without the support of this nursery, (b) the revegetation work of TREAT being continued without the support of this nursery, (c) Donaghy's wildlife corridor being finished without this nursery, (d) this decision sitting with his Government's stated commitment to Landcare and Catchment Management, (e) the nursery's work propagating rare and threatened species of native plants being continued and (f) the revegetation work on new and existing national parks in Far North Queensland continuing without the nursery?
- (5) Who made the decision to cut funding to the nursery?
- (6) Was the matter considered by Cabinet?

Mr Littleproud (6/11/96):

(1) The overall budget allocation (including operational funding) for the Lake Eacham Nursery for the 1996/97 financial year is yet to be determined. The final allocation will depend upon the outcome of a Departmental review of the nursery, as well as:

- (a) an as yet undetermined allocation by the Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA) for ecosystem reconstruction; and
- (b) discussions with Trees for Eacham and Atherton Tablelands (TREAT) and other parties.

(2) There is currently one full time person staffing the nursery with support provided by other regional staff as required. This situation may alter after Departmental review of the nursery is completed in late November 1996.

(3) In June 1996 one temporary and one casual position were terminated as a consequence of strong indications from WTMA that budget allocations for a number of projects carried out by the nursery, and funded by WTMA, would either be terminated or cut. A further temporary employee has been re-deployed to other duties pending the outcome of the review.

(4) a) While the Departmental review of the nursery has not been completed, it is intended that access to nursery facilities by TREAT members will continue, particularly use of the nursery each Friday by volunteers. On this basis, the education work of TREAT would be expected to be largely retained.

If the nursery did close, TREAT would obviously be unable to undertake an education role based solely around the nursery. In the unlikely event this did occur, Departmental officers would help TREAT to identify alternative education opportunities. The Department would also continue to provide an extension service for those individuals and community groups interested in restoration and enhancement of natural habitats by native plant revegetation.

b) As stated above, it is intended that TREAT access to nursery facilities will continue. The revegetation work of TREAT may be affected by reduced field support by the Departmental and it may be necessary for TREAT members to collect more seed for planting than in previous years.

c) The Department's contribution to the Donaghy's corridor revegetation project has been predominantly funded by WTMA. Current indications are that there will be no allocation to this project by WTMA in the 1996/97 financial year. The plants for this project currently housed at the Lake Eacham nursery will be maintained until the planting out period during the forthcoming wet season, at which time I would expect that they would be planted in the area known as Donaghy's corridor.

I am advised that the completion of this project is not so much dependent on the continued operation of the nursery, rather the provision of additional funds for minor capital works.

d) These programs are funded by the Commonwealth Government and managed by the Queensland Department of Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry. The Lake Eacham nursery is not funded by either program, and although cooperative projects have been undertaken, the Lake Eacham nursery is not directly affiliated with either program. The State Government will continue to support both Landcare and the Integrated

Catchment Management initiatives throughout Queensland.

e) The propagation of rare and threatened species is not a primary function of the Lake Eacham nursery, although some experimentation work has been undertaken to trial various propagation techniques. Therefore there is not expected to be a significant impact on this work.

f) If a final decision were made to close the Lake Eacham nursery, priority revegetation work would continue to be undertaken on a park by park basis which would be coordinated through a regional strategic plan for priority rehabilitation works.

(5) and (6) Decisions regarding Lake Eacham will be made by the Government in the context of a woeful funding situation inherited from Labor at both Commonwealth and State levels.

1015. Enduring Power of Attorney Forms

Mr WELLS asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (9/10/96)—

- (1) Is he aware that the introduction of an Enduring Power of Attorney by the last Labor Government had as one of its purposes making accessible to lay people a simple form which could be signed by individuals without occasioning legal expense?
- (2) Is he aware that as a result of recent amendments to the old form 16 (PLA) the new form is now barely locatable, and therefore inaccessible to lay people?
- (3) Is he aware that a person trying to find the new form must go through the following steps (a) realise there might be a new form, (b) check the update of Queensland Legislation Annotations (25.8.96), (c) read through to discover the form is renumbered, (d) note that the form was gazetted 17 May 1996 and go to that Gazette, (e) find p. 621 and note that it says the form is in fact in Special Gazette No. 36 of 1996, (f) look under "n" for "notification of forms" to find a reference to PLA on pages 549-567 and (g) find form 14?
- (4) In light of this absurd difficulty, will he take steps to make Enduring Power of Attorney Forms accessible to the public again by, for example, putting together a package which can be advertised as available, and be circulated to Members for provision to their constituents?

Mr Beanland (12/11/96):

- (1) Yes
- (2) Notice of the approval of new forms for use under the Property Law Act 1974 was given in *Government Gazette* No. 41 17 May, 1996 and commenced on 28 May 1996. These new forms included a new Enduring Power of Attorney form 14 in lieu of the previous form 16A. The content of the new form is identical to the previous form, with the exception of the form number.
- (3) The Honourable Member will no doubt recall that it was legislation introduced and passed during the period he was Attorney-General that created the

inaccessibility of forms highlighted by his question. The passing of a 1994 amendment [via. the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1994 No. 15 of 1994] to the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, by the Goss Government, inserted provisions which are now Part 8 in that Act. Thereafter all forms to Queensland legislation ceased to be included in Schedules to Acts. Since 10 May, 1994 the procedure for making forms for use pursuant to Queensland legislation, including the Property Law Act 1974, has been regulated by Part 8 of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992. The Honourable Member has correctly described the procedure which the Goss Government decided that the people of Queensland would follow to locate forms to legislation passed by this Parliament. The 1994 Explanatory Note, for section 47 which was subsequently renumbered section 58, asserts that the section "... states standard requirements to facilitate access to forms (and the correct versions of forms) by people who wish to use them".

(4) The Honourable Member suggests that his constituents and the people of Queensland have no choice but to go through the complex procedure described in part (3) of his question. However, in practice most people seeking to appoint an attorney under an Enduring Power of Attorney, either use the services of a solicitor, the Public Trustee or a Trustee Company or purchase a printed form from a Newsagent or a Stationery firm. The Honourable Member's suggestion of producing a package of forms to be supplied to Members for provision to their constituents may have some merit and will be considered. However, that consideration will be postponed until after my Department has completed the process of considering proposals made by the Queensland Law Reform Commission for reforms to the existing Enduring Power of Attorney legislation.

1016. Voluntary Conservation Agreements; Cape York Heads of Agreement

Mr WELFORD asked the Minister for Environment (9/10/96)—

- (1) Does he endorse and support the comments of the Member for Mansfield in Parliament on Tuesday 8 October regarding the benefits of voluntary conservation agreements (VCAs) with landholders?
- (2) Does he believe all landholders should be treated equally in this regard; if so, does he support the Cape York Heads of Agreement between landholders, conservationists and Aboriginal communities providing for environmentally sustainable protection and use of Cape York lands?
- (3) When will he speak up for Cape York landholders to ensure State Government endorsement of their agreement in the same way he claims to support VCAs referred to by the Member for Mansfield?
- (4) Why is he happy to boast about his promotion of VCAs with rich white landholders elsewhere in Queensland while remaining conspicuously silent in the face of his Government's refusal to

endorse the Cape York VCA to which local Aborigines happen to be a party?

Mr Littleproud (6/11/96):

- (1) Voluntary conservation agreements (VCAs) are an appropriate strategy to provide protection for the conservation values of an area by working in partnership with the landholder. The Member for Mansfield highlighted the benefit of such agreements during his speech on 8 October 1996.
- (2) Yes to the first part of this section of the question. With regard to the Cape York Agreement, this is an unrelated issue, though I can understand the Member's confusion.
- (3) See answer to question 2.
- (4) See answer to question 2, although I resent the offensive nature of this section of the question.

1017. Commercial Crabbing, Pumicestone Passage

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN asked the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry (9/10/96)—

- (1) Is he aware of reports that certain commercial fishermen were conducting crabbing operations in Pumicestone Passage on a commercial basis?
- (2) Were the reports based on fact; if so, were the operations condoned by his department or the QFMA?
- (3) What action has been taken to ensure strict adherence to the regulations in future?

Mr Perrett (5/11/96):

- (1) Two recent reports have been received at the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol (QBFP) Mooloolaba office regarding crabbing operations in Pumicestone Passage. In the first instance a juvenile was crabbing using a licensed tender vessel. The youth was reminded to keep commercial fishing boat markings covered if it was being used recreationally. The second instance related to a number of crab pots. QBFP located only lawful pots. Subsequently patrols of the area revealed no unlawful activity.
 - (2) Commercial fishing operations of any form are not condoned within the closed waters of the Pumicestone Passage by any staff of the Department or the Queensland Fisheries Management Authority (QFMA).
 - (3) Regular patrols of the Passage are conducted by QBFP staff.
- Very few comments or complaints have been received regarding commercial fishing activities within the Pumicestone Passage and I believe any known infringements would be reported by the public and other commercial fishers alike. Any complaints or notifications are fully investigated.

1018. Perpetual Town Leases

Mr CAMPBELL asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing (9/10/96)—

- (1) How many perpetual town leases are there in Queensland under the State Housing Act?

- (2) In what cities and towns are they situated and how many are in each?
- (3) What has been the average increase in the valuations of these leases over the past five years in Brisbane, Maryborough, Bundaberg, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay and Townsville?
- (4) What is the annual rental on a perpetual town lease with a valuation of (a) \$10,000, (b) \$15,000, (c) \$20,000, (d) \$30,000, (e) \$40,000 and (f) \$50,000?

Mr Connor (8/11/96):

- (1) There are 493 perpetual town leases in Queensland under the State Housing Act.
- (2) The spread of leases throughout the state is shown in schedule 'A'.
- (3) The average increase in valuations over the past 5 years is shown below -
 - Brisbane (residential)—58%
 - Brisbane (commercial)—14%
 - Maryborough (residential)—107%
 - Bundaberg (residential)—73%
 - Gladstone (residential)—143%
 - Rockhampton (residential)—65%
 - Mackay (residential)—93%
 - Townsville (residential)—48%
- (4) Annual land rental for residential leases is based on 3% of the unimproved capital value. Annual land rental for commercial leases is based on 12% of the unimproved capital value.

1019. Year 2 Student Literacy

Mr BREDHAUER asked the Minister for Education (9/10/96)—

- (1) What proportion of year two students were identified in phases A and B of the 1996 year two net for literacy?
- (2) How many of these students will be assisted by the Reading Recovery Program in 1996-97?
- (3) Will he provide a regional breakdown of both figures?

Mr Quinn (6/11/96): (1), (2) & (3) The Honourable Member would be aware that data from the Year 2 Net is protected under the Freedom of Information Act. Therefore, in the interests of Queensland students I am unable to provide a detailed response to this question.

The Reading Recovery program is an intervention program which utilises highly trained teachers to deliver individual specialised daily support to children who require assistance with support in reading and writing.

This program operates with the lowest text readers from the beginning of the second year of primary school. On entry into the program children will be operating in either Phase A or B of the Reading Continuum. On exiting the program the large majority of children will be Phase C readers.

A child would normally take between 14 and 20 weeks to exit the program. Upon completion less than 4% of children require any additional literacy support in their compulsory school years.

The Reading Recovery program is in its first year of implementation within Queensland. It is operating in four regions and there are currently 96 Reading Recovery Teachers operating in approximately 100 schools. In 1997, the program will extend to operate in all regions.

1020. Tugun Bypass

Mrs ROSE asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (9/10/96)—

With reference to the proposed Tugun Bypass, west of the Coolangatta Airport—

- (1) What action has the Government taken to progress this proposal?
- (2) What discussions has he held with the New South Wales Transport Minister regarding the bypass?
- (3) Will he outline the Government's commitment to this proposal?

Mr Johnson (7/11/96):

(1) This Government is working towards determining the final land use transport strategy for the southern Gold Coast/Tweed corridor. An outcome of this work will be the preferred location and alignment of transport corridors and associated supporting facilities, including the resolution of the proposed Tugun Bypass and the Robina to Coolangatta rail line.

At this stage in the process, three consultants have been shortlisted and their final offers submitted to Government for consideration. It is expected that the successful consultant will be appointed in November 1996. The period allowed in the study is 250 working days, which means completion of the study at the end of 1997.

(2) This study is a joint exercise involving the Departments of Transport, Main Roads and Local Government and Planning. In early September 1996, representatives of these Departments met with representatives from the New South Wales' Department of Transport, the Roads and Traffic Authority and the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning to ensure the New South Wales Government was fully aware of this study. Following this meeting, my colleague the Hon. Di McCauley, Minister for Local Government and Planning wrote to the Hon Craig Knowles, Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning and Minister for Housing seeking agreement in principle of the New South Wales Government to support the findings of the study. I understand a reply has not been received at this point in time.

(3) My Government is committed to progressing and finalising the Southern Gold Coast/Tweed Corridor Strategic Planning Study. It is believed a key outcome of the study will include a land use/transport strategy for the study area which would identify preferred land uses and transport

networks. This would take into account the requirements for both passenger and freight transport and identification of detailed alignments for the major public transport corridor south of Robina and the major new road corridor between Tugun and the Tweed.

1021. Standards Australia

Mr ROBERTS asked the Minister for Training and Industrial Relations (9/10/96)—

With reference to the organisation, Standards Australia, and the standards which are issued by this organisation—

- (1) Does he and his department have confidence in the standards issued by Standards Australia; if not, which standards issued by Standards Australia and which are referred to in legislation within his portfolio, do not have his or his department's confidence?

Mr Santoro (7/11/96): (1) There are 37 Australian Standards referenced within the Queensland Workplace Health and Safety legislation. My Department and I have every confidence that these Standards are appropriate to the specific circumstances in which the legislation references them.

1022. Hospital Waiting Lists

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN asked the Minister for Health (9/10/96)—

With reference to the proceedings for Estimates Committee G, in which he refused to supply information in response to a question on notice from the Shadow Health Minister (Mrs Edmond) concerning hospital waiting lists, under various categories, for certain Queensland hospitals and as he explained his refusal to the Committee by claiming that the question was really a series of questions and too onerous to answer and yet, in Parliament on 9 October, he informed the House that data for waiting lists is "signed off each month" by his department—

- (1) Was his statement to the Parliament on 9 October correct; if so, why did he refuse to supply this readily-available data on waiting lists to the Estimates Committee?
- (2) Is this simply another example of his contempt of the Parliamentary process or did he deliberately withhold this information from the Estimates Committee to hide waiting list figures from the people of Queensland?

Mr Horan (8/11/96): (1 & 2) The only contempt of parliamentary process was that committed by the Member for Mount Coot-tha, Mrs Edmond. She abused the standing orders by asking dozens of questions on notice when she was permitted ten. The success of Surgery on Time has been achieved through the time and effort of Queensland's first class medical, nursing, and allied health staff, which should not be diverted into chasing paper for Mrs Edmond.

I am only too happy to again provide the House with details of the success of Surgery on Time. I am advised that, at the ten Surgery on Time hospitals, between 1 July 1996 and 1 October 1996, the number of long wait, category 1 (urgent) patients fell by 71.6% to only 156. Similarly, the number of category 2 long waits fell by 56, and the number of category 3 long waits by 200.

1023. Cairns Health District; Townsville Health District

Mr De LACY asked the Minister for Health (10/10/96)—

Will he advise the actual recurrent expenditure for 1995-1996 (reconstituted on district basis), and estimated expenditure for 1996-1997 (including details of unresolved issues) for (a) Cairns Health District and (b) Townsville Health District?

Mr Horan (11/11/96): I am advised that the actual recurrent expenditure for 1995-1996 was as follows:

- (a) Cairns District—\$96.460 million (from a budget of \$97.527 million)
- (b) Townsville District—\$131.554 million (from a budget of \$122.264 million)

It must be noted that the total 1995-1996 expenditure for Cairns and Townsville Districts included several items (Cairns District—\$3.171 million, Townsville District—\$2.141 million) which will not occur in either District in 1996-1997, for example Regional Office costs, one-off litigation expenditure, and Public Health activities which have been centralised. This non-recurrent expenditure has been deducted to arrive at the above figures.

Also, under Minister Beattie, the Townsville District incurred a 1995/96 State funded budget overrun of \$9.72 million, which is expected to be reduced to nil in 1996-1997. I am advised that this District is, to date, running to budget.

The estimated funding (including estimated funding for unresolved issues) for 1996-1997 is as follows:

- (a) Cairns District—\$99.349 million
- (b) Townsville District—\$131.993 million

1024. Mackay Helicopter Rescue Service

Mr MULHERIN asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport (10/10/96)—

With reference to his Government's pre-election promise to the people of Mackay that \$1.5m in capital funding would be provided to the Helicopter Rescue Services in Mackay—

Does he intend to keep the promise to the people of Mackay; if so, when will he be delivering on this promise?

Mr Veivers (11/11/96): On 26 June 1996 I handed over a cheque for \$300,000 from the Department of Emergency Services and a further \$100,000 from the Motor Accident Insurance Commission to assist with the establishment of the

Mackay helicopter rescue service. The Mackay service commenced operations on 1 September 1996.

The Central Queensland Helicopter Rescue Service based in Mackay currently receives an annual Government grant of \$300,000 (minimum) paid quarterly in advance.

I intend to submit an application for increased funding for the Mackay service, along with the other Community Helicopter Providers, to be considered in the Mid-Year Budget Review process in December 1996. A submission for increased funding will also be made for the 1997/1998 Budget.

The Government will continue to provide substantial financial support to the Mackay service.

1025. Jet Skis

Mr SMITH asked the Minister for Environment (10/10/96)—

With reference to the noise from jet skis which has emerged as a problem in many areas of the State and, in particular, my interest in the area from the Townsville Breakwater to Cape Pallarenda—

Will he provide an assurance that the department will accept responsibility for the control of noise from recreational water vehicles or will he guarantee that the administrative steps will be urgently taken to transfer the responsibility to the Department of Transport?

Mr Littleproud (11/11/96): Under the Marine Safety Act which was enacted by the previous government, control of jet skis now only relates to safety issues.

The Department of Environment is having discussions with the Department of Transport with a view to devising suitable administrative and legislative control mechanisms to deal with the difficult issue of noise from transitory noise sources such as jet skis.

1026. Maryborough, Sesquicentennial Birthday Celebrations

Mr DOLLIN asked the Premier (10/10/96)—

- (1) Is he aware that the funding for Maryborough's Sesquicentennial (150 year) Birthday Celebrations has been slashed (the celebrations are an opportunity to celebrate 150 years of achievement since the community was founded in 1847)?
- (2) As this is not only a significant achievement for Maryborough but has broader significance to Queensland as a whole, will he take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that the sesquicentennial celebrations are a complete success by reinstating the funding it deserves?

Mr Borbidge (11/11/96):

(1) No.

(2) Meetings were arranged with representatives of the Maryborough City Council for Tuesday, 29

October 1996, to discuss the 1997 Maryborough Sesquicentennial Celebrations, and relevant Government Departments are considering their possible involvement.

1027. National Guidelines on Teacher Training

Mr BREDHAUER asked the Minister for Education (10/10/96)—

With reference to the announcement by the Federal Minister for Education, Dr David Kemp, of the Federal Government's intention to impose national guidelines on teacher training—

- (1) What consultation occurred with him as the responsible State Minister and his Federal counterpart prior to this announcement being made?
- (2) What has he done since the announcement to ensure that the interests of Queensland's education system are appropriately incorporated in any proposed national guidelines?

Mr Quinn (6/11/96): (1) & (2) I am aware of statements that have been made in the media recently concerning what has been described as a national review of teacher training standards, and the alleged imposition by the Federal Government of national guidelines for teacher education.

The initiative is not a "review" but a collaborative project funded by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs. The project will build on the work done nationally by the "Chalk Circle—A Dialogue on Teacher Education" in 1995 and the work of the National Working Party on Guidelines for Teacher Education, convened by the Australian Teaching Council. This working party has a membership which includes representatives of the Australian Council of Deans of Education, the Australian Teacher Education Association, the South Australian Teacher Registration Board, and the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration.

The Working Party prepared and endorsed for discussion a set of 'Draft National Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education', which outlined best practice in teacher education. The draft guidelines were based on, and very closely resembled, the Acceptability of Teacher Education Programs for Teacher Registration Purposes guidelines of the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration. The draft guidelines were distributed widely late last year to members of the education community. The aim was to generate as much discussion and consensus as possible so that the profession and its key stakeholders could adopt a national position on teacher education and have more influence on its future direction.

The newly announced National Standards and guidelines for the Initial Teacher Education Project has similar objectives:

to develop national guidelines for teacher education, based on national work already undertaken;

to determine the role of national guidelines and frameworks in underpinning high standards of teacher education and entry into teaching across Australia;

to forge partnerships between key education stakeholders to promote ongoing commitment to the implementation of teacher education guidelines and to improve the effectiveness of initial teacher education.

The project will be managed by an Advisory Committee which will include representatives of government and non-government education authorities. The Queensland Board of Teacher Registration will be represented on the Committee, which meets for the first time next month. The envisaged outcome will be a report, suitable for presentation to the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) and wider dissemination, as appropriate.

Queensland is in the fortunate position of being the only state in Australia to have established, under the Education (Teacher Registration) Act 1988 a statutory body which legislated authority to confer and collaborate with members of the education and general community in relation to standards of courses of teacher education. Through the work of the Board of Teacher Registration, Queensland has a high basic standard for entry into the profession, underpinned by legislation. National guidelines cannot simply be 'imposed' in Queensland.

The Board of Teacher Registration has strongly supported the development of agreed national standards for the teaching profession. The Guidelines of the Board, and the widely-consultative way in which they were devised and have been implemented, have served as a model of good practice for the rest of the country. The new Advisory Committee is expected to draw on, and benefit from, the experience and expertise of Queensland.

1029. State Schools, Security Services

Mr ROBERTSON asked the Minister for Education (10/10/96)—

With reference to the plan to wind back Government Security Services for State primary and secondary schools—

- (1) Which schools in the Sunnybank Electorate will now be required to pay for security services to protect buildings and equipment outside of school hours?
- (2) What will be the approximate costs incurred by schools to engage private security providers to protect buildings and equipment outside of school hours?
- (3) How does he propose that schools raise the funds to engage private security providers to protect State Government assets?
- (4) What assistance is he prepared to provide to smaller schools in my electorate such as Kuraby State School and Sunnybank State School to

maintain security services given that smaller schools have a much narrower fund raising base than larger schools?

Mr Quinn (6/11/96): (1), (2), (3) & (4) The decision, by the Department of Education, to withdraw funding for responses to the official electronic security systems of schools has now been rescinded. Consequently, no school in the Sunnybank electorate will be required to pay for security services, except when an alarm is caused by the incorrect use of a security system by school staff, or user groups.

The Department of Education, in conjunction with the State Government Security service, will continue to monitor the cost of this service to ensure that money allocated for school security is a benefit to as many schools as possible.

1032. Queensland Health, VERs

Mr NUNN asked the Minister for Health (10/10/96)—

With reference to the reorganisation of Queensland Health—

Have any staff who had their position abolished and who requested a VER, either from former Regional Health Authorities or in Central Office, resigned without having received a redundancy payout; if so, how many and why were they denied VERs?

Mr Horan (8/11/96): Two officers have resigned after having accepted other positions outside the Queensland public sector. They had requested but not been offered a Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) package because the requirements of the Public Sector Management Standard for Staffing Options to Manage Organisational Change in the Queensland Public Sector had not been met.

1033. Mr F. O'Gorman

Mr BARTON asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (10/10/96)—

With reference to recent media coverage concerning further investigation into the murder/suicide of two Atherton women, which raises the possibility of a new investigation taking place under an independent investigator, and the possibility that the independent investigator may be Mr Frank O'Gorman, a member of his personal Ministerial Staff, who is a former police officer—

- (1) What powers does Mr O'Gorman have to carry out police investigative work?
- (2) Who pays Mr O'Gorman's salary?
- (3) Will Mr O'Gorman's position in the Minister's office be filled from elsewhere while he is carrying out the investigation?
- (4) If Mr O'Gorman is not a serving police officer, why can't this investigative work be carried out by a serving police officer?
- (5) On what basis will Mr O'Gorman be given authority to carry out this investigation?

Mr Cooper (8/11/96):

(1) This question, as acknowledged, is based on media reports. The media reports are wrong and were written despite quite specific denial by my office that Mr Frank O'Gorman was conducting any review or investigation of the Arnold/Leahy murder/suicide.

(2) The bulk of the question is thus irrelevant.

(3) Mr O'Gorman, a highly respected former Assistant Commissioner with the Queensland Police Service, is acting in the position of Senior Policy Adviser in my office and as part of that role is tasked with handling correspondence relating to the Arnold/Leahy murder/suicide.

(4) During Opposition, I promised an independent inquiry into the police investigation of that matter as a suitable response to the widespread public disquiet about the matter.

(5) Since taking office, I have approached the Criminal Justice Commission who have undertaken to review all previous inquiries into that investigation. Any further action by me is a matter which will be decided when I am advised of the outcome of that review by the Commission.

1036. Mr A. Callaghan

Mr BRISKEY asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (10/10/96)—

With reference to the very serious allegations made against Allen Callaghan by three RSPCA Councillors and the subsequent Fraud Squad investigation into whether Mr Callaghan has misused a corporate Mastercard while working for the RSPCA since 1994—

As the Fraud Squad began their investigation 10 weeks ago on 30 July and as the allegations of misappropriation by Mr Callaghan are causing immense damage to the RSPCA in Queensland, will he advise when this investigation will be finalised?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96): The investigation into the allegations made against Mr Callaghan have been assigned appropriate priority by the Fraud and Corporate Crime Squad. The investigation is being conducted by a senior police officer.

In order to properly and thoroughly investigate the complaint, investigators consider it necessary to completely reconstruct the accounts associated with the credit card transactions. In order to achieve this the original vouchers have been called for from the relevant financial institutions. This has proved to be a lengthy and labour intensive process for the institutions concerned.

Following the receipt and analysis of those documents, a final determination will be made concerning the nature of any charges to be laid. It is anticipated that the matter will be finalised by the end of November 1996.

1037. Police Numbers

Mr HOLLIS asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (10/10/96)—

With reference to the matter of police to population ratios and the figures he supplied previously for each region and projected figures for 30 June, 1997—

(1) Why will the north coast be worse off in twelve months time and why isn't it being addressed?

(2) Why will there be virtually no improvement in the southern region and why isn't this being addressed?

Mr Cooper (5/11/96):

(1) The Queensland Police Service constantly monitors the need for police staffing numbers in line with population growth on a Statewide basis. The Service utilises a Staffing Allocation Model to determine appropriate police staffing strengths for each particular region.

The approved model allocation strength for North Coast Region at June 1996 was 704 police officers with an estimated model allocation strength at 30 June 1997 of 743.

The police to population ratio at June 1996 was based on the actual strength of North Coast Region which at that point in time was 715 police officers. The North Coast Region was in fact 11 police officers over the approved model allocation (704).

The actual staffing strength for each region can vary markedly at any given point in time. Contributing factors to this are the allocation of first year constables for training purposes to each region, and conversely, natural attrition and promotions and transfers in and out of each region.

The following comparison between the police to population ratios based on model allocations indicates an increase in staffing numbers and a reduction in the police to population ratio for North Coast Region over time:

Approved Staffing Allocation—June 1996	704
Police/Population ratio—June 1996	1:844
Actual Strength—June 1996	715
Police/Population ratio—June 1996	1:831
Estimated Staffing Allocation—June 1997	743
Police/Population ratio—June 1997	1:833

(2) Similarly, the above would apply to Southern Region.

The approved model allocation strength for Southern Region at June 1996 was 625 police officers with an estimated model allocation strength at 30 June 1997 of 636.

The police to population ratio at June 1996 was based on the actual strength of Southern Region which at that point in time was 635 police officers. The Southern Region was in fact ten police officers over the approved model allocation (625).

As mentioned previously, the actual staffing strength for each region can vary markedly at any given point in time. Contributing factors to this are the allocation of first year constables for training purposes to each

region, and conversely, natural attrition, and promotions and transfers in and out of each region.

The following comparison between the police to population ratios based on model allocations indicates an increase in staffing numbers and a reduction in police to population ratio for Southern Region over time:

Approved Staffing Allocation—June 1996	625
Police/Population ratio—June 1996	1:673
Actual Strength—June 1996	635
Police/Population ratio—June 1996	1:663
Estimated Staffing Allocation—June 1997	636
Police/Population ratio—June 1997	1:669

1038. Queensland Health, Staff Reductions

Mr MILLINER asked the Minister for Health (10/10/96)—

With reference to his promise to substantially reduce bureaucracy and I quote from one of his health policy announcements of 23 June 1995 entitled Coalition Hospital Management Plan in which it was stated that "180 bureaucrats would be axed to free up funds for another 300 nurses, doctors, and allied health professionals"—

- (1) Is he still planning to sack 180 people from Queensland Health?
- (2) Will he clarify the reference to the surrender of 200 net funded positions mentioned on page 4 of the Ministerial Program Statement as, in answering other questions on this specific issue, he has stated that this will not see a reduction of 200 full time employees?
- (3) Will he fulfil his pre-election promise to sack bureaucrats with approximately 200 positions to get the axe or not?

Mr Horan (8/11/96):

(1) The Coalition is not in the business of sacking the employees of Queensland Health.

(2) The number of positions saved since restructuring was identified as 214.5 at 18 June 1996. These savings are made up of Regional Office positions (181.5) and Central Office State permanent positions (33). These savings have enabled the Coalition to expand nursing numbers by 540, meeting and exceeding its commitment to the electors of Queensland.

(3) As I said, the Coalition is not in the business of sacking the employees of Queensland Health.

A vacancy management program to assist in rebuilding of Queensland Health has continued throughout my administration. A small number of employees who are unplaceable due to their geographical location or their skill fit with new positions may yet be offered Voluntary Early Retirement packages; however, Queensland Health is currently holding more vacancies than it has employees to place. I have every confidence in these redeployees and look forward to working with them in the new Queensland Health.

Queensland Health now has fewer administrators to clinical staff, its surgical waiting times are falling fast, and genuine community input is being restored, as is public confidence in the health system. These were our promises, and on these, the Coalition has well and truly delivered.

1039. Noise Barriers, Ipswich Motorway

Mr ARDILL asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (10/10/96)—

When will action be taken to provide noise barriers on the Ipswich Motorway at Riawena Road, Salisbury, which is the defined transport route to the west and acts as a sound stage for the amphitheatre of residential south west Salisbury?

Mr Johnson (11/11/96): A report which will prioritise sections of access-limited roads for noise reduction treatment in the Metropolitan area south of the Brisbane River, is currently being prepared.

These roads include both State funded roads and the Federally funded National Highway.

This section of Riawena Road, Salisbury is a part of the National Highway, and approval of works by the Federal Government is necessary. Until the report is completed, I am unable to advise the priority for treatment of this section compared with other sections of the National Highway. However, I have already foreshadowed an application for funding of noise reduction measures to the Federal Minister, following completion of the report.

1040. Justices of the Peace (Qualified)

Mr WELLS asked the Minister for Training and Industrial Relations (10/10/96)—

With reference to his departmental publication Future Focus, specifically page 2, referring to the new course for Justices of the Peace (Qualified) (10/10/96)—

- (1) Is it the case that he and or his office, and/or officer/s of the Department of Justice, either verbally or in writing, sought to stop the delivery of the JP (Qual) courses in both the TAFE Colleges and by Walker Pender in the pre-budgetary deliberations in the months leading up to the State budget; if so, what were the reasons given for the attempted curtailment of these training programs?
- (2) Was funding sought by the Department of Justice for the delivery of Justice of the Peace (Magistrates Court) training; if so, what was the decision in relation to this funding and the reasons that funding was or was not provided?
- (3) Will JP (Qual) courses continue to run in the TAFE Colleges and in rural and remote Queensland in 1997 and 1998 calendar years?
- (4) Given the article on page 2 which states "Those who have achieved JP (Qual) status can receive further training to a JP (MAG CT)", will he advise the 7,000+ JP (Quals) in the community how, when and where they can

receive this training and which department has the responsibility for delivering the training?

Mr Santoro (11/11/96):

(1) Neither I nor my officers sought to stop delivery of the JP (Qual) courses. I am unaware of any such attempt by officers of the Department of Justice. Furthermore, negotiations with Walker Pender Consultants Pty Ltd and TAFE Queensland Institutes in May 1996 resulted in a total of 51,216 student contact hours being delivered in remote areas.

(2) No.

(3) In 1997 provision is made for delivery of more than 40,000 student contact hours in JP (Qual) courses across a number of TAFE Queensland Institutes, including those Institutes in rural areas. Courses to be delivered in remote areas will be advertised through a competitive tendering process.

Delivery of the JP (Qual) course for 1998 is subject to the outcomes of consultations with stakeholders for the development of the 1998 State Training Profile.

(4) At this stage the JP (MAG CT) course is not recognised by VETEC. When a decision is made regarding delivery of the JP (MAG CT), people who have attained recognition for the JP (Qual) course will be advised how they can access the JP (MAG CT) training.

1041. Tuberculosis

Mrs EDMOND asked the Minister for Health (10/10/96)—

With reference to reports of an alarming incidence of positive tuberculosis test results identified in nursing staff at the Dandenong Hospital in Victoria and the public health implications this poses for Queensland Hospitals—

- (1) What testing is or has been conducted to allay community fears that this potentially life threatening illness could be contracted by patients free of the disease when they enter public health facilities for treatments?
- (2) Have there been any incidences of tuberculosis recorded by the department which could be attributed to staff in Queensland hospitals or other health facilities; if so, which hospitals and how many cases were identified in each case?
- (3) What is Queensland Health doing to ensure that all precautions are being taken in relation to the possibility that tuberculosis is making a come back in Australia?
- (4) From a clinical point of view, is Queensland more conducive to the spread of a disease like tuberculosis for climatic or other reasons worth noting?

Mr Horan (8/11/96):

(1) All nurses and medical students have a mantoux test (screening), chest x-ray and vaccination (BCG) if appropriate before commencing hospital work. The number of new cases of tuberculosis (TB) in Queensland remains low. Queensland facilities follow both the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards

and the recently released National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Guidelines. A working party is reviewing all State infection control policies. Any patient who is likely to be of higher risk of TB is screened and managed according to these guidelines.

(2) Most transmission of TB occurs in a household environment. Transmission of TB in Queensland hospitals is uncommon. This year one case of a health care provider in an Oral Health Clinic who had acquired the infection on an overseas trip has been implicated in the possible transmission of the TB bacteria to two other persons who have developed the active form of the disease. However, as neither of these persons were treated by the health care provider the investigation is continuing.

(3) While TB has re-emerged as a significant problem in the USA particularly, this has not been the case in Queensland or Australia. The Specialised Health Services Branch of Queensland Health has continued the program of specialised central TB control throughout Queensland. The situation is closely monitored on a continuous basis through an advanced TB surveillance statewide program.

(4) No. Rates of TB in Queensland are among the lowest in the world. On current knowledge, it is possible that the lifestyle and climate in Queensland is less conducive to the spread of TB. However, TB has not been eliminated anywhere in the World and its nature is such that small outbreaks are likely to occur and should not cause undue surprise. Our Queensland anti-tuberculosis control policy ensures that TB is maintained at low rates for the general population and special strategies ensure that special risk areas and situations are adequately catered for.

1042. Queensland Health, Staff Reductions

Mr PURCELL asked the Minister for Health (10/10/96)—

With reference to his promise to reduce bureaucracy outlined in yet another one of his pre-election statements on 4BC radio on 23 June 1995 when he said, and I quote "160 health fat cats would be sacked to create an additional 200 beds"—

- (1) Is this promise to axe 160 "health fat cats" as he put it still his policy and when will he finalise this number of sackings from his department?
- (2) Is this promise to sack 160 positions in addition to the 180 he also promised to sack or part of the total 180 and the 200 net positions to be surrendered which was mentioned in the health budget papers?

Mr Horan (8/11/96): The promises of the Coalition are to be found in its Policies. The Coalition Health Policy committed the Coalition to—

". . . devolve services as closely as possible to the people to achieve efficiencies that will enable more services to be provided from the health dollar."

It goes on to say that, at that time—

". . . regionalisation [had] nothing to do with community interest and access to facilities, but

everything to do with administrative convenience, with Government forgetting that it is the servant of the people. The Coalition will put the people first by delivering the service they require.

...

[District] Health Councils [will] provide for genuine community input into the services of their Hospital and Community Health Service."

The Coalition Nursing Policy provided for—

". . . an additional 400 staff in the first year . . ."

As you can see, the Coalition is not in the business of sacking the employees of Queensland Health. The number of positions saved since restructuring was identified as 214.5 at 18 June 1996. These savings are made up of Regional Office positions (181.5) and Central Office State permanent positions (33). These savings have enabled the Coalition to expand nursing numbers by 540, meeting and exceeding its commitment to the electors of Queensland.

A vacancy management program to assist in rebuilding of Queensland Health has continued throughout my administration. A small number of employees who are unplaceable due to their geographical location or their skill fit with new positions may yet be offered Voluntary Early Retirement packages; however, Queensland Health is currently holding more vacancies than it has employees to place. I have every confidence in these redeployees and look forward to working with them in the new Queensland Health.

Queensland Health now has fewer administrators to clinical staff, its surgical waiting times are falling fast, and genuine community input is being restored, as is public confidence in the health system. These were our promises, and on these, the Coalition has well and truly delivered.

1043. School Programs, Capricornia Region

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing (10/10/96)—

With reference to the previous Labor Government's initiatives 'Schoolsafe', 'Makeshade' and 'Building Better Schools'—

- (1) Are these programs being continued by the Government; if so, what is the budget for each of these programs for the Capricornia Region?
- (2) What schools are involved and what is the time line for each of these schools/projects?

Mr Connor (11/11/96): (1) & (2) The Makeshade and Building Better Schools programs rest within the portfolio of my Cabinet Colleague, the Honourable Bob Quinn MLA, Minister for Education, it would be more appropriate that these questions be referred to him. With reference to the Schoolsafe program it would be more appropriate that these questions be directed to my Cabinet Colleague who is responsible, the Honourable Vaughan Johnson Minister for Transport and Main Roads.

1044. Mental Health Services, Emerald and Central Highlands

Mr PEARCE asked the Minister for Health (10/10/96)—

With reference to ongoing calls for additional dedicated mental health workers to service Emerald and the Central Highlands—

- (1) What is the level of service provided to patients at the Mental Health Service clinic at Emerald?
- (2) How many social workers and nurses are located in Emerald to service those in need of mental health care and to support the families of patients?
- (3) Has the Regional Mental Health Services Plan identified the need for additional dedicated mental health workers?
- (4) When will he commit real dollars to improving Mental Health Services for Emerald and the Central Highlands?

Mr Horan (8/11/96): Labor may not have listened to these ongoing calls, but the Coalition will.

(1) The Rockhampton District Mental Health Service provides an outreach service to Emerald two days every four weeks. This comprises a multidisciplinary team of psychiatrist, psychiatry registrar, psychiatric nurse and mental health allied health professional.

(2) Two locally based community health nurses provide support to people with mental illness and their families between visits from the Rockhampton team.

(3) Thanks to the return of genuine community input (through the Central Highlands District), the need for a locally based mental health service has now been recognised. This need was not previously highlighted by the then Central Region. So this is just one local benefit flowing from the abolition of Labor's failed regional system.

(4) The Ten Year Mental Health Strategy includes a time frame for the allocation of new resources to develop this new local service, supported by outreach services from Rockhampton. Emerald will be considered as a priority in the allocation of resources in the next State Budget.

1045. Gladstone State High School

Mrs CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Education (10/10/96)—

With reference to the need for permanent emergency access to all areas of State and private school properties—

Will the department accept responsibility for the dirt road at Gladstone State High School which allows fire brigade, ambulance and police to rear buildings on this site?

Mr Quinn (6/11/96): The Department will review the situation of emergency access to buildings at the rear of the Gladstone State High School site in light of priorities within the Capital Works Program.

I will keep Honourable Member informed of any development regarding this matter.

1046. Bus Trials

Mr ELDER asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (10/10/96)—

What are the details of the accessible bus trials which are being conducted as part of the pilot program this year?

Mr Johnson (11/11/96): In the 1996/97 Budget the Government allocated funding of \$7.5 million over three years to provide financial assistance to bus operators to purchase and trial wheelchair accessible buses. \$1.5 million has been allocated for 1996/97.

The Government recognised the value of the Accessible Bus Pilot Program introduced by the previous Labor Government and continued it with this substantial injection of funds.

Under the program, bus operators will receive a subsidy of up to 25 percent of the total purchase price of accessible buses which they operate. As a condition they will be required to collect information for Queensland Transport about the operations of the buses over a twelve month period.

As well as giving operators a helping hand in investing in new technology, it will also provide us with some good information on the performance of different types of accessible buses in different operating conditions in Queensland.

In terms of the details of the accessible bus trials currently being conducted, the Honourable Member will be aware that two accessible buses commenced operating in the Ipswich area in March this year.

By the end of October, the operator in Camira will take delivery of a wheelchair accessible ultra low-floor MAN mini bus which will be the first of its kind to go into operation in Australia. This operator will take delivery of a second MAN bus approximately four weeks after this. The bus operator in Mackay expects to take delivery of the same type of bus around December. The Townsville operator will be obtaining a number of accessible buses over the next 2 years.

A number of other operators from Park Ridge, Maryborough, Redcliffe, Bribie Island, Cairns, Wynnum and Brisbane have also expressed a strong interest in receiving funding under the program to purchase accessible buses in this financial year.

1047. Sheepstation Creek Conservation Park

Mr HAYWARD asked the Minister for Environment (10/10/96)—

With reference to Sheepstation Creek Conservation Park at Morayfield—

Will he confirm whether or not adult visitors, including local residents, will be required to purchase a Park Pass before entry?

Mr Littleproud (7/11/96): The proposed Park Pass entry fee will be required from March 1 next

year for all national and conservation parks in Queensland including Sheepstation Creek Conservation Park. This entry fee will apply to adult visitors including local residents. You will be aware that introduction of such an entry fee was made necessary by the Labor legacy of inadequate funding for management of protected areas. However, it is worth noting that all other States and Territories have some form of park entry fee already operating.

1048. Mr R. Matson; Peicor Pty Ltd

Mr D'ARCY asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (10/10/96)—

With reference to my Question on Notice No. 840 and to his answer—

- (1) Is Mr Roger Matson a principal of Peicor Pty Ltd?
- (2) Who are the office holders of that company?

Mr Beanland (12/11/96): In response to the specific questions made by Mr D'Arcy, I can advise as follows:

- (1) No.
- (2) The office holders of Peicor Pty Ltd are Christa Antoinette Schweizer, director and secretary, and Robert Schweizer, director.

1049. Nelly Bay, Magnetic Island

Mr WELFORD asked the Minister for Environment (10/10/96)—

With reference to the proposed development of Nelly Bay, Magnetic Island—

- (1) Does the Government intend to excise any section of World Heritage Marine Park in order to sell the area to private developers?
- (2) What is the legal precedent for the removal of a public beach from a World Heritage State Marine Park for private residential development?
- (3) When will the final EIS be made public?
- (4) Will the Government require a new public review process if the proposal is altered significantly through the EIS process?
- (5) Will the Picnic Bay jetty be closed to make way for the Nelly Bay Harbour project?
- (6) What does he understand to be the result of the Bright Point boundary dispute?
- (7) How much has the Queensland Government spent to date on project promotion, the EIS process, various applications affecting the marine park, court proceedings and other costs?
- (8) What infrastructure and ongoing maintenance costs will the State incur in servicing the project if it goes ahead?

Mr Littleproud (11/11/96): This matter is the responsibility of the Honourable Minister for Economic Development and Trade, to whom any question should be directed.

1050. Gold Coast Rail Link

Mrs ROSE asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (10/10/96)—

With reference to the Gold Coast Rail Link—

- (1) What is the expected completion date of the Robina Station?
- (2) What is the expected completion date of the rail line from Helensvale to Robina?
- (3) What studies to date have been undertaken on the extension of the rail line from Robina to Coolangatta?
- (4) What is the Government's commitment to the extension of the rail line from Robina to Coolangatta?

Mr Johnson (11/11/96):

- (1) For several years, the completion date for the station has been December 1997.

However, negotiations have also been in progress for many years with Robina Land Corporation (RLC) with regard to the acquisition of the land required for the station and for the southern extension of the railway through RLC's lands.

Unfortunately, these negotiations have not been concluded as there emerged significant differences of opinion between the Government and RLC over the form of construction for the southern extension.

The date for completion of the station will depend upon the outcome of negotiations and in particular the date when land can be acquired for construction and also the form of architectural treatment of the station building.

It is therefore no longer possible to say specifically that the station will be opened in December 1997. An opening in March 1998 will be feasible if Government resumes the land and the station building is to QR's design. Adoption of RLC's proposed building could add some months to the design and construction which would affect the completion date.

As previously stated, these negotiations are imminent and the question can be better answered when they are concluded, hopefully within the next month.

- (2) As noted in the response to Part 1 of this question, the station building at Robina is critical for the rail line opening to Robina.

However, construction is well advanced between Helensvale and Nerang and it is expected to call for tenders for the station building in November this year, with completion expected twelve months later.

It is expected that the service to Nerang will open in December 1997 as planned.

Included in the station complex is a bus interchange which will provide bus/bus transfer as well as bus/rail and it is expected that this will lift the level of public transportation in the region significantly.

(3) A study was conducted in 1991/92 which looked at options for a Casino—Murwillumbah/Robina rail corridor. The study was conducted by Symonds Travers Morgan on behalf of Queensland Rail and the NSW State Rail Authority. The options were for the development of some form of full or partial rail service between Casino and Robina. One option considered was a rail extension from Robina to Coolangatta.

Gutteridge Haskins and Davey (GHD) managed a study for Queensland Transport on an investigation of a proposed rail connection from Robina—Coolangatta. A report was produced in August 1995.

The purpose of the GHD study was to examine the technical feasibility of a rail alignment, to identify impacts on property, and to assess major construction and operational issues.

(4) Agreement between all levels of Government was reached in 1996 to progress the rail extension from Robina—Coolangatta. The study project will progress under the umbrella of the Building Better Cities Program. The investigation program also includes consideration of a Tugun Bypass (an extension of the Pacific Highway).

The Queensland and Commonwealth Governments are both contributing major funding towards the project, with a contribution also from Gold Coast City Council. This Government is committed to a proper evaluation of the concept as are also Gold Coast City and Tweed Shire Councils. A Steering Committee is in operation, and it is expected that consultants will be appointed to commence the study by the end of 1996.

The rail extension is an important public transport opportunity for investigation identified in the draft Integrated Regional Transport Plan (IRTP).

1051. Schools, Nudgee Electorate

Mr ROBERTS asked the Minister for Education (10/10/96)—

With reference to primary and secondary schools in the Nudgee Electorate—

- (1) What are the enrolment and predicted enrolments for each school at (a) Boondall, (b) Zillmere, (c) Geebung, (d) Nudgee and (e) Northgate Primary Schools and Banyo State High School for the years 1990 through to 2006?
- (2) Excluding the monitoring of enrolments and demographic trends what proactive action has the department taken, or does it intend to take, to maintain viability of schools within the electorate?

Mr Quinn (6/11/96):

(1)

Year	Banyo SHS	Boondall SS	Geebung SS	Northgate SS	Nudgee SS	Zillmere SS
1990	405	430	365	141	440	140
1991	455	466	324	144	427	173
1992	394	448	298	118	416	194
1993	319	466	293	125	406	205
1994	289	458	294	147	378	181
1995	291	463	306	157	331	193
1996	292	460	314	145	337	184
1997	301	456	325	133	318	186
1998	321	440	338	135	314	193
1999	322	435	346	147	326	195
2000	328	428	344	158	336	197
2001	327	443	341	159	366	197
2002	321	450	334	168	386	198
2003	316	462	334	190	394	196
2004	311	470	332	208	400	194
2005	306	476	331	219	404	192
2006	300	484	329	226	407	195

(2) The Department of Education maintains regular monitoring of enrolments and demographic trends for all schools in the region. Part of such monitoring includes a viability assessment.

Projections indicate that Boondall State School, Geebung State School, Northgate State School, Nudgee State School and Zillmere State School will maintain enrolments at, or about, their present levels.

Banyo State High School shows a continuing downward trend which will make the provision of a range of senior secondary programs increasingly difficult, over time. This will be addressed in part by Banyo SHS students accessing a wider array of post compulsory offerings drawn from the surrounding cluster of schools. The Honourable Member would be aware that I met recently with Mrs Elizabeth Grace MP, Federal Member for Lilley, and representatives from Banyo SHS and Nudgee College, to discuss the concept of a Centre for Excellence at the high school.

1052. Reef Tax

Mr CAMPBELL asked the Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry (10/10/96)—

With reference to the proposed increase in the barrier reef tax by the Federal Government from \$1 to \$6 per day and the State Government's \$3 national park entrance tax, for a tourist visiting Lady Musgrave Island off Bundaberg and having a scuba dive, the taxes imposed will be \$9 paid by the tourist boat operator and \$6 paid by the dive operator—a total of \$15.00—

(1) Since many of the tourist packages have been presold to tour wholesalers for the period up to March 1998, how can these tour operators absorb these massive tax increases?

(2) What help will be given to tourist operators to enable them to survive with these massive cost increases?

Mr Davidson (8/11/96):

(1) The Commonwealth Government's proposal to increase the EMC by \$5 and to implement this increase by 1 January 1997 would not give many operators sufficient time to absorb the increase, especially those who have pre-sold a large number of tours. It is extremely regrettable that the Commonwealth has announced the increase in the EMC in this way. The Queensland Government will not increase commercial tour operator user charges for national parks before 1 January 1998, allowing time to negotiate with the industry and time for the industry to absorb any increases.

(2) I view the proposed increase in the EMC with great concern and have asked the Commonwealth to reconsider this proposal. The most effective form of assistance to the industry would be to have a compromise worked out that will provide sufficient funding for the management and protection of the Great Barrier Reef.

I have made representations to the Commonwealth Minister for Industry, Science and Tourism, the Honourable John Moore MP, and the Minister for Environment, Sport and Territories, Senator Robert Hill. I have also spoken to the Prime Minister, the Honourable John Howard, outlining Queensland's concerns. The Chair of the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation has written to Mr Moore seeking to have the decision overturned. The marine tour industry is making strong representations on the issue. My Department is continuing to liaise with the Commonwealth Government, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the industry. It is hoped that the Commonwealth will reconsider the issue and

a compromise will be reached that shares the cost of protecting the Great Barrier Reef among all those who benefit from it.

1054. South Bank Parklands Redevelopment

Mr BEATTIE asked the Minister for Environment (11/10/96)—

With reference to plans to re-develop the South Bank Parklands at a cost of \$26m—

- (1) What part and area of the South Bank Parklands is proposed for this re-development?
- (2) What portion of the re-development area will have the 200—250 residential units built upon it?
- (3) What portion of the re-development area will be retained as open space parkland?
- (4) What portion of the re-development area will be set aside for commercial development?
- (5) Will two hotels providing up to 700 rooms also be built on the site?
- (6) Are a series of 6-10 storey office developments also planned for the site?
- (7) Is the South Bank Corporation planning land sales of South Bank land to recoup the \$26m cost of this re-development and realise a profit of approximately \$24m?
- (8) Where is it intended to spend this \$24m profit?
- (9) How much land is intended to be sold and where is this land located on the South Bank site?

Mr Littleproud (11/11/96): This question should be directed to the responsible Minister, that is, the Honourable the Premier.

1055. Cautionary Notices; Traffic Breach Notices

Mr NUNN asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (11/10/96)—

- (1) What is the normal operational procedure followed by police officers in issuing cautionary notices instead of fines?
- (2) How many traffic breach notices were issued by the Queensland Police Service in August 1996?
- (3) How many cautionary notices were issued by the Queensland Police Service in August 1996?

Mr Cooper (8/11/96):

(1) The discretionary power for a police officer to issue penalty notices or cautionary notices is found in section 3.4 of the Operational Procedures Manual for the Queensland Police Service. This section outlines the matters that the officer is to consider before making a decision to prosecute or not.

The decision to either institute proceedings or desist from doing so initially rests with the officer who, having investigated the offence, contemplates instituting proceedings against the person for that

offence. In cases where a minor offence is detected and where the offender is an otherwise law abiding citizen, prosecution for the offence may in fact be counter productive. However, each case must be considered individually.

Some of the factors an officer must consider when deciding to initiate a prosecution are:-

- (i) the seriousness or, conversely, the triviality of the alleged offence or whether the offence is of a 'technical' nature only;
- (ii) any mitigating or aggravating circumstances;
- (iii) whether the prosecution would be perceived as counter-productive;
- (iv) the availability and efficiency of any alternatives to prosecution both personal and general.

The manner in which cautionary notices are to be issued is outlined in Commissioner's Circular 74/93.

That Circular provides for officers to give a verbal caution to an offender when issuing a cautionary notice.

The officer is to make a note of the date, time, location, offence committed, the offender's name and address and registration number of the vehicle in their official notebook or Activity Log.

No other action is required.

(2) Queensland Transport records indicate that during the period 1 August to 31 August 1996, a total of 29,615 Traffic Infringement Notices were issued by members of the Queensland Police Service. This figure does not include Infringement Notices issued as a result of traffic incidents.

(3) No centralised records are kept of cautionary notices issued by police and consequently the number issued during August 1996 is not readily obtainable.

1056. South East Freeway; Pollution Levels

Mr ROBERTSON asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (11/10/96)—

With reference to his answer to my Question on Notice No. 521 where I raised concerns that the decision to widen the South East Freeway and increase its carrying capacity would result in a further deterioration in air quality in suburbs such as Underwood, Springwood and Rochedale and his advice that 'the increased capacity in the corridor, particularly if achieved in a manner which encourages increased vehicle occupancy, is not expected to cause a deterioration in air quality levels'—

- (1) What scientific evidence does he have to support this statement?
- (2) Will he provide this evidence to ensure residents who currently live along the South East Freeway will not suffer a deterioration in health as a result in a deterioration in air quality brought about by the significant increase in traffic movements along the freeway predicted by the Vietch Lister Consulting Technical

Report prepared for the Department of Transport?

Mr Johnson (11/11/96):

(1) Air quality levels are affected by a range of parameters, transport being only one. The population growth in the South East Freeway corridor and dispersed land use patterns are the primary causes of the expected increase in traffic flows and associated changes to air quality. To meet this growth, effective transport infrastructure is needed. Without additional capacity, congestion and air quality problems will increase. Provision of the additional capacity through a busway and high occupancy vehicle lanes is an environmentally responsible way to meet the growth in population and travel demands.

In terms of scientific evidence, modelling of air quality levels which may result from the upgrading has not been done at this time. However, it is noteworthy that modelling done as part of the development of the Impact Management Plan for the section of the Pacific Highway south of the Logan Motorway, showed that regional air quality would not deteriorate as a result of the widening.

(2) An Impact Management Plan (IMP) will be developed as part of the planning for the South East Busway Project. As part of this process, air quality impacts will be analysed. This will include consideration of both regional air quality and local air quality impacts. It is unlikely that the improvements to public transport resulting from the South East Busway Project will cause a deterioration in air quality. The incentives to increase vehicle occupancy created by the HOV lanes will play a key role in moving people more efficiently and reducing emissions from transport in the corridor.

1057. Suncorp and QIDC, VERs

Mr HAMILL asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts (11/10/96)—

With reference to the operation of Suncorp and the QIDC—

- (1) What was the total number of employees in each of these Government owned enterprises at 26 June 1996?
- (2) What is now the total number of employees in each of these Government owned enterprises?
- (3) How many employees of each of these Government owned enterprises have (a) retired and not been replaced, (b) resigned and not been replaced, (c) taken a voluntary redundancy package, (d) redeployed and their old position abolished and (e) been retrenched in the period since 26 June 1996?
- (4) What is the cost to Suncorp and the QIDC for the voluntary and involuntary redundancies during this period?

Mrs Sheldon (8/11/96): QIDC

(1) The total number of employees of QIDC as at 26/6/96 was 455.

(2) The total number of employees of QIDC as at 22/10/96 was 450.

(3) The number of employees who have left QIDC since 26/6/96 due to:

- (a) retired and not replaced—0
- (b) resigned and not replaced—11
- (c) taken a voluntary redundancy package—0
- (d) redeployed and their old position abolished—0
- (e) been retrenched—14

(4) The cost to QIDC of voluntary and involuntary redundancies for the period was \$573,908.41

Retrenchments at QIDC have resulted from the decision to close some elements of the investment banking division, in particular, the Corporate Advisory area due to under performance and a consequent lack of profitability. Retrenchments have not in any way been merger related as neither Suncorp or Metway conduct similar activities to those terminated at QIDC. QIDC is still actively recruiting to fill key vacancies.

SUNCORP

(1) The total number of employees of SUNCORP as at 26/6/96 was 3781.

(2) The total number of employees of SUNCORP as at 22/10/96 was 3850.

(3) The number of employees who have left SUNCORP since 26/6/96 due to:

- (a) retired and not replaced—0
- (b) resigned and not replaced—30
- (c) taken a voluntary redundancy package—0
- (d) redeployed and their old position abolished—34
- (e) been retrenched—35

(4) The cost to SUNCORP of voluntary and involuntary redundancies for the period was \$502,017.

In the case of Suncorp, any redundancy or redeployment of staff has occurred as a result of various organisational restructures that were planned well before any announcement of the merger with Metway and QIDC was made.

1058. Railway Workshop Job Losses, Townsville

Mr SMITH asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (11/10/96)—

With reference to the Estimates Debate during which he acknowledged that further job losses in the railway workshops would occur from the existing 1,844 jobs to 1,100 in 1998—

In view of the foreshadowed loss of a further 750 workshop jobs, will he indicate if any of those job losses will occur in Townsville?

Mr Johnson (11/11/96): It was established at the Estimates Committee Hearing this year that the reduction of employment within the Workshops group of Queensland Rail was in line with the overall direction of the original Workshops Strategy

adopted in July 1993, which was during the time of the Labor administration.

In September 1996, a new initiative in respect of Townsville Workshops has been entered into by Queensland Rail in line with the Coalition Policy which considers the retention of a number of major maintenance operations within the Townsville region.

The current level of employees within the Townsville Workshops will be retained subject to normal attrition, and the current Voluntary Early Retirement policy operating within QR and the workload which will be appraised on a regular basis.

Overall, the level of employees within the Workshops group will reflect the opportunities afforded to the group to compete for appropriate rail work and the group's ability to achieve the necessary efficiency to compete within the market.

1059. Bingham Report Implementation Committee

Mr BARTON asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (11/10/96)—

With reference to his announcement of an Implementation Committee for the Bingham Committee Report and the fact that no information has been made publicly available of the costs associated with that implementation committee's work—

- (1) What are the projected costs to the Police Service for this implementation?
- (2) What will be the remuneration paid to each member of the implementation committee?
- (3) How will their expenses be paid and what is that projected cost?
- (4) How will the Bingham Report Implementation Committee impact on the work of the Criminal Justice Commission?

Mr Cooper (11/11/96):

(1) In answering this question it is assumed that it relates to the operations of the Overview Committee, and not the costs of implementing the QPS Review Committee's recommendations.

The members of the QPS Review Overview Committee are:

Sir Max Bingham (chair)

Sir Bruce Watson

Ms Jill Bolen

Mr Roly Dargusch

Mr Laurie Witham

Projected costs relating to the Overview Committee will consist of remuneration for Committee members, associated travel costs, executive support, equipment and miscellaneous costs.

The cost of the Overview Committee for the remainder of the 1996/97 financial year has been estimated to be \$70,664.39. The breakdown of this cost is provided below.

2. Members of the Overview Committee will be remunerated at the same daily rate as applied when they were conducting the Review, with the exception of Sir Bruce Watson who has again asked that an honorarium be paid to charities nominated by him. While it is not certain at this stage exactly how many days the Committee will need to sit, it is anticipated that ten days per member for the remainder of the 1996/97 financial year is the likely requirement. On the basis of this estimate, the following costs will be incurred:

Sir Max Bingham @\$600 per day—\$6,000

Ms Jill Bolen @\$600 per day—\$6,000

Mr Roly Dargusch @\$500 per day—\$5,000

Mr Laurie Witham @\$500 per day—\$5,000

Sir Bruce Watson—\$1,000

Total—\$23,000

In addition, it is anticipated that Sir Max Bingham and Ms Bolen will be undertaking research and reading work associated with the Overview Committee separate from formal meeting days.

Sir Max Bingham @\$600 per day x 15 days—\$9,000

Ms Jill Bolen @\$600 per day x 10 days—\$6,000

Total—\$15,000

(3) Other costs include travel and accommodation costs for Committee members and administrative costs.

- (a) Travel costs have been calculated at \$7,201.89
- (b) Accommodation costs have been calculated at \$2,880.00
- (c) Administrative costs:-
 - (i) Motor Vehicle Parking \$480.00
 - (ii) Secretarial support \$7,200.00
 - (iii) Executive Officer support \$9,600.00
 - (iv) Contingency Reserve for Unidentified Costs \$4,000.00
 - (v) Equipment (computer connection and software) \$700.00
 - (vi) Miscellaneous (telephone and post office box rental) \$602.50

(4) The Overview Committee will have no impact whatsoever on the work of the Criminal Justice Commission.

1060. Juvenile Aid Bureau, Gladstone

Mr LIVINGSTONE asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (11/10/96)—

With reference to my understanding that the Assistant Commissioner, Central Region, supports the idea of establishing a Juvenile Aid Bureau in Gladstone in principle—

- (1) Why has Gladstone a higher priority than any other town, city or district under his control?

- (2) What other towns, cities or districts in the central region does the Assistant Commissioner support in principle for the establishment of a Juvenile Aid Bureau?
- (3) What other towns, cities or districts in all other police regions in Queensland have "in principle" support for the establishment of a Juvenile Aid Bureau?

Mr Cooper (8/11/96):

(1) Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone and Longreach Police Districts are located in Central Police Region. Juvenile Aid Bureaux are established at Rockhampton and Mackay. No Juvenile Aid Bureau (JAB) is located at Longreach and it is not proposed to establish one as the volume of reported crime does not warrant it.

The Officer in Charge, Gladstone Criminal Investigation Branch, submitted a report dated 7 February 1994 for establishment of a Juvenile Aid Bureau at Gladstone with justifying statistics for juvenile police work conducted there. This application was supported by the District Officer. The Juvenile Aid Bureau State Co-ordinator conducted a needs assessment for the establishment of a Juvenile Aid Bureau in the Gladstone Police District in 1994. As a result of this assessment, it was recommended that three additional positions be allocated to Gladstone Police District to establish a Juvenile Aid Bureau. The additional positions could not be met from existing Regional Resources at the time.

The District Officer, Gladstone, made further application on 26 October 1995 for establishment of a Juvenile Aid Bureau at Gladstone. Justification was based on local statistics showing that, for the period 1 January to 30 October 1995, the number of juvenile arrests/summonses/cautions for the District totalled 407. Of this figure, 220 juvenile arrests/summonses/cautions were reported for Gladstone Division.

A proposal was made to the Queensland Police Service's Board of Management on 11 June 1996 for the provision of additional staff to create a Juvenile Aid Bureau at Gladstone in conjunction with other staffing submissions. At that time, it was resolved to defer a decision on this matter, pending the completion of a Statewide review of service delivery.

As previously stated, the need for a Juvenile Aid Bureau in Gladstone was identified in 1994, and its priority for establishment over any other town, city or district in the Central Police Region has the full support of the Assistant Commissioner. This support is based on the volume of juvenile related police work conducted in the Gladstone District compared with similar work undertaken in Rockhampton and Mackay which are already serviced by a JAB.

(2) The Assistant Commissioner, Central Police Region, does not support in principle the establishment of a Juvenile Aid Bureau at any other towns, cities, districts in the Central Police Region at this time.

(3) No other Regions within the State have Board of Management approval or support "in principle" or

otherwise for the establishment of Juvenile Aid Bureaux at this time.

1061. Denison Street Rail Line, Rockhampton

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (11/10/96)—

With reference to the upgrade of the Denison Street rail line in Rockhampton—

- (1) Will he ensure that the ballast on that line is completely sealed and therefore averting the continuing problem of stone damage in the area?
- (2) Will he assure any small businesses in the area that they will be compensated for any loss incurred during the reconstruction of this line?

Mr Johnson (11/11/96):

(1) Virtually all railway lines in Queensland are laid on crushed rock ballast which has to be renewed from time to time. Open ballast track allows this maintenance work to be carried out quickly and with minimum effect on the occupants of Denison Street.

Sealing the ballast reduces the ability to maintain track stability and alignment, a necessary requirement for the safe operation of trains. In addition, future removal of the surfacing to allow track maintenance, can only be achieved at considerable cost and will cause disruption to businesses and residents in the area.

Queensland Rail, in the development of the Denison Street upgrade project, undertook extensive community consultation and reluctantly agreed, due to the costs involved and the serious limitations in relation to maintenance operations, to reconstruct the section between Stanley and Fitzroy Streets as a sealed bitumen surface. While sealing of the remainder of the line is not being carried out, Queensland Rail has put in place measures for staff to be vigilant in reporting acts of vandalism.

I am sympathetic to the residents in the area, but I do believe that it is a community policing issue and every effort should be made to fix the cause of the problem, not the symptom.

Ultimately, as an organisation, Queensland Rail cannot be held responsible for the criminal actions of unknown persons.

(2) Given that the rail line is located within Denison Street, its reconstruction always had the potential to cause some disruption to businesses within the surrounding area. Queensland Rail always identified this fact and as such undertook to notify all concerned parties, including the wider community and to carry out the work in an efficient and expeditious manner.

Queensland Rail has endeavoured to work in with businesses as far as practicable.

The high standard of reconstruction work carried out means Queensland Rail will not need to carry out major works for some years. Trackwork on the line in the immediate future will be limited to minor maintenance. In the interests of safety, the reconstruction work is required.

I am satisfied that Queensland Rail has done everything in its power to minimise the effect of the construction on businesses and residents and as such compensation will not be paid.

1062. Fortune Telling, Criminal Sanctions

Mr WELLS asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (11/10/96)—

With reference to his proposals for review of the criminal law and noting that they fail to recommend removal of criminal sanctions against fortune telling—

- (1) Is he aware of strong representations for removal of this archaic and now pointless legal ban?
- (2) What is his response to these representations?

Mr Beanland (12/11/96): The leading questions asked by the Honourable Member and the point of reference upon which they are predicated each assume

- (a) that there is a flaw or a failure in the independent review process not recommending the repeal of laws which proscribe fortune-telling;
- (b) that because something is old it is archaic and therefore unnecessary; and
- (c) that I should agree with his view that the law is pointless.

I am aware of representations to have section 432 of the Criminal Code and section 4(1)(o) of the Vagrants Gaming and Other Offences Act 1931 repealed.

These provisions as they are there to protect the gullible and to discourage the practice of not only fortune-telling but, as section 432 also provides, witchcraft, sorcery and practices in the occult; the very kinds of evil which led to the killing of Mr Baldock in a Brisbane city park and to the conviction of Tracey Wiggington, Kim Jervis and Lisa Ptaschinski.

These practices therefore are not archaic. Between 1984 and 1990 in Western Australia, one Scott Bryan Gozenton committed deviant sexual acts upon 12 to 15-year-old boys while professing to be practising witchcraft, and initiated some boys into an organisation called "the Satanic Warriors". Reported cases of prosecutions for pretending to tell fortunes also exist; see for example *Hartridge v Samuels* [1976]14 SASR 209 in which it was accepted that the South Australian Parliament had outlawed fortune-telling because it was in itself a fraudulent practice and necessarily deceptive whether or not the defendant genuinely believed in his ability to foretell the future.

1063. Police Numbers

Mr BRISKEY asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (11/10/96)—

With reference to his projected police to population ratios for the next decade previously provided—

- (1) Will Queensland's ratio, by the year 2004-05 have only just surpassed New South Wales' present figure of 1:475 and still be worse than every other Australian State and Territory's present figure and just level with the Australian average ratio?
- (2) Is he admitting that he intends to preside over the worst police to population ratios in Australia for the next decade?
- (3) What, in his view, is the value of the police to population ratio as a measure of effectiveness of delivery of policing services?
- (4) Has his continued carping on this subject over the last six years now been exposed for the hollow rhetoric it obviously was?

Mr Cooper (8/11/96):

(1) The Coalition inherited the worst police to population ratio in Australia. This Government's proposed increase in police numbers over the next nine years is more than double the increase proposed by the previous Government and is a major step in improving the police to population ratio. We plan to match the Australian average by 2005.

(2) Under this Government, the average increase in police strength over the next decade will be approximately 302 officers per year, as against only 142 officers per year under Labor. In fact, under Labor, the police to population ratio in 2004-05 would have been 1:531 which is even worse than the one they left to the Coalition in February 1996.

(3) It is the Government's view that police to population ratios are valuable indicators of policing requirements at the macro level to ensure police numbers keep pace with population growth and do not return to the levels experienced under the former Government. In the larger States, New South Wales and Victoria, police to population ratios have remained static for many years. The Queensland police to population ratio will be steadily reduced through our ongoing commitment to increased police recruit intakes.

However, in determining the effectiveness of delivery of policing services, particularly at the District and Regional levels, there are other factors that must be considered rather than relying solely on police to population ratios.

The demographics and social characteristics of the population to be served, the proportion of police performing operational duties, the number of specialist positions and civilian staff available to support general duties police officers, changes in technology, and the efficiency and effectiveness of police systems and procedures are critical measures of the standard of policing services.

(4) I believe that the Coalition's action in addressing the police to population ratio speaks for itself.

1064. Spectacle Prescription Examinations, Princess Alexandra Hospital

Mr ARDILL asked the Minister for Health (11/10/96)—

Will he advise if patients still waiting for appointments at Princess Alexandra Hospital to provide examination for spectacle prescriptions, will be allowed the option of attending other hospitals with shorter waiting lists and easier access, in view of the problems being faced by these people, denied an essential faculty?

Mr Horan (8/11/96): All patients already have the option to attend any hospital they choose to seek assistance with the provision of spectacles. Provided the patient is not seeking provision of spectacles more frequently than is considered reasonable under the guidelines, any hospital will provide the necessary examination.

1065. QE II Hospital

Ms SPENCE asked the Minister for Health (11/10/96)—

With reference to the QE II Hospital—

- (1) How many medical beds are available?
- (2) How many surgical beds are available?
- (3) How many patients have been seen in the emergency department in the past 12 months?
- (4) What improvements have been made in radiological facilities since he became Minister for Health?
- (5) What use is proposed for the 5th floor of the hospital?

Mr Horan (11/11/96):

(1 & 2) Fifteen (15) medical beds and fifty (50) surgical beds are currently available. However, through the recent State Budget, the Borbidge Government provided \$10 million for capital works, as well as an additional \$10 million in operating funds to restore the QE II Hospital to full community general hospital status.

Your constituents remember that QE II was downgraded to such an extent that during one weekend in 1995 there was a total of 9 patients in the Hospital.

In contrast, the Coalition will restore QE II to a fully operational 161 bed hospital. This redevelopment will result in the:

Upgrade of the High Dependency Unit with the ability to ventilate patients for short periods;

Establishment of a 30 bed acute medical ward;

Addition of another rehabilitation unit to complement the existing neurological rehabilitation unit;

Equipping and staffing the remaining two operating theatres to increase surgical throughput, improve access to elective surgery and reduce waiting times;

Increasing staff for the emergency department;

Re-equipping the radiology unit.

These major improvements to QE II will make the hospital a vital link in the network of hospitals on Brisbane's southside.

(3) During the 1995/96 financial year, 25,873 patients were seen in the Emergency Department. A total of 6,684 patients have been seen in the 1996/97 financial year.

(4) As part of the redevelopment process, the Radiology Review Reference Group was established in July to investigate the various options for improvement. A report was prepared and is currently being considered by the Capital Works Branch of Queensland Health.

(5) In the current plan, the 5th Floor of QE II Hospital is to accommodate Clinical Division offices, hospital and community administration offices. The hospital and District administration are relocating to the 5th Floor to make space available for clinical services on the Ground Floor. It will also accommodate the Aged Care Assessment Service currently based at Diamantina House, Princess Alexandra Hospital and the Community Health Service which is currently housed at 1st Floor, 472 Ipswich Road, Annerley.

1066. Undurba State School

Mr HAYWARD asked the Minister for Education (11/10/96)—

With reference to the Undurba State School—

When will covered walkways between the modular and demountable buildings be constructed?

Mr Quinn (6/11/96): It is current Department of Education policy not to provide covered walkways to temporary (relocatable) buildings. Therefore any request for this provision at Undurba State School would require consideration of any circumstances which would warrant approval as a special case.

1068. Drought Assistance

Mr PEARCE asked the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry (11/10/96)—

With reference to the fact that on 10 December 1996, several thousand primary producers across Queensland will become ineligible for the Drought Relief Payment as a result of the revocation of drought exceptional circumstances and as producers and their families will also be ineligible for other forms of income support, such as Job Search, because of the assets and activity tests—

What urgency has he, as Minister, applied in his negotiations with the Federal Government to ensure that thousands of Queenslanders will not be denied income support until they have recovered from the drought and established a cash flow that will allow them to again stand alone as a much needed rural producer?

Mr Perrett (5/11/96):

(1) There have been ongoing delegations and submissions to the Prime Minister and Minister for Primary Industries and Energy since the revocation

of northern and south-eastern Queensland from Drought Exceptional Circumstances (DEC) declared status on 11 June 1996.

(2) I presented a submission to Messrs Howard and Anderson during their visit to Winton and Clermont drought areas on 16 August 1996.

The submission sought extension of assistance measures, including the Drought Relief Payment for two (2) years, rather than the six (6) months currently provided, following revocation of DEC status.

(3) To further progress that submission, the Premier lead a delegation, including myself and senior industry members, to Canberra on 16 October 1996.

(4) The Prime Minister has been made well aware of the plight of Queensland primary producers and has provided an assurance that he will progress Queensland's case through Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.

(5) In addition, I have been vigorously pursuing the plight of Queensland producers during drought and in post drought recovery, through the Commonwealth Spring Review of DEC Declarations and the Mid-Term Review of the Rural Adjustment Scheme currently under way.

1069. Bundaberg Police District

Mr CAMPBELL asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (11/10/96)—

- (1) How many extra police will be provided in the Bundaberg Police District?
- (2) What steps are being taken to immediately provide extra patrols in the CBD on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights?
- (3) What steps are being taken to improve immediately the police patrols and services to coastal towns around Bundaberg?
- (4) Will he advise the number of crimes reported, by classification, number of crimes cleared, crimes per police officer etc., for 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96 and this year to date for the Bundaberg Police District?
- (5) Will he advise the annual Budget for the Bundaberg Police District for 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97?
- (6) What was the average number of prisoners held in the Bundaberg Watchhouse for 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96 and what was the highest number of prisoners held in any one day in the Bundaberg Watchhouse in 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96 and the current year to date?

Mr Cooper (8/11/96):

(1) During 1996/97, the funded strength of the Queensland Police Service will be increased by 139 officers. Of this, it is expected that the allocated strength of the Bundaberg Police District will be increased by six officers to a total of 92 officers.

(2) The Bundaberg District has a Target Committee which includes the District Officer, the District Intelligence Officer, the Officer in Charge of the District Criminal Investigation Branch and the Officers in Charge of all police divisions throughout the District. This Committee meets monthly to identify problem areas in the Bundaberg Police District and to develop appropriate strategies to address them, based on local intelligence. Specific operations targeting a number of locations, including the Bundaberg CBD, have recently been conducted. The Target Committee will continue to focus on policing priorities of the areas concerned.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights are known periods of increased activity and all available police staff are rostered at those times.

(3) The Assistant Commissioner, North Coast Region, is satisfied with the policing service currently provided to coastal towns around Bundaberg. All calls for assistance received by police in this area are prioritised and attended to accordingly on that basis. Additional intelligence driven patrols and operations are also conducted in the area.

(4) Bundaberg District Crime Statistics

	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	Year to 30/9/96
Offences Against Person				
Occurred	345	353	521	101
Cleared	257	272	355	59
Offences Against Property				
Occurred	4840	4128	4685	1194
Cleared	971	1146	1017	195
Other Offences				
Occurred	1182	1143	1633	337
Cleared	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total				
Offences	6367	5624	6839	1632
Officers	88	88	89	89

Please note that cleared offences include offences which may have occurred in previous years but were cleared in the year under review. Consequently it is possible to have more offences cleared than reported for a given year.

(5) Summary Report—Bundaberg District:

Description	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97
Salaries	3,290,548	3,291,303	3,367,557	3,471,249
Wages	25,689	30,496	34,286	35,828
Allowances	68,385	70,330	71,394	98,102
Overtime	140,574	137,447	170,344	126,993
Statutory Holidays	49,357	40,837	17,685	17,333
Weekend Work	298,217	292,879	451,388	504,878
Travel Allowance	24,576	26,406	42,507	31,687
Fares, Freight, Printing and Stores	30,661	39,043	27,693	23,773
Maintenance, Plant and Equipment	114,741	127,606	83,812	82,977
General Administrative Expenses	99,428	152,205	157,537	125,218
Fixed Assets		1,929		
Payroll Tax	193,639	199,599	205,633	212,719
Total	4,335,815	4,408,151	4,631,765	4,730,757

Please note that for salary related items, the 1996/97 column is an estimate based on this years expenditure to September. Comparisons between previous years' expenditure will be affected by changes to staffing levels throughout Districts as the Region moves towards its correct model strength. These budgets are affected by budget redistributions relating to the centralisation of motor vehicle expenditure and changes to the processing of workers compensation.

(6) The average numbers of prisoners held in the Bundaberg Watchhouse were:

93/94	1020
94/95	1166
95/96	1480

The highest number of prisoners held in any one day (i.e. overnight) was:

93/94	unknown
94/95	17
95/96	17

1070. Police Station, Palm Beach

Mr ROSE asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (11/10/96)—

With reference to the proposed Police Station at Palm Beach—

- (1) How will the \$75,000 allocated in the current Budget be spent?
- (2) How much of the funding for land acquisition will be set aside for a Palm Beach site?
- (3) What is the timeframe for acquisition of a site?
- (4) When is it expected that the police station will be fully operational?

Mr Cooper (8/11/96):

- (1) The funds allocated will be used towards preliminary planning and professional fees as a prerequisite to actual construction.

(2) Negotiations are continuing and the valuation of a property is being sought. Until this valuation is known, it would not be appropriate to speculate on the purchase price.

(3) It is expected that settlement of a suitable property will be effected later this year or early in 1997.

(4) The station should be fully operational sometime in the 1998/99 financial year. The actual date for completion is unknown at this stage.

1071. Austcast Foundry, Northgate

Mr ROBERTS asked the Minister for Environment (11/10/96)—

With reference to the Austcast Foundry situated at Toombul Road, Northgate—

- (1) How many complaints have been received in each of the years 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995 and 1996 for noise, dust and odour respectively?
- (2) What actions are taken when complaints of this nature are lodged?
- (3) Has the department entered into an environmental management plan with Austcast; if so, what environmental management strategies have been agreed to under this plan?
- (4) What action will the department take if aspects of the management plan are not adhered to?

Mr Littleproud (7/11/96):

(1) Year	Noise Complaints	Dust Complaints	Odour Complaints
1990	1	0	27
1991	1	0	54
1992	0	4	55
1993	2	5	27
1994	0	3	8
1995	0	0	7
1996	0*	0*	0

0* Up to and including 20 October 1996

(2) When complaints are received, details are recorded and complainants contacted by telephone or personal visit. Premises are inspected to assess the nature and sources of the alleged complaints. Appropriate action is then taken to resolve the issues.

(3) Yes. Odour minimisation.

(4) Austcast has shown every indication of complying with the Certificate of Approval for the Environmental Management Program.

If circumstances arose to the contrary, investigation and enforcement provisions are available under the Environmental Protection Act.

1072. National Institute of Indigenous Performing Arts

Mr FOLEY asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts (11/10/96)—

With reference to the support National Institute for Indigenous Performing Arts (NIIPA), the proposed (Roving) Indigenous Arts Festival, Support to Indigenous Arts in general in Queensland—

- (1) What action has she taken to date to establish the National Institute of Indigenous Performing Arts (NIIPA) in Queensland?
- (2) Why has she continued to avoid public criticism of the Federal Government for depriving Queensland of this important national arts institute?
- (3) Why has she scrapped the proposed indigenous art festival launched by the Labor Government in 1995?
- (4) What action, if any, is she taking to support and promote indigenous art in Queensland?

Mrs Sheldon (8/11/96):

(1) I have previously advised the House that I have met with Senator Alston on several occasions and twice written to him in the lead up to the formulation of the Federal Government budget. On each of these occasions I championed Queensland as the appropriate home for NIIPA.

Notwithstanding my strong advocacy, the new Commonwealth Government did not have the same commitment to a National Institute for Indigenous Performing Arts. I am separately considering a number of issues related to the accommodation needs of arts organisations. I will be looking at what capacity there is for Queensland to support training in the Indigenous arts.

(2) There seems little value in criticising the Commonwealth Government on this issue. The former Labor Government had plenty of time to finalise arrangements with the Commonwealth regarding NIIPA but the delay in finalising funding for a new site for the Queensland College of Arts (which was proposed as a co-location option with NIIPA) resulted in Queensland losing NIIPA.

(3) The Coalition Government recognises the need to maintain traditional practices and encourage contemporary expressions of the two Indigenous cultures of Queensland. Increasing the opportunity

for employment in all cultural industries through resourcing and empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities to preserve, express and develop their unique Indigenous arts and heritage is an essential part of the Governments program. I will shortly receive a report on Indigenous Arts Infrastructure in Queensland. This survey will inform future policy and program direction especially in relation to festivals and other celebratory events.

(4) The Government through the Arts Development Program and through the Arts Statutory Authorities is supporting women's traditional arts and craft; preserving heritage through displays of historical artefacts; encouraging greater community access to Indigenous arts and heritage collections; developing artistic skills; supporting urban Indigenous practice; and the commercial development of Indigenous arts and craft.

1073. Rugby League Clubs

Mr McELLIGOTT asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport (11/10/96)—

As the guidelines for the allocation of grants and subsidies to Queensland sporting bodies require that applicants be affiliated to their State governing bodies, what will be the situation for any rugby league clubs and associations which align themselves with the privately owned and controlled Super League?

Mr Veivers (7/11/96): I am advised that, under the present guidelines, Super League clubs would not be eligible for funding under programs administered by my Department.

1074. Management of National Parks

Mr DOLLIN asked the Minister for Environment (11/10/96)—

- (1) Is he aware that the Maryborough office of the Department of Environment is severely understaffed and that there is a need for additional park rangers to care for our national parks?
- (2) Is he also aware that the employment of a trainee ranger could cost as little as \$122 a week, or \$3 an hour, with Federal Government subsidies?
- (3) Will he take appropriate action and employ additional staff to ensure the future management of our national parks?

Mr Littleproud (7/11/96):

(1) Staffing levels have been the same for at least the last four years. Despite the budgetary situation inherited from Labor, this Government is prepared to meet the management challenge for National Parks—unlike our predecessors who had an excess of \$50m in three years to make the area operational and viable and who failed abysmally on both counts.

That being accepted there are six national parks and 12 conservation parks managed by the Department of Environment's Wide Bay-Burnett District staff

based in the Maryborough office. At present there is a District Ranger and four field rangers dedicated to management of those parks.

A ranger position at Murgon is vacant. This will have a minor impact on wildlife operation but will not affect management of the conservation parks in the area which are willingly managed by the local Shire Councils as trustees.

(2) There are 11 environmental trainees placed with the Department of Environment in Queensland; 5 in Southeastern Region, 4 in Southwestern and 2 in Central Coast Region.

Across the State and all employers there is a total of 170 environmental trainees placed.

The cost of employing a trainee can be as low as \$122 per week but depends on a number of factors including the type of certificate being sought, the length of time the person is unemployed before the traineeship and their eligibility for Job Start and any Federal Government subsidies.

The decision to employ a trainee must include consideration of the resources available to provide the necessary and obligatory training as well as the identification of funding. The Department of Environment has and is considering appropriate traineeships within the constraints of budgets and identified needs.

(3) Management of national Parks is a high priority for this Government. Unfortunately the previous government did not match its funding for park acquisition with adequate funding for management, so there is considerable catching up required. Increased funding has been provided for park facilities and introduction of the Park pass system will also help in increasing funding for park management.

1116. Logan West Community Centre; Ms W. Howard

Mrs WOODGATE asked the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care (30/10/96)—

With reference to the application for funding under the Family Support Worker Program by the Logan West Community Centre which carries the signature of Ms Wendy Howard alongside the telephone number of his ministerial office—

(1) Is this the same Wendy Howard who is employed as his private secretary?

(2) Is he aware of community and departmental concern that preferential treatment was given to the LWCC because of Ms Howard's association with him?

(3) Will he agree that it is highly inappropriate for someone from his staff to submit funding requests to his department?

(4) Will he outline why the submissions lodged by the other 30 unsuccessful applicants for funding were inferior to that submitted by his private secretary?

(5) Did he exert any influence over his department's selection process to ensure Logan West and

Jimboomba, the community centre in his electorate and of which he is a patron, became successful applicants?

Mr Lingard (12/11/96):

1. I am advised that Wendy Howard's signature does not appear anywhere on the application; therefore questions (1), (2), (3) and (4) are not applicable.

5. I am advised that I am not the Patron or a member of the Committee of Jimboomba Central Neighbourhood Centre.

1120. Carruthers Inquiry; Connolly/Ryan Inquiry

Mr ROBERTSON asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (30/10/96)—

With reference to his reply in the second reading debate on 11 October on the Criminal Justice Legislation Amendment Bill which provided significant powers to be given to the Connolly Inquiry where he stated—"There will be no way that Carruthers will be influenced by other matters. It is quite clear that Mr Carruthers will not be influenced. I am sure that he will produce his report together with its recommendations in due course" and given the shock resignation by Mr Carruthers as a result of inappropriate interference by the Connolly Inquiry—

(1) What correspondence or conversations occurred between the Attorney-General and Commissioners Connolly and/or Ryan and/or Counsel assisting the Inquiry with respect to the Carruthers Inquiry?

(2) Was he aware that Commissioner Carruthers had been directed to produce all documents relevant to his Inquiry by the Connolly Inquiry; if so, when did he become so aware?

(3) Did he support the actions taken by the Connolly Inquiry in demanding the production of all documents by Mr Carruthers prior to the completion of his Inquiry; if so, why?

(4) Does he remain committed to the completion of the Carruthers Inquiry free from interference from the Connolly Inquiry or other sources; if so, how does he intend to facilitate this?

(5) Will he publicly distance himself from the disgraceful interference in the independence of the Carruthers Inquiry and allow the completion of the investigations free from any further unwarranted and compromising actions by the Inquiry he established?

Mr Beanland (12/11/96):

(1) No correspondence or conversations occurred on this matter.

(2) I first became aware of this from media reports on 29 October 1996.

(3) The Commission of Inquiry into the future role, structure, powers and operations of the Criminal Justice Commission is entirely independent of the Government. The Commission is required to operate within the terms of the Order in Council of 7 October 1996 and the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950. I have no evidence this has not been done.

I am advised that Senior Council assisting the Inquiry sought from Mr Carruthers an undertaking that

neither he nor any person engaged in assisting him in the preparation of his reports would destroy any document which came into his or their possession or had been procured in the course of the inquiries conducted by him or the preparation of his reports.

Despite the honourable member's unsubstantiated assertion, I am unaware of any request to Mr Carruthers to produce any documents.

(4) This is entirely a matter for the Criminal Justice Commission.

(5) I understand the Criminal Justice Commission has taken steps to overcome the problems arising from Mr Carruther's resignation.

1124. Carruthers Inquiry

Mr ARDILL asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (30/10/96)—

(1) What action does he intend to take to remove the ultimate corruption of interference with the work of Mr K Carruthers QC, a person in a judicial situation and a former Supreme Court Judge, investigating possible corruption at the highest level, at the crucial time of preparing to bring down his report?

(2) Will he consider the fact that matters, such as this, are only interrupted if a Supreme Court or Appeal Court order is obtained?

Mr Beanland (12/11/96):

(1) I do not understand the concept of "corruption of interference" raised by the Honourable Member.

(2) See (1).

1133. Police Action at 4ZZZ Concert

Mr BARTON asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing (30/10/96)—

With reference to the police action at the 4ZZZ market day concert on Saturday, 19 October which involved the use of police horses and riot equipment, the batoning of young people by police, and the inappropriate (and possibly illegal) involvement of military police—an incident which resulted in over 60 arrests—

(1) How does he explain this use of physical force by police on a group of young people sheltering from the rain?

(2) Why did police not consult with the concert organisers as provided for in the Policing and Conflict Resolution Plan negotiated with the Police Service prior to the concert before deciding to clear the park?

(3) Will he guarantee that police will not act in a similarly precipitous way at future such concerts?

(4) How many police from which units attended this function?

(5) Why were these numbers required?

(6) At what other similar functions have similar numbers of police been required in Brisbane in recent times?

(7) At what time was the main body of police who dispersed the crowd attending the function put into place?

(8) What action by the crowd warranted this action at this time?

(9) Who gave the order for these numbers of police to be assembled at this time?

(10) Was a request received by police from organisers of the function for this police assistance?

(11) Which police officer requested the assistance of the military police and at what time was this request made?

(12) When did the military police make their presence at the function known to the Queensland Police Service?

(13) How many military police were in attendance?

(14) What role did the military police play in this affair?

(15) How many arrests were made in total and how many people were charged?

(16) What particular actions at the function required police dogs, mounted police and riot gear to be used?

(17) Is he satisfied that this matter has been handled according to the best standards of policing; if not, what action has he taken to ensure there is no repetition?

(18) Is he aware of an undercurrent of ill-feeling amongst the Police Service towards radio Station 4ZZZ?

(19) Will he absolutely rule out the possibility that police handled this function in the manner they did in response to 4ZZZ's criticism of the Police Force?

(20) Is he satisfied with the manner in which the Criminal Justice Commission is handling their inquiry into this incident?

Mr Cooper (8/11/96): The Member for Waterford was fully briefed by Chief Superintendent Freestone on Monday 21 October 1996 in relation to the 4ZZZ Concert.

As this incident is currently under investigation by the Criminal Justice Commission, it would be inappropriate for me to make any further comment on this subject.

1141. Repayment of Rates, Hamilton Island Enterprises/Whitsunday Shire Council

Mrs BIRD asked the Minister for Natural Resources (30/10/96)—

With reference to an answer to my Question on Notice in September in which he advised that his department had reduced valuation of land occupied by concessionaires on Hamilton Island at nil value and given that in real terms this land is valued at many millions of dollars (most expensive in the Whitsundays) (30/10/96)—

How can he justify the huge reduction in valuation and an enormous refund anticipated at \$800,000 to Hamilton Island Enterprises?

Mr Hobbs (13/11/96): The concessionaires, that is the sublessees, are not "owners" for the purposes of the Valuation of Land Act 1944. The head lessee—Hamilton Island Enterprises—is the "owner". Therefore, the recent valuations were issued over the whole of the island in lieu of the previous valuations which were calculated by adding the valuations of each of the subleases.

The valuations date back to 30 June 1993. Therefore, there is an accumulation of rates affected by the changed valuations.

1175. Pine Rivers Shire Council, Quarry Approvals

Mr HAYWARD asked the Minister for Local Government and Planning (31/10/96)—

With reference to the expiration of the moratorium on quarry approvals at 13 July as contained in the Pine Rivers Shire Council's Town Planning Scheme—

Will he extend the moratorium on quarry approvals in the shire until 13 January 2002?

Mr McCauley (13/11/96): The moratorium expires on 13 January 1997, and not on 13 July 1996.

A six month extension to the original five-year moratorium approved by the previous Government, was published in the Government Gazette on 12 July 1996. This extension from 13 July 1996 to 13 January 1997, was granted at the Council's request to allow it time to consider a consultant's report on

extractive resources, and for the Council to initiate appropriate amendments to the Strategic Plan.

The Pine Rivers Shire Council notified the Chief Executive of the Department of Local Government and Planning on 29 October 1996 of its intention to extend the moratorium to the year 2002, by way of draft amendments to its Planning Scheme and Strategic Plan. Public submissions on these proposed amendments close on the 28 November 1996 and the 23 January 1997 respectively.

Officers of my Department will evaluate the amendments including any public submissions and Council's representations on them, when they have been submitted to the Department by the Council following its assessment of public submissions. I will consider this material together with advice from Departmental officers, in deciding the nature of my recommendation to the Governor in Council. It would therefore be inappropriate for me to prejudge what my recommendation could be until I have had the opportunity to review this material and the merits of the amendments.

As a general principle however I do not favour the use of moratoriums as a permanent means of managing land uses and their impacts. I would prefer that Councils take a more comprehensive planning approach to the management of their communities in an even handed and carefully considered manner, rather than merely continuing to defer hard decisions to another time when they will be all the more difficult to deal with, and where such moratoriums only serve to perpetuate uncertainty.