THE ROAD TO FITZGERALD

Revelations of corruption spanning four decades

by

Walkley Award-winning journalist

Phil Dickie
THE ROAD TO FITZGERALD

Phil Dickie was born in Brisbane in 1955. He studied forestry, politics and economics at the Australian National University, where he also began his journalistic career by editing the student newspaper. Following his return to Queensland in 1981, he worked on the Nambour Independent and later the Courier-Mail and Sunday Mail. Phil Dickie's detailed investigation of organised crime won him Australian journalism's prestigious Walkley Award.
THE ROAD TO
FITZGERALD

Phil Dickie

University of Queensland Press
Foreword

The day I left the Queensland Force, the then editor of the *Australian* newspaper, Max Jessop, gave front page publicity to "the last of the honest cops". In his article he outlined the many reforms which my minister, Max Hodges, and I had introduced. He then went on to assert we had been naive in underestimating the extent of the resistance to our efforts to eradicate corruption.

Certainly I had taken up my appointment with a firm commitment to that long cherished British tradition, the rule of law, and a strong belief in the ultimate triumph of right over wrong. I had assumed that these principles were widely recognised and officially sponsored. It had then taken seven years of struggle, culminating in the disappointing promotion of Terry Lewis, to convince me that those early "naive" assumptions of mine were ill-founded. The events of the next decade, as revealed by the Fitzgerald Commission, support that finding.

For straight police officers, belief in the supremacy of the rule of law is essential if they are to withstand temptation and actively prosecute their bent colleagues and their patrons and underlings.

Recently Helen Chung, the ABC correspondent in Beijing, said the biggest obstacle to progress in China was the absence of the rule of law. In its place was rule by persons. Observations have shown that where the rule of law is weak or non-existent corruption flourishes, as in China where "squeeze" is mandatory. In places nearer home, exemptions from penal punishment for "one’s little mates" must weaken the rule of law which stands for equal justice.
At my farewell media conference in Brisbane, I stated that, in Queensland, rule by persons was taking over and gave illustrations to demonstrate. I hoped for an appropriate response to this warning by concerned individuals. The next day, I understand, seven senior judges agreed that my departure was a great loss and then went on with their luncheon.

Commissioner Fitzgerald's revelations and recommendations will cause a stir in the community but if we follow precedents elsewhere, agents of corruption within two to three years will once more re-emerge and again build their network among the greedy and the weak in all classes of society.

That is, unless there is a co-ordinated move in the community to implement the recommendations. I assess the chances of this happening as slim. Reading this book may stimulate some to action. If the principal guardians of the rule of law, the lawyers, remain indifferent why should the other good citizens of Queensland lessen their time at Lang Park football, cricket at the Gabba, races at Doomben, fishing at The Pin, bowls on the Coast to become involved in a campaign for integrity.

Within a short time they will discover the emergence of a new person, one who will confidently tell them not to worry their heads over any matters of state for he will take good care of them. All they have to do is just leave it to him. When that happens, hopefully, Phil Dickie, Chris Masters and Andrew Olley will patiently sharpen their pencils and try to convince Queenslanders of the dangers in such submission.

The revelations of the Fitzgerald Commission were unexpected because of the sterility of earlier official inquiries. The conscientious and competent approach of this commissioner must have dumbfounded many who had thought themselves in no danger of exposure.

The honest people of Queensland, indeed of Australia, are under an obligation to Phil Dickie and his journalist colleagues who helped force the creation of the inquiry. Similarly there is a debt of gratitude to Mr Tony Fitzgerald and his associates who persevered under difficulty to publicly expose some of the crime and corruption in Queensland. I believe only a portion of this
wrongdoing has so far been subjected to public scrutiny but even that is a major step forward.

However, exposure does not automatically mean elimination. Who was it who once said “All that evil requires to flourish is for good men to do nothing”. Ah well, back to betting, fishing and bowling. Slumber on, Queensland. Today has been perfect. Tomorrow will be the same, with business as usual ... business both legal and illegal.

Ray Whitrod
Adelaide
August 1988
Preface

By September 1988, Mr Gerald Edward Fitzgerald QC had been conducting an inquiry into organised crime and police corruption in Queensland for more than a year; in nearly 180 sitting days more than 310 witnesses had given evidence, filling more than 15,000 pages of transcript.

The story of what has been happening in Queensland during the last four decades is not yet fully known and much evidence is incomplete or untested by cross-examination. Many who have been accused of wrongdoing are awaiting their turn in the witness box, having already put their denials on record. Over the next months other views of some incidents may emerge and other explanations for events will no doubt be presented. The view that matters most, Fitzgerald's own, will not be known until he delivers his report and then only if it is released by the government.

Fitzgerald's inquiry has already changed the face of Queensland. It bore directly on the downfall of the state's longest-serving premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, forced out by his own party nine months short of his twentieth anniversary in office. Two influential Cabinet ministers followed him out the door within days.

Sir Joh's handpicked and twice honoured commissioner of police, Sir Terence Lewis, fell casualty to the inquiry in its third month of sittings, when he was suspended from duty after his own record term of almost 12 years. The reckoning of other casualties in blue uniform will continue for some time but at last count the commissioned list comprised an assistant commissioner and an inspector, a former superintendent and two retired
inspectors. The government has also ceased paying for the legal representation of several others facing serious allegations including a former deputy commissioner and a former assistant commissioner. The net has also fallen over solicitors and other professionals, bookmakers both legal and illegal, and many who have made their living on the wrong side of the law.

Fitzgerald was given his job as a result of the scratching of two “chooks”, the term Sir Joh used, frequently and contumaciously, to refer to journalists. I was one of those chooks; the other was Chris Masters from the ABC “Four Corners” programme. One thing we had in common was disregard for Sir Joh’s favourite advice to the public in general and the media in particular, “Don’t you worry about that”.

Our individual journeys down the road to Fitzgerald started close behind Sir Joh’s greatest electoral triumph in November 1986, following which he announced his intention to take his policies, and very possibly his bags, to Canberra.

But the story really begins much earlier.

September 1988
It has been said, and not entirely in jest, that Sydney is the most corrupt city in the western world, except of course for Newark, New Jersey and Brisbane, Queensland.

Evan Whitton, 1986
1 Enter the Rat Pack

The act of corruption — money being passed from a person seeking a favour to a person in the official position to grant it — rarely occurs where it may be witnessed. Unravelling corruption therefore begins by detecting what happens as a result of the unseen payments. Criminal enterprises flourish, certain people are repeatedly involved in unlikely associations, events occur for no logical reason, and official explanations are regularly at odds with observable fact.

Surprisingly, wrongdoing in high places sometimes generates a considerable amount of documentation, such as court records, official memos, even diary notes. One of the ways of exposing corruption, whether for the investigative journalist or the commission of inquiry, is to obtain such documents. Unfortunately many records are short-lived or inaccessible to those with only the resources of public or media inquiry. Sometimes, however, finding them is little more than knowing, or being told, where to look.

One of the crucial admissions for untangling Queensland’s web of corruption came into my hands in mid-1987 during a search of Supreme Court Registry files. It was a sentence in a 1985 statement of claim filed by solicitors acting in defamation actions for the Queensland commissioner of police, Terry Lewis and one of his former assistant commissioners, Tony Murphy. In Lewis’s statement it read: “Among police officers in Queensland the words ‘the Rat Pack’ had since the 1960s been used to refer to and include the plaintiff (Lewis), Anthony Murphy and one Glen Patrick Hallahan who had served with them in the police force.” An essentially identical sentence also appeared in Murphy’s statement.
I take my cue from those words of Sir Terence Lewis and Tony Murphy. The long and twisting road to the Fitzgerald Inquiry started in the late 1950s. It is a story that could be called The Rise and Fall of the Rat Pack. Numerous allegations have been levelled over the years at Lewis, Murphy and Hallahan — all have been denied and all three men have sued and in some cases are still suing various organs of the media for defamation. All three have been represented or appeared before the Fitzgerald Inquiry and there also they have denied any involvement in corruption.

Glen Patrick Hallahan, born in 1932 and a police officer since 1952, first came to public notice in 1958 as a young detective in Mt Isa. He had arrested a man for the Sundown murders, a brutal triple killing in remote north-western South Australia, the conviction for which resulted in one of the country’s last hangings.

Terence Murray Lewis was born at Ipswich on 29 February 1928 and started work as a shop assistant at the age of 12. In 1948 he was working as a Main Roads Department clerk when some fellow employees, former police officers, suggested he might find police work more rewarding. Lewis joined the Queensland Police Force and graduated to plain-clothes work fairly rapidly.

In 1959 he and Hallahan went to a house in the Brisbane bayside suburb of Lota where German seaman Gunther Bahnemann was threatening his unfaithful wife with a gun. Bahnemann fired a shot and was later convicted of Hallahan’s attempted murder. Hallahan and Lewis were both given George Medals for bravery. “The bullet did not miss Hallahan by very much,” said Lewis, years later. Bahnemann went to prison, where he wrote a few books, and on his release became an innovative boatbuilder. Much less fortunate was his former wife who went to Sydney where she was murdered five months before her new husband, notorious Sydney brothel owner Joe Borg, turned the ignition key of his car to find it wired up to a charge of gelignite on 8 May 1968.

Anthony Murphy, always regarded as the senior member of the trio, was born in Brisbane on 2 October 1927 and joined the
police force in 1944. He also graduated to plain-clothes work fairly rapidly and came to enjoy a reputation as an able, and innovative, detective.

Brisbane then was the size of a city with the soul of a large country town. The dizziest height in the central business district was the clock tower of the City Hall. Traffic in its precincts was not yet heavy enough to cause any agitation for the removal of tramlines from the city streets. Trams, decked out in battleship grey paint, negotiated a grid of streets named unimaginatively after members of the late Queen Victoria's extended family. At right angles to William, George, Albert and Edward Streets ran Alice, Margaret, Mary, Charlotte, Elizabeth, Adelaide and Ann. Queen Street, the city's most prestigious commercial address, and the name Queensland were Victoria's own preserve.

Government was something that took place mainly in George Street. Queensland entered the 1960s with a young Country and Liberal Party coalition government which had fallen into office, somewhat surprised, when the previously all powerful ALP self-destructed in 1957. Some cynics observed that all that changed was the label of the government — the style, the freewheeling patronage and the casual regard for any ideal of Westminster parliamentary democracy continued unaltered. Of the conservative parties, the urban Liberals received more votes but played junior coalition partners to their Country cousins, who inherited the electoral gerrymander set up by the ALP in days when a united party and the votes of shearers and railway workers made the more remote seats a safe bet for Labor.

When first introduced in 1949, this zonal gerrymander enabling more seats to be won from fewer votes was most strongly criticised by newly elected Country Party member for Nanango, Johannes Bjelke-Petersen: "The people are given the right of voting, admittedly, but the odds are so greatly against them that to achieve the results they desire is impossible because the predetermined zones and the numbers set out will mean nothing but that the majority will be ruled by the minority." Once in government, however, the Country Party could find little fault with the arrangement and it was Johannes Bjelke-Petersen who took the original Labor blueprint to new levels of electoral usefulness.
In 1914, aged three, Bjelke-Petersen came to Queensland with his Danish parents from the town of Dannevirke on New Zealand's North Island. In spite of illness, his father, a Lutheran pastor, took up farming at the town of Kingaroy, north-west of Brisbane. Bjelke-Petersen himself suffered from polio as a child and left school at 13 to work full-time on the farm. At this stage the family was desperately poor, but due no doubt in large part to the long hours and inventive enterprise of Johannes, the family business prospered. Bjelke-Petersen pioneered many useful innovations in land clearing and aerial spraying, but his use of ex-army tanks for land clearing and his rubber cricket bat were not successes.

He entered parliament, a self-made man, in 1947. Some of his invective against Labor's gerrymander may have been inspired by the fact that his own seat was one of those listed for abolition, but in the 1950 election he won the newly created seat of Barambah with a handier margin than he had before. The rhetoric of his maiden speech was to be maintained for 37 years. His most noted biographer, Hugh Lunn, wrote of him as a backbencher:

When he spoke in the House there were often interjections referring to him as a preacher and a wowser. . . . He appeared as a fundamental man, blinkered, calvinistic, and rural. . . . His speeches revealed a man who had known poverty and who had come to believe the only way out — for everyone — was to develop and progress and above all to work hard.

On 26 September 1963 Bjelke-Petersen became minister for Works and Housing, and, apparently, began keeping a careful record of work done in the electorates of his colleagues.

After 42 years of almost unbroken Labor rule the upper echelons of the public service had become, like the Labor party itself, strongly Roman Catholic, strongly Irish and, presumably, strongly Labor as well. This was, perhaps, even more true of the police force. The new, largely Protestant, conservative government might have expected trouble with official relationships so cosy, but the deep and bitter divisions following the ALP split largely saved them the worry. However, they did make one concession to their Protestant constituency after years of criticism
of Catholic influence in the police force when a Protestant, Frank Erich Bischof, was considerably elevated to the post of commissioner of police in 1957.

Bischof appeared a robust commissioner, one of his best-remembered exploits being the closure of inner city brothels in 1959, in one case by simply padlocking the doors. One of the best known of these brothels, Killarney, employed prostitute Shirley Margaret Brifman. Marg, as she was more usually known, did not have a high public profile, but she and two others, Val Weidinger and Lilly Ryan, were well known to police and particularly useful as informants. Evicted on to the streets after the closures, the prostitutes soon found a much better way to work: by reaching accommodations with the managers of some inner city hotels and soliciting in the hotel lounges. This later caused considerable official anguish but for the moment it was of no concern to Bischof or the politicians. Appearance had been served, the brothels had been closed.

Bischof was later exposed as a somewhat less than robust commissioner. Four years after his retirement in 1970, he was charged with shoplifting goods to the value of $6.12, although after he was committed for trial the Crown dropped the charges. More serious allegations about his conduct in office were made after his death in 1979.

In 1982, Sir Thomas Hiley, treasurer of Queensland from 1957 to 1965, revealed that Bischof had been involved in massive graft from SP bookmakers. Hiley’s lead came from a deputation of western SP bookmakers who told him in 1964 of an annual protection fee collected at rates of $80,000 for large towns down to $20,000 for small towns. Half the fee was retained by local police, and half went to Brisbane, which they understood to mean Bischof. The bookmakers were not complaining about the system — according to them it worked very well — but they were upset about being stood over for additional sums.

Hiley began checking and discovered that Bischof was a large-scale punter who never seemed to enter a losing bet. This mystery was not solved until after an argument between Bischof and a Brisbane paddock bookmaker. It was then learned that all Bischof’s on course bets were initially entered as “Mr B”. If he
The Road to Fitzgerald

won, his name was completed. If he lost, the name was filled out to read "Mr Baystone". A check of the sheets revealed that the alter ego Mr Baystone was also a large-scale punter — and that he always lost.

The SP bookmakers were adamant they would not give evidence and the solicitor-general thought that criminal charges would not succeed. Treasurer Hiley and Police minister Alex Dewar confronted Bischof. The police commissioner entered the meeting blustering and left agreeing to stop the racket. What the SP bookmakers thought of not getting the protection they had paid for has never been recorded but Hiley noted that Bischof's illnesses seemed to date from around that time.

Although he did not know it then, Hiley wasn't alone in exposing Bischof. In 1971 Shirley Brifman came out of the woodwork and was questioned at length by police from New South Wales and Queensland. Not a great deal happened as a result of what she revealed about the police force of either state because she died, somewhat mysteriously, before she could give evidence in court. Some 64 pages of police records of interview with her were tabled in the South Australian Legislative Assembly in 1978.

At the time of her death Brifman was a self-confessed perjurer, certainly had spent a life in bad company and was facing criminal charges. Towards the end her behaviour was on occasion bizarre and suicidal; paranoid, too, though perhaps not without reason. Her allegations about certain New South Wales police have proved surprisingly accurate. The records of interview show she was consistent under intensive questioning by two high-level police teams. Her knowledge of police procedures and identities was extensive and what corroboration there is tends to support her story rather than refute it.

In the 115 pages of records of interview compiled by police Brifman not once used the words "the Rat Pack". Whether she had never heard them or was just not asked cannot be known but in 1971 she had this to say about the early days: "The collect boys were Lewis, Murphy and Hallahan. That went to Bischof. How much they got and how much Bischof got I do not know. They were his trusted boys."
Like the SP bookies who spoke to Hiley, Brifman saw nothing out of the ordinary in paying police. She paid off a large number herself in various ways and distrusted most of all those she believed weren’t being paid by anyone — a distinct minority, it seemed, among those she dealt with from the specialist squads of Queensland and New South Wales.

The sums paid in those days were not huge and the system operating for vice seemed ad hoc compared with the system for the SP bookies. “What about a chap by the name of Barnes?” Brifman volunteered. She continued:

Yes, Alan, he used to work at one stage with Murphy or Hallahan. Glen (Hallahan) complained about him. He said “Barnes is so stupid, he is not collecting enough for the things that are happening.” … I have paid Barnes. I would say he was never a high asker, this Barnes — he would be lucky to get about five pound every three weeks because the big boys were there. The big boys were the big askers.

Brifman also gave some notion of a hierarchy, which was interesting in the light of later events. “Murphy was higher than the others and he always had a driver. … Terry (Lewis), I hold a high respect for him — as far as money goes I didn’t pay Terry a thing,” she said.

According to Brifman, morality had very little to do with Bischof’s decision to close down the brothels.

Once he (Bischof) went on holidays and they (some or all of Lewis, Murphy and Hallahan) decided the fees would go up and collect a bit more for themselves. They went around to do the collecting and up went the fees. There was a madam in Margaret Street named, I think, King — she named them. Bischof came back. He could not charge them, the only thing he could do was close them and shut his mouth. They hit for half of what they were collecting again.

Brifman would indeed have been an interesting witness so her untimely death was unfortunate in many ways. Some corroboration for her version of the story of the brothel closures came to me in the form of a letter from former sergeant Charlie Corner who for years after his retirement had been a lonely voice against corruption in the force in letters to newspapers, many of them not published, and to politicians.
Corner said he had been in the city office of the Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB) when a prostitute came in to lay a personal complaint that Lewis and Hallahan had demanded payment of several hundred pounds. Two detectives started an investigation and Acting Commissioner Jim Donovan allegedly transferred Lewis and Hallahan to uniform duties. Detective Jim Voight found himself transferred to the Consorting Squad as one of the replacements, but it was to be a very short posting. Bischof, who was on leave, turned up at the CIB and cancelled both the investigation and the transfers, Corner said. But Donovan, who described Corner as reliable, said at the time of the Fitzgerald Inquiry that he must have been mistaken. Former Licensing Branch officer Jack Reginald Herbert told the Fitzgerald Inquiry of a conversation he had with Tony Murphy in which Murphy claimed to have “saved their (Lewis and Hallahan’s) bacon”. Murphy allegedly said he had warned Lewis and Hallahan not to meet a prostitute at an appointed time after he saw her walking into CIB headquarters. Another detective, Ron Edington, who ultimately became president of the police union, put a different interpretation again on the affair. He told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that Donovan, who thought he should have been made police commissioner, had attempted to set up Lewis and Hallahan because they were two able detectives who enjoyed Bischof’s special favour.

All Bischof’s troubles were yet to come when in 1963 he had to face the most serious test of his police career — a royal commission into allegations that he and other police availed themselves of after-hours drinks on offer at the inner city National Hotel and condoned a call girl service there. The National Hotel is no longer a Brisbane landmark, having been reduced overnight to a pile of rubble in October 1987, the year of Fitzgerald. The National was then a large, century-old hotel, its ironwork balconies lending Victorian charm to the corner of Queen and Adelaide Streets.

On 29 October 1963, down at the also charming and not much older Parliament House in George Street, Mr Col Bennett, Labor MLA and barrister, rose to speak on the estimates for the
Department of Supply. No fireworks were expected: not long before, the speaker had called for a quorum when it was noticed that only two government members were present in the House. Bennett began to let off a string of crackers, saying: "I propose to concentrate my attention on the police force."

He said the force was seething with discontent and laid the blame squarely at the feet of Commissioner Bischof. Bennett went into detail on the matter of police transfers before launching into party politics, saying that Bischof, Chief Inspector Norm Bauer and another inspector had engaged in back-country barnstorming tours urging votes for the Liberal and Country parties. Finally, by way of a parting shot, he said that senior police officers frequented the National Hotel, condoning and encouraging a call girl service there.

Government members flooded back into the House. The first to speak said the allegations against the force were the product of a diseased mind and unless Bennett could back up his statements he deserved to be branded as a character assassin of the lowest order. A more considered response took a little more time. The minister responsible for the police told the House he had checked the call girl allegations with Commissioner Bischof and was satisfied that Bennett's statement was a figment of infantile imagination. There it seemed to rest. However, after some prodding from the police union, anxious to clear the good name of the force, the premier, "Honest Frank" Nicklin, called for any credible witnesses willing to give first-hand information to come forward. One did: David Young, a former employee of the National Hotel.

Nicklin announced a royal commission and, a few days later, its terms of reference; these were widely criticised as being impossibly narrow. The police union immediately said that an inquiry into the policing of the National Hotel, the conduct of the hotel and in particular whether a call girl service operated there was not the inquiry into all aspects of the force it had been seeking. It seemed to Bennett also that the overall thrust of his speech was being neglected in favour only of his closing remarks.

The royal commissioner was Queensland Supreme Court judge Harry Gibbs, later Sir Harry Gibbs, chief justice of the High Court of Australia. He started work in November 1963, assisted
by his own counsel and faced by, on the one side, counsel for the
government, the police union, some police officers, the police
commissioner, and the hotel interests. On the other side was Mr
Brian Ambrose, later Mr Justice Ambrose, counsel for David
Young, a lonely voice in the gathering. For the first time the
Queensland taxpayer funded legal proceedings for the police
union and, by later dispensation, Commissioner Bischof and
Detective Sergeant Tony Murphy. (This precedent was sub-
sequently extended to the defamation proceedings of premiers
and Cabinet ministers and the interests of the National (Country)
Party before bodies such as broadcasting tribunals. Before the
Fitzgerald Inquiry a threat not to extend the privilege to the
police union’s expenses was issued not long after Cabinet had
decided that the privilege of legal funding should extend from
ministers to any of their staff who might feel defamed by the
media. Like the gerrymander, this was a system of protection
from the media that was to reach its highest level in the final
years of Premier Bjelke-Petersen’s incumbency.)

Appendix D to the royal commissioner’s report was a list of 88
police from the Licensing and Consorting squads, represented by
Mr Jim Douglas QC and Mr John Murtagh Macrossan. The
names A. Murphy, T.M. Lewis and G.P. Hallahan were all fairly
high on this list; others named were to achieve fame or notoriety
over the next 25 years. D.F. Lane later became first a Liberal
then a National Party Cabinet minister. R.J. Redmond in 1987
became the acting commissioner of police. J.R. Herbert was tried
and acquitted of corruption before becoming a person much
sought by the Fitzgerald Inquiry and the Taxation Commissi-
oner. G.R.J. Parker, apparently a partner with Herbert in this
period in a house restumping business, rose to the level of assist-
ant commissioner before admitting corruption to the Fitzgerald
Inquiry. A.F. Barnes later played an inadvertent role in trigger-
ing the Fitzgerald Inquiry, was named there as being corrupt,
and later retired as an inspector with an estimated superannu-
ation payout of $220,000. J.W. Boulton retired as an inspector
in 1987 and in 1988 admitted to Fitzgerald that he had been
corrupt, in the process also saying that he was aware that
prostitutes used the National Hotel in the early 1960s.
Murphy, Hallahan and Herbert were called to give evidence before Royal Commissioner Gibbs, with Murphy having the most extended stay in the witness box. But first the accusers, former hotel staffers David Young and another who had come forward, John Komlosy, had their say. Young said he had served Murphy and other police with liquor after hours, had seen prostitutes, including Brifman and her colleagues Val Weidinger and Lilly Ryan, at the National Hotel and had received a threatening telephone call about what might happen to him if he gave evidence. Komlosy went further — Weidinger and Brifman were among a number of prostitutes who virtually lived at the hotel and he had seen Police Commissioner Bischof and detectives Murphy and Hallahan drinking there when the hotel, by law, ought not to have been serving liquor.

Murphy, who claimed to have arrested more prostitutes than any other police officer, said prostitutes had frequented two hotels which had closed by the time of the inquiry but not the National. He said he had suspicions that Brifman, Weidinger and Ryan were prostitutes but had been unable to get evidence. Counsel for Young asked Murphy if Brifman had been advised to leave Queensland just prior to the commission. "If so, I never heard of it," Murphy said. Later he said he had tried to locate Brifman but was unable to do so. Murphy’s evidence was in part contradicted by Detective Sergeant William Patrick Osborne of the Licensing Branch who said that he had obtained admissions from Brifman and Ryan that they were engaging in prostitution. This information was not passed to Murphy and the Consorting Squad — Osborne assumed they would have better information of their own.

Murphy did admit mounting an investigation into Young prior to the royal commission, and damaging allegations about Young were made by the hotel interests, prostitutes and others. Most of these allegations were canvassed in the anonymous telephone Young received, but Murphy said he knew nothing about this call, or an affidavit obtained from a woman in Sydney concerning an abortion performed by Young. One person approached by Murphy for information on Young had been credit officer and bookmaker Michael Desmond (Des) Scanlan. He told the
commission Young had remarked that he had a good thing going at the National, selling liquor and renting out rooms to women on his own behalf. Scanlan’s original statement also included the abortion allegation against Young, but he wasn’t the person who levelled it in the hearings.

Licensing Branch constable Jack Reginald Herbert, who had once served a sly grogging summons on Komlosy, appeared only briefly to tell the royal commission something he thought they should be aware of. Komlosy, he said, had told him: “They (the hotel) sacked me. I will get even with them if it is the last thing I do.”

Hallahan appeared in the witness box of the royal commission as a detective under suspension. In September 1963 Justices Lucas, Hart and Stanley of the Full Court had quashed the conviction of a Gary William Campbell, saying that a statement to the Magistrates Court by Hallahan amounted to a fraud on the court. Campbell had pleaded guilty to having insufficient means of support (an old offence which, like consorting, was often brought against those suspected of illegal activities) and had been given six months in jail. He appealed against the stiffness of the sentence and told the Full Court he had been taken from his place of employment at a sound lounge to his flat where Hallahan allegedly told him that if he did not plead guilty he would be loaded up with housebreaking implements. There was a furor in state parliament, the police mounted an internal investigation and Hallahan was suspended just a week before his appearance at the National Hotel Royal Commission.

The criticism of Hallahan by the judges and his suspended status was not put to his credit at the commission hearings. Hallahan denied knowing Komlosy, denied drinking outside licensing hours with Murphy, said Brifman was not a reputed prostitute and claimed that he had been unable to get evidence against Ryan or Weidinger. Young then came forward to identify Hallahan as his mystery caller. Hallahan denied making the call and Young did his cause no good by changing the details of how he came to identify Hallahan when later cross-examined about it.

The departmental charges brought against Hallahan were heard behind closed doors after the royal commission by
barrister Mr Hoare QC. Hallahan was cleared of giving inaccurate, dishonest and misleading information to the court. A charge that he had not kept his police diary up to date was referred back to the department and it was later reported he was fined three pounds. A minor storm blew up over the secrecy of the hearings and the findings, which some felt reflected unfavourably on the three Full Court judges who had been critical of Hallahan. In state parliament Police minister Alec Dewar evaded some of the questions levelled at him by saying Mr Hoare had heard extra evidence not available to the Full Court from Campbell's employer John Hannay, Hallahan and another detective.

The much sought Shirley Brifman appeared before the royal commission and had every detail of her dress, hat, shoes and handbag described in the *Courier-Mail*. Brifman said the reason for her sudden and unexpected appearance was to deny Sergeant Osborne's testimony that she was a prostitute. How she knew of the allegation was unclear because she claimed ignorance of the commission's proceedings. Most of Brifman's evidence actually related to the character of Young, and proceedings were thrown into confusion when she interrupted a question from counsel for the hotel with the words 'David Young done an abortion on me'. Mr Justice Gibbs decided that this evidence and the ensuing legal argument should remain unpublished.

Brifman, like Des Scanlan, told the royal commission that Young had told her about renting rooms and selling liquor at the National on his own behalf. Mr Ambrose, for Young, put it to Brifman that her evidence was a fabrication. This she hotly denied. Questioned further, she denied being approached by any police in Sydney or making any contact with police in the five hours between when her plane landed in Brisbane and when she appeared in the courtroom. Years later she said she had spent this time picking up a client, having intercourse, drinking with Lilly Ryan and speaking to Tony Murphy on the telephone. Murphy, she said, told her not to come to court on the grounds she would be drunk. If she was, it didn't affect her performance.

The evidence of Bischof and the hotel owners, the Roberts brothers, all revolved on the point that others were out to get them. The Roberts brothers told the commission that other
hotels were envious of the National and annoyed at its growing share of the functions trade. Bischof agreed he had attended a number of functions there — including Christmas dinner — and that he had several times stayed in a holiday house owned by one of the Roberts brothers. He denied drinking there after hours and said some people were out to get him. ‘I think it was said two thousand years ago, ‘Forgive them for they know not what they do,’” he said. The Dawson Valley Methodist Church responded quickly and indignantly to the Courier-Mail to dispute any similarity between the police commissioner and the founder of Christianity.

The commission wound down and in the report Mr Justice Gibbs found only that there had been after-hours drinking at the hotel and some laxity on the part of the management. The Licensing Commission later considered the matter and found no reason for any serious action against the licensee. Mr Justice Gibbs found no evidence of organised prostitution at the hotel and made no findings against the police other than some criticism of diaries not being kept in accordance with the regulations. Much of his report dealt with the crediblity of Young and Komlosy, in both cases found wanting.

In considering the telephone call to Young, Mr Justice Gibbs said that he believed such a call had been made and that it was most probably made by someone who had some knowledge of the police investigation into Young. However, he found Young's identification of Hallahan as the caller one of the most telling points against his crediblity.

Many were not happy with the findings of the royal commission which were said to be at variance with what was common knowledge in the town. In defence of Mr Justice Gibbs, however, few had come forward to give evidence of this “common knowledge”. Detective Jim Voight was later to tell the Fitzgerald Inquiry that Bischof’s car was frequently parked outside the National Hotel after trading hours. Asked why he had not approached the royal commission, Voight said he and others thought it “rather toothless”. The main weight of accusation rested on Young and Komlosy and the main weight of the evidence presented to Mr Justice Gibbs went against them. Young
and Komlosy had contradicted themselves numerous times under long ordeals of cross-examination by counsel for opposed interests. Other witnesses did not have to bear nearly as much. Gibbs found that Young, Komlosy and two prostitutes were unreliable witnesses and said as a result that the evidence of any one could not be used to corroborate that of the others.

One might have wished for more searching examination in the report of the issues raised in the telephone call to Young, the police investigation of his background and the similarity in the testimony of Scanlan and Brifman. Labor MLA Col Bennett, whose remarks had started the royal commission, was particularly unhappy with the result and became notorious for the frequency with which he raised the issue in the House. When he was incautious enough to speak of the matter outside the House, Murphy sued for defamation and in an out of court settlement received $11,750 from Queensland Newspapers and Channel Seven.

In June 1971, Shirley Brifman appeared on ABC television to say she had worked as a prostitute in Sydney between 1965 and 1969, that she had paid off New South Wales police and that she had lied to protect herself and her family at the National Hotel Royal Commission. Brifman wasn’t baring her soul — she said she had been paying for police protection and, just lately, had not been getting it.

Her admissions were followed by months of investigations by New South Wales and Queensland police, all well out of the public eye. Some allegations however were raised in the Queensland Parliament by Col Bennett, who produced two letters allegedly written to Brifman by Murphy in the period before she gave evidence to the royal commission.

The first letter, signed Tony Murphy and sent from Woolloongabba CIB at least a month before the events leading up to the royal commission, could be construed as a normal communication between a detective and an informant. The second letter, unsigned and undated but also from the Woolloongabba CIB, thanked “Marg” (Brifman) for information she had already provided on David Young and solicited more. It also assured Marg on one point: “to put your mind at ease, if you are in fact
thinking that some policeman from either NSW or Qld will land on your doorstep any tick of the clock, SUCH WILL NOT BE THE CASE. If any member of the Force is to interview you, it will be MYSELF’’ (emphasis in original). The letter provided Murphy’s home telephone number and went on to say: “Should you think that there are other things which might occur to you if I were to talk to you personally in Sydney, I think such could be arranged.”

Government members, as usual, attacked Bennett and leapt to the defence of Hallahan and Murphy. The two police used a different forum, the Courier-Mail, to deny all the allegations made by Bennett. Neither was ever faced with the complete records of police interviews with Brifman until the Fitzgerald Inquiry. In them, Brifman several times and to several different police said she had been a prostitute both before and during the royal commission and that this was known to a number of police including Hallahan and Murphy. She had also been in contact with both Hallahan and Murphy during the commission hearings and it was they who arranged for her to come back to give evidence after Detective Sergeant Bill Osborne named her before the commission as a prostitute.

Osborne, Brifman told police, “was the only one who told the truth”. She repeatedly described her own evidence as “all lies”; she gave it, she said, because she was “told to lie” and, in a slightly different interpretation, because she was “just trying to protect Tony, Glen, myself and my family”. She told the investigators that Murphy and Hallahan had briefed her on what questions she would be asked and what answers she should give. Her brief was mainly to deny anything Osborne had said about her and to discredit Young.

Young did not perform any abortion and according to Brifman he “wouldn’t know how”. “I was told (saying he had) would discredit David Young and finish the Royal Commission,” she told Queensland Police superintendent Norm Gulbransen. When he asked who told her, she said: “That was Tony more so than Glen. Tony said ‘We have got to finish David Young. We have to get something on him.’” Likewise, Young had never told Brifman he sold liquor or rented rooms to call girls at the National on his
own account. "It is completely false," Brifman said. "I was told to say that by Murphy." Any of Brifman's allegations that made the public domain were denied by Hallahan and Murphy.

In 1963, the then Detective Senior Constable Terry Lewis set up the Juvenile Aid Bureau, a pet project of Commissioner Bischof. Detective Sergeant Bill Osborne was shipped out of the Licensing Branch in March 1964 and sent to Townsville for the duration of Bischof's term as commissioner. Detective Senior Constable Glen Patrick Hallahan was given a plum posting to the International Police Force in troubled Cyprus in 1964 and returned in 1965.

Detective Sergeant Tony Murphy joined the Licensing Branch in December 1966 and served there until May 1973, becoming a detective senior sergeant on the way. He allegedly told Brifman: "Shirley, I'm sitting in the place where I've wanted to be for years. The place where I can make money." This observation about the Licensing Branch appears totally justified — former branch sergeant Jack Reginald Herbert told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that by the early 1970s his annual earnings were $4614 less tax in police salary and about $9600 a year in protection payments from SP bookmakers. Herbert had been introduced to the "Joke", as the protection system was known, soon after joining the branch in 1959. Those in on the "Joke", allegedly including Bill Osborne and the later assistant commissioner Graeme Parker, called others in the Licensing Branch "the enemy". Herbert showed talent as an organiser and book-keeper and about four years later was well on the way to becoming administrator of the "Joke".

New members of the Licensing Branch were usually given some time to settle in, during which their amenability to being bribed was assessed. However, on Herbert’s account, Murphy was included in the "Joke" on the day of his arrival. Another sergeant told Herbert that he was already receiving money from Murphy and Terry Lewis for warning them of any proposed action against an illegal baccarat school run by Tony Robinson on the southside — a scheme in which Police Commissioner Bischof was also involved. Herbert and the sergeant met Murphy for a meal in the police canteen on the day of Murphy's arrival.
Herbert explained the "Joke" and when he asked Murphy if he wanted the money, Murphy said, "Watch your em." Herbert had the money ready and paid Murphy on the spot. According to Herbert, Murphy later introduced into the system three well-known registered bookmakers conducting SP operations on the side and arranged for a modest monthly payment to be made to Terry Lewis of the Juvenile Aid Bureau. The payments to Lewis were usually made via Murphy but Herbert told the inquiry of occasions when he paid Lewis himself and was thanked with the words, "Little fish are sweet". Before the inquiry Lewis denied the allegations of Herbert, and Murphy generally denied any involvement in corruption or wrongdoing.

Herbert also told the inquiry that Detective Don Lane, at that time probably in the Special Branch, approached him and said that if his squad did not visit a particular hotel on a Sunday there would be a quid for him. If it did head in that direction to police illegal Sunday trading, Lane allegedly told Herbert to ring a particular person. Lane paid Herbert four or five pounds over a number of weeks until Herbert made a more direct arrangement with the publican for a few pounds a week more. Lane denied the allegation.

Shirley Brifman kept her contacts in the Queensland Police after the National Hotel Royal Commission, even though she shifted on a more permanent basis to Sydney. She continued in business as a prostitute or madam, paying off Sydney vice squad police as a matter of course. She had previously met Detective Sergeant Ray Kelly of the New South Wales Police in, of all places, the National Hotel in Brisbane. Said Brifman: "They stayed at the National Hotel — they had a ball. I was in their company with Hallahan." Ray "The Gunner" Kelly, now dead, was regarded as one of Sydney's most able detectives. Now he is also regarded as corrupt. *Sydney Morning Herald* writer Evan Whitton recalled him telling another reporter: "Top criminals are rarely hard to get on with — they are smart, cunning, egotistical and suave." Commented Whitton: "He may have had himself in mind; it is understood that he (was) part of a police ring which, among other extortions, demanded 10 percent of the price of every abortion performed in Sydney."
One of Kelly's closest police associates was Detective Sergeant Frederick Claude Krahe, once similarly regarded as a notable detective but now as notably corrupt. Through Kelly, Krahe met Glen Hallahan, who passed him the Sydney telephone number for Brifman. She initially received Krahe's calls very coolly, but eventually agreed to meet him. Brifman later recalled the conversation:

Krahe: "Have you ever dealt in money before Shirley?"
Brifman: "What do you mean?"
Krahe: "Well, the same applies here as in Queensland. You don't work in this town unless you pay. It's like this. You get mugs with the knockabouts. You get in with them. You find out about their robberies. When they sell their stuff we give them one night with their money. Next morning we move in — as long as they had the money. First of all they deny it, deny that they have done anything wrong so you put the pressure on them. They offer you a third and they say that is all we get. We are not happy with a third then they offer you a half. We are not happy with a half. We gave them one night on the town. We want the lot. We end up with the lot and you get a third way split."
Brifman: "You're worse than the thief. You are letting them rob and you are getting the benefit and you are supposed to be a policeman."
Krahe: "If you repeat one word of what we have said here today to the Queensland Police I will shoot you stone dead and anything you have to say to them naturally they will repeat back to me."

Brifman obviously felt well enough connected with the Queensland Police not to feel much threatened. She immediately rang Hallahan and "gave him the best blast of all times and told him to get that fellow off my back". Brifman wasn't shot and later mended her bridges with Krahe. "Krahe then grabbed Glen, did everything with Glen," Brifman said. "Once he (Glen) mixed with Krahe, he wanted big money. He had been on small money before."

The New South Wales Police records of interview with Brifman tabled before the South Australian Legislative Assembly name 34 police officers involved in various crimes, including receiving stolen goods, organising bank robberies, distributing counterfeit money and framing some criminals for the jobs of others. Most of these officers were from New South Wales but the two most frequently mentioned are Fred Krahe
and Glen Hallahan, who, according to Brifman, frequently split the proceeds in her presence. Brifman’s husband complained that she had more time for Hallahan than for him.

More than twenty Queensland police were named in Queensland Police records of interview with Brifman conducted in September and October 1971 by Superintendent Norm Gulbransen, Detective Sergeant Basil Hicks and Senior Constable Greg Early. Not all were said to be corrupt — some earned a mention because they were not. The officers mentioned most were Glen Hallahan and Tony Murphy.

In the records of interview tabled in the South Australian Parliament, Brifman said:

Glen Hallahan was living in a flat off Petrie Terrace at Normanby. It was a one bedroom flat. I was staying at the Treasury Hotel in Brisbane about 1967, I signed in there under Brifman. I went to Glen’s flat and I remember I picked a cent up off the floor and handed it to him and I said “Put that in your money box.” He opened his wardrobe... and I saw a terrific amount of money there. There was bundles of it. It was just sitting in the wardrobe, it had bands around it and folded over. I said, “Well, you don’t need the cent piece.” He said, “I have never been short of money since I went to Sydney.” I sat and drank. The telephone rang about half past eleven and Glen... said to the other person on the phone, “Forget about the bank robbery tonight. I have got a friend up from Sydney.”... When he got off the phone he told me about the bank at Capalaba, a small town outside Brisbane on the coast. Glen said to me, “The bank was going to be robbed tonight. I put it off because you are here. When it is done I will charge another couple of chaps with it.”... The telephone number to Glen’s place was 25-015, I mean 25-051.

Brifman was correct on at least Hallahan’s address and telephone number.

In 1968, Hallahan was appointed a detective sergeant but the promotion was appealed and eventually won by Detective Senior Constable Ron Redmond. Police Commissioner Bischof was quoted as saying, “Seniority should have gone out with kerosene lanterns” and Hallahan, promoted not long afterwards, issued a defamation writ against the police union journal for its report on the appeal of the first promotion. Detective Sergeant Terry Lewis, who had made a name for himself as the head of the
Juvenile Aid Bureau, was awarded a Churchill Fellowship. Said Brifman:

I saw Terry off when he went to England... He rang me on the way back at Sydney and I went out and saw him. As far as Terry goes, I cannot say nothing. I know his abilities. I have talked with him quite a lot and drank with him quite a lot. I have been in his company quite a lot. I do have a lot of respect for Terry Lewis.

According to Brifman, Krahe, Hallahan and Murphy were also "the best detectives": "They are in the centre of everything. They have got the best informers. They are either standing over and paying for it or something else."

Similar themes were used by Murphy, Hallahan and others in their defence before the National Hotel Royal Commission, in trials, and years later before the Fitzgerald Inquiry. It was said a successful detective depended on his informants who were often and by necessity criminals. No-one has ever questioned that Murphy, Hallahan or for that matter Krahe in Sydney were not successful detectives. But the continual consorting with criminals had its own dangers — criminals could make unfounded accusations and so could other, less successful, police officers, or "corridor assassins", as they were called before the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

One police officer who greatly disapproved of the methods of Murphy and Hallahan was Detective Basil Hicks, who later became one of the star witnesses before the Fitzgerald Inquiry. Hicks claimed in evidence that in the early 1960s he had declined to help Hallahan and Murphy get someone "the commissioner (Bischof) wanted a job done on" away from his solicitor. He also said he declined Hallahan's invitation to say he saw a prisoner do some things that Hicks had not seen, and declined Murphy's invitation to spend a weekend with some prostitutes. Later, in Brisbane, he had resisted Hallahan's invitation not to charge a person, had declined that person's attempt to bribe him, and had checked on the criminal record of a woman whom Hallahan introduced to pay surety for this prisoner and found she had 300 convictions for prostitution in Sydney.

In 1969, Hicks was posted to Fortitude Valley CIB and while there gave some attention to an unlicensed nightclub, Interlude.
It was run by Donald Hector Neville Smith, described by Hicks as "a notorious gunman from Sydney" and later by Brifman as "a gunnie". Brifman told a New South Wales Police team in 1971 that Krahe and Hallahan arranged for Linda and Donnie Smith to go to Brisbane: "They split Jackie Clark (another gunman) and Donnie Smith up because Jackie and Donnie had a blue over something and it looked like a shoot out so they sent Linda and Donnie up here (to Brisbane)". Hicks described the Interlude Club.

It was a dive. Most of the women there were prostitutes. They were operating from there. Males would go in and pick up a prostitute there and they would go away to some premises and have sex and then go back to the club again. They were selling sly grog. I found out over a period of time that Smith was receiving stolen property and also there were a number of criminals there organising crime from the club itself. I found out at the time that some of the best criminals in Brisbane were in the club.

Hallahan, who was junior to Hicks, allegedly asked him to stay away from the club because he had a number of good informants there. When Hicks did not comply Hallahan threatened to report him to the CIB chief, Inspector Bill Simpson. Murphy, senior to Hicks, also allegedly asked him to stay away from the Interlude Club and called him a troublemaker when he did not. Hicks's own informants told him they had overheard conversations between Hallahan and club proprietor Smith about Hicks's impending transfer. According to one informant whom Hicks had arrested for parking a stolen car outside the club for a week, Hallahan said Hicks was to be "put in (his) place with the kids". Soon afterwards, and only months after arriving in the Valley, Hicks was made a Children's Court prosecutor. He was later told that Hallahan and Murphy had brought Smith to Brisbane to run the club and that Hallahan and Smith had shared in the proceeds of a $70,000 jewellery robbery in a case where Hallahan had asked Hicks, acting as prosecutor, to agree to self-bail for the alleged robber.

Smith was later shot dead in a Sydney nightclub. The Interlude Club wound up but its premises were reopened as a nightclub under the name Pinocchio's in the early 1970s by two Sicilian-born brothers, Geraldo and Antonio Bellino.
Tony Murphy was not represented before the Fitzgerald Inquiry when Hicks gave this evidence and did not, at that time, give his side of the story. Hallahan denied the allegations and his counsel, Des Draydon QC, put it to Hicks that Hallahan’s attitude was one of “complete indifference to you. He didn’t care two hoots about you, he wasn’t interested in you at all”. Draydon said that Donald Smith had been arrested by Hallahan and other detectives on his first arrival in Queensland and only released when they were advised he was no longer wanted for questioning in connection with a Sydney shooting. Hicks said he was not aware of these incidents. When Draydon asked him whether he had been told by a superior that he was annoying a barmaid at the Interlude Club, Hicks retorted, “That’s a typical Hallahan verbal”. Draydon also said and Hicks agreed that Hallahan was the arresting officer in the case of the $70,000 jewellery robbery. Hicks said he had regarded Hallahan’s request for the alleged offender to be allowed self-bail with suspicion because of the amount of the robbery and because of his previous experience with Hallahan.

Premier Frank Nicklin had retired in January 1968 after 10 years in office and became Sir Frank Nicklin in June. He was succeeded by his long-term deputy Jack Pizzey, then just 57, who was expected also to spend about a decade in office. The election of Joh Bjelke-Petersen as deputy premier was worth only a few sentences in the Courier-Mail. In the Cabinet reshuffle, Bjelke-Petersen became the minister responsible for the police.

Jack Pizzey died suddenly on 31 July 1968 and Bjelke-Petersen won the three-way contest to succeed him as party leader. For a few days it seemed that Liberal leader Gordon Chalk was reluctant to give up his post as acting premier but Bjelke-Petersen had the numbers and became premier on 8 August. The new premier was “a fundamentalist Christian, passionately anti-socialist and a fervent advocate of unfettered development.” (Ross Fitzgerald, From 1915 to the Early 1980s: A History of Queensland (1984)).

There were many in the three eastern states who suspected their police forces were not as scrupulously clean as they could,
or should, have been; and it was fast becoming just as clear that the impetus for reform would never come from within the police forces themselves. Politicians of all shades and the majority of the media had also shown few signs of taking any initiatives against corruption.

In the late 1960s a Scottish-born former army colonel and now Melbourne general practitioner, Dr Bertram Wainer, began to campaign for reform of the abortion laws. He uncovered evidence of police corruption and campaigned on that issue as well. In the end he forced two inquiries in Victoria. The government there eventually came to the conclusion that a corrupt police force was potentially too great an embarrassment and Victoria became the first state to clean up its act. One of Dr Wainer’s close associates in the media, Evan Whitton, said the long campaign by the controversial and often abused doctor was “the most successful example of civic action achieved by a private individual in this country”. Dr Wainer died, aged 58, in January 1987, a few months too early to see the belated education of the Queensland government on the matter of police corruption. Speaking at the doctor’s Melbourne funeral, Whitton said: “Because of Dr Wainer’s efforts we now have a relatively uncorrupted (Victoria Police) force and the consequent failure of organised crime to have more than a toe-hold in this State.”

When Dr Wainer was in full flight, however, alleging significant corruption in Victoria, much more in New South Wales and some in Queensland, one Queensland politician seemed alive to the implications — Max Hodges. The new premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, gave his Works and Housing portfolio to Hodges, a former Gympie business man and fellow Country Party member. Hodges impressed on Bjelke-Petersen the risks inherent in a premier holding the Police portfolio and Hodges received that as well, in May 1969. He was widely regarded as one of the new Cabinet’s most capable ministers, although he was also noted for his periodic dropping of hints that he would be leaving parliament to take up some other appointment. At a Cabinet dinner for the Queen in 1970, Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen referred a number of Her Majesty’s questions on government administration to Hodges, thus provoking one final question.
“Mr Hodges,” asked the Queen, “are you the entire Queensland Cabinet?”

Police Commissioner Frank Bischof, who was succumbing to increasingly frequent bouts of illness, finally retired on 14 February 1969. He was succeeded by his deputy, Norm Bauer, himself approaching retirement. Hodges looked around for a replacement and found the man he wanted in Raymond Wells Whitrod, then commissioner of the Papua New Guinea Police. Whitrod’s record was certainly impressive. Born in South Australia on 16 April 1915 he became a police cadet in 1934. He had wanted to be a teacher, but the Adelaide teachers college took no new students that year. After serving with the RAAF during the war, he resumed his career as an Adelaide detective. When South Australian judge Sir Geoffrey Reed was asked to form ASIO in 1950, he took Whitrod with him. Whitrod became ASIO’s deputy director and, in 1960, the first commissioner of the newly formed Commonwealth Police. He went to Papua New Guinea in 1969. Journalists there during some of the pre-independence scuffling remember him speaking about, and staging, some impressive “shows of force” against demonstrators.

The determined Hodges and his “intellectual cop” Whitrod were a new team and many, both inside and outside the police force, had hopes for a new era.
2 The Failure of Reform

Whitrod’s first acquaintance with the Rat Pack came in April 1970, in the first days of his new job. Two junior police from his own office, Senior Constable Ken Hoggett and Senior Constable Greg Early, took it on themselves to risk telling their new boss about the corruption in the force. Whitrod recalled that he raised his eyebrows at this and that Hoggett and Early elaborated, saying they were particularly concerned at the activities of the Rat Pack, whom they identified as Detectives Tony Murphy, Terry Lewis and Glen Hallahan. They allegedly claimed that Bischof had selected this promising trio to “do his bag work from the brothels”. One alleged method of collecting payments in the late 1950s involved the circulation of books between brothel and library, books that one suspects were hardly ever read.

Soon afterwards, Whitrod’s two “informants” on corruption were joined by others, and a new name came forward. Hoggett told Whitrod that Detective Sergeant Jack Reginald Herbert of the Licensing Branch was also obviously one of the group and “a fairly shrewd operator”.

Whitrod’s early contacts with Brisbane’s legal fraternity had also caused him disquiet about one officer in particular, Hallahan. A barrister told him that he had defended two criminals on breaking offences who had been arrested by Hallahan. The accused claimed that Hallahan had put them up to the job and then arrested them. The barrister claimed that it was Hallahan’s regular practice to arrange these breaking offences, secure recovery of the property but only return one-third to the owners, or enough to have the crime written off as cleared up. Some of this was, of course, the kind of allegation it would be
very easy for a criminal to make against an arresting police officer. Whitrod detailed one of his staff to check and it was found that a number of robberies had been cleared in which the majority of the stolen goods had not been recovered.

Whitrod became increasingly disturbed. It wasn't the first time he had heard the name Hallahan. Some years earlier, while he was commissioner for the Commonwealth Police, forged $10 notes had disappeared from Melbourne and some had turned up in a Queensland country town. Commonwealth Police inquiries showed that Hallahan had visited the town in the relevant period. Prostitute Shirley Brifman also said that Hallahan returned from Victoria with a briefcase of counterfeit notes and, in her flat, gave some to Detective Sergeant Fred Krahe of the New South Wales Police. Krahe had announced an intention to "load them up" on criminals he did not like, and nominated one in particular who was indeed later charged. Hallahan's alleged role in the circulation of counterfeit notes was aired in an article I wrote for the Courier-Mail in March 1988. Hallahan denied any involvement in impropriety before the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

In later years Whitrod often talked of an "east coast network of corrupt police", a view supported by Brifman's allegations that certain Queensland detectives regularly flew south and some of their New South Wales contacts regularly flew north. There was allegedly a corresponding traffic in criminals, particularly "tank-men" (safe crackers). Whitrod approached his counterpart police commissioners to see if a joint crime intelligence unit could be set up to monitor this interstate movement of police and criminals. New South Wales police commissioner Fred Hanson agreed, but when he nominated Detective Sergeant Fred Krahe as one of his men, Whitrod dropped the idea.

In April 1987 when I first approached Whitrod to research this period he was polite and interested but essentially uncommunicative. He asked for copies of my articles and I obliged. I later heard that he had been similarly pleasant but unforthcoming to ABC "Four Corners" reporter Chris Masters in the same period. In November, with the Fitzgerald Inquiry in full and spectacular swing, I knocked on Whitrod's door in Adelaide. He was surprised, but invited me in. Rotund, a touch fussy but very alert,
he poured two large beers and started to talk. I scribbled furiously. My beer went flat.

After receiving his initial leads on corruption, Whitrod had spoken of his disquiet about Hallahan to the CIB chief, Inspector Bill Simpson. "I thought he was straight," Whitrod said. Simpson said: "He (Hallahan) is a first class man. You can't believe a word these crims say against him. I'll personally vouch for him." Whitrod told me he then started to wonder just whom he could trust in the Queensland Police Force.

Cabinet, which presumably knew something of corruption after the Hiley revelations about former commissioner Bischof, didn't exert itself to give the new commissioner any background. Whitrod first heard of Bischof's $400,000 a year betting racket from Hiley's newspaper articles in 1982. It was something he still felt angry about, he said. SP betting was something of a sore point between him and Cabinet on another count. Whenever he tried to raise the issue he found the premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, had police information which he himself did not have. Whitrod, rightly or wrongly, identified the premier's informant as Special Branch sergeant Don Lane, "one of Joh's little clique, one of his protective staff". "I was angry about that as well," he said. "There was all this material going through to Joh which never went through me."

Whitrod had a rough baptism into Queensland's top police job. Friction with the Queensland Police Union of Employees began even before his appointment, after an airport interview in which he said promotion should be on merit rather than seniority. Whitrod started work as acting commissioner in April 1970 and in July the first of many no-confidence motions in him was passed. The police union president, Detective Sergeant Ron Edington, accused him of trying to set up "a force of psychologists or a force of social welfare workers hiding under the name of police". Whitrod was not the only target. Union criticism of Police minister Hodges was, if anything, more intense and the police union, never reticent about talking to the press, periodically called on the premier to replace him.

Bjelke-Petersen in the early years had a more pressing issue on his mind — survival. His personal financial affairs and the
preferential issue of Comalco shares to Cabinet ministers were raised first in parliament and then repeatedly by the media who gave the new premier a very tough going over. In October 1970, Joh's own party moved against him but his opponents made the serious tactical error of telling Joh they had the numbers. He spent the night on the telephone calling up old debts and speaking of Cabinet posts and loyalty. One member could not be contacted and at the meeting Joh produced his proxy vote. This, and his own vote, saved him. The premier arranged for party president Bob Sparkes to fly down from his property and head off a threatened revolt on the floor of parliament. But, as 1971 began, the press was still speculating on the demise of the premier.

Bjelke-Petersen acquired the services of one of the most critical of the journalists, ABC Radio state political reporter Allen Callaghan. He became Joh's press secretary in May 1971 and within weeks the two of them found an issue to turn the premier's image from fumbler to strongman — law and order.

A tour by the South African Rugby Union team, the Springboks, had led to some impressive anti-apartheid demonstrations in Sydney and Melbourne and protesters were expected to try for a repeat performance in Brisbane. The premier, not noted for any personal objection to South African racial policy and sometimes accused of emulating it in his own government, injected further heat into the situation by declaring a month-long state of emergency despite opposition in Cabinet from Police minister Max Hodges. Some four hundred country police were brought to Brisbane to handle the expected protests. There were demonstrations and the inevitable arrests, which some southern journalists flown up to see what a state of emergency looked like found impressive enough. In Queensland the general comment was that everyone concerned except the premier had been commendably restrained. Some police accused Whitrod of being too soft on the demonstrators and the presence of the country police enabled the police union to call its largest ever meeting and pass a motion of no-confidence in the police commissioner and a motion of confidence in the premier. Bjelke-Petersen may or may not have been responding to this when he gave an extra week's leave to police involved in the Springbok tour.
On the day of the largest football match and the largest demonstration the government won two by-elections: the seat of Maryborough, which had been held by Labor for the last 56 years; and the inner city seat of Merthyr, where former police Special Branch officer Donald Frederick Lane had an impressive victory for the Liberal Party. Law and order was the issue that had set the premier on a confident new course and civil liberties in Queensland faced many long years of challenge as a result. In the Springbok episode also were the beginnings of the special bond that would grow between the premier and his police. However, in the early period, the team of Hodges and Whitrod was inconvenient. Whitrod marked his first Christmas by returning a truckload of gifts, mainly from publicans. He also stopped a long-established practice whereby country inspectors on the point of retirement spent many hours soliciting donations for their send-offs. Hodges kept a traffic fine receipt in his desk drawer to demonstrate that he received no special favours from the police.

In one of his early public statements Whitrod warned that Queensland was on the brink of infiltration by organised crime. Five "vice parlours" then operating in Brisbane would "attract the muscle men who will set up protection rackets," he said. Indeed, Whitrod’s arrival coincided with changes in the world of vice and gambling. Prostitutes were coming out of the hotels and taking cover in so-called health studios or massage parlours, an innovation brought to Brisbane by a woman named Simone Vogel, a former trusted employee of murdered Sydney vice boss Joe Borg. The floating baccarat schools were starting to fade away, faced with some pressure from police and a loss of custom to blackjack and manilla games organised by a few Italians initially for their own countrymen.

Little was known about the Queensland underworld in the broader community until the Fitzgerald Inquiry shed some light on its workings. One of the most compelling accounts, covering a 15 year involvement in vice and crime, was provided by a petite woman giving evidence under the assumed name of Katherine James. James left school, aged 16, in 1972 and married, for a very brief time, soon after. At that time Whitrod’s police were prosecuting
fairly vigorously any men they found to be involved in the massage parlour industry — women, however, did not attract the same degree of attention. A friend put a proposition to James that for $300 a week he would use her name as proprietor of the so-called Brisbane Health Studio in Fortitude Valley (it was later known as the Top of the Valley massage parlour and later still as a part of the "Sin Triangle" building). After some six months of this arrangement James, then aged 17, allegedly bought the business.

An apprentice hairdresser, James was now the owner of a massage parlour employing 12 girls on two shifts. The police had some requirements of which she was duly informed: she had to do a course in massage; the partitions in what were little more than cubicles were not to go right to the ceiling and there were to be no locks on the doors; and if any liquor was provided she would be charged under the licensing laws. As was then standard practice in massage parlours, clients were charged a $10 massage fee of which the house kept $7; services other than massage were, in theory, a matter between masseuse and client.

Katherine James and her staff were subject to visits from the Licensing Branch, the Consorting and Drug squads, the Crime Intelligence Unit and the Valley CIB. When the police were intent on getting a breach for prostitution one would hoist up another to peer over the partition in the hope of catching client and "masseuse" in the act: if that failed they might disappear down the steps with armfuls of towels for scientific analysis. For any breach the culprit was taken to the watchhouse, charged, finger-printed, kept overnight and ushered into court the next morning.

A year later the apprentice hairdresser set up another massage parlour, so business cannot have been affected too badly by all the police attention. The operators of different parlours were on at least speaking terms with each other. Among those named by Katherine James were Roland Short, who also dabbled in gambling; Ray Curtis, who was later charged with trying to corrupt a police officer; and Simone Vogel, who later disappeared and was presumed murdered. By early 1976, Katherine James was no longer a prostitution entrepreneur. She took to heroin, became an
The Road to Fitzgerald

addict, faced drug charges and absconded on bail, gave up the drugs, had a child and sold her two studios.

She had rented the Valley premises of the Brisbane Health Studio from a man named Luciano Scognamiglio, who also ran a card game for Italians down at the end of her corridor. James wasn’t associated with this game in any way except socially. She told the Fitzgerald Inquiry, however, that for 18 months she had earned $100 plus tips a night three nights a week dealing blackjack and manilla in a casino above a Valley nightclub known then as Pinocchio’s.

The club was owned and operated by the Sicilian-born brothers Antonio and Geraldo Bellino. Geraldo, the younger brother, was the dominant one. Swarishly handsome, he had once made a minor name for himself as Geraldo the Magnificent, adagio dancer. On his own account, his first brush with the law had been while he was on the door of a gambling club owned by one Tony Robinson, which was raided by police. As the police bashed in the doors of the club an undercover agent inside watched Geraldo leave through a manhole in the roof. Antonio Bellino had once taken Geraldo on as a plasterer’s apprentice before the brothers became partners in the Taormina spaghetti bar and, later, Pinnochio’s nightclub.

Pinocchio’s opened in Ann Street in 1971, close to where the Story Bridge spilled traffic into the Valley. According to Katherine James, while Antonio mainly looked after the nightclub downstairs, Geraldo operated the casino on the top floor. James told the inquiry she had a sexual relationship with Geraldo in this period, although she couldn’t remember if he was circumcised or not. Geraldo Bellino denied that there had been such a relationship, both inside and, more vehemently, outside the inquiry. On James’s evidence it was Geraldo who owned the game run by Luciano Scognamiglio, and Geraldo who gave her the job upstairs from Pinocchio’s. Geraldo denied this. As well as dealers, James claimed, the casino employed professional gamblers for a percentage of their winnings. According to James, “if they had a bad hand, they could let you know — it is pretty easy to misdeal a manilla hand. Obviously it couldn’t happen too
often but it did happen if it looked like they were going to lose a lot of money." Turnover could be $100,000 on a "bit above average, but not outstanding" night, James claimed. Geraldo and Antonio Bellino thought this a wild exaggeration and disputed most elements of James's testimony.

James remembered only one police raid at Pinocchio's, resulting in the arrest of Geraldo and five or six other people. She did, however, remember seeing police both at Pinocchio's and another two nightclubs — Romeo's, which also housed a casino, and J.P.'s, owned by Scognamiglio. The most frequent police visitor by far, according to James, would appear to have been Detective Sergeant Syd Atkinson of the CIB. James claimed she saw him several times a week, at all three places, and often in conversation with Geraldo. Detective Sergeant Tony Murphy was also seen several times conversing with Geraldo and James claimed Geraldo told her he "was paying Tony Murphy so that the gambling operations could run smoothly". Both Murphy and Atkinson denied her allegations and counsel for them before the Fitzgerald Inquiry said that Murphy was at that time serving with the Toowoomba CIB. Atkinson has denied ever meeting James or visiting Pinocchio's.

The Brisbane nightclub scene was becoming increasingly violent. In January 1973 a firebomb destroyed a car belonging to the manager of the Whiskey Au Go Go club and a cafe belonging to a former Whiskey Au Go Go manager, John Hannay, was burnt down. In February, another firebomb destroyed the Torino nightclub nearby. In the early hours of 8 March, two petrol drums were placed under the stairs of the Whiskey Au Go Go and set alight. In one of Queensland's worst tragedies, 15 people died in the blaze.

Police soon arrested two men, John Andrew Stuart, a former inmate of and escapee from mental institutions, and Englishman James Richard Finch. Both were convicted at least partly on a confession in an unsigned record of interview typed up by Detective Sergeant Ron Redmond. The case has been controversial ever since. Stuart, protesting his innocence to the end, died in jail in 1979. An often noisy public campaign was mounted on behalf
of Finch, who was released on parole in February 1988 and deported to England. An ABC “Four Corners” programme on the case at this time featured two unidentified police officers saying they had been told that Finch was verbedled and a day later they were joined by another former police officer who spoke anonymously on another television programme. Redmond denied the allegations of verballing Finch.

Another police informant came forward in April 1988 and implicated criminal Vince O’Dempsey, whom the informant had allegedly seen hanging around the Whiskey Au Go Go club entrance before the fire. O’Dempsey, later jailed in New South Wales for heroin offences, denied this and also any involvement in a number of disappearances and presumed murders. These included the case of prostitute Margaret Grace Ward, who disappeared in November 1973 after leaving a city solicitor’s office in the company of O’Dempsey’s de facto wife, and the case of Barbara McCulkin and her daughters Vicki, 13, and Barbara, 11, who disappeared in January 1974. Barbara McCulkin had fled her home immediately after the Whiskey Au Go Go fire and later told neighbours she had information on the firebombing. State parliament was told in 1988 that her husband, Billie McCulkin, carried out the Torino nightclub firebombing for the Bellino brothers. Geraldo and Antonio Bellino denied this claim and Antonio said the family was being accused of everything that had happened in Brisbane.

Luciano Scognamiglio had for some years also run an illegal game on the top floor of a building at 142 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley. Over the years it was to grow into Queensland’s most notorious illegal casino. One of the first police raids occurred when it was still a very small-scale operation and by the time the Licensing Branch men had battered down the door, Scognamiglio had moved the tables and hidden the cards and money. This did not help him — Senior Constable Jack Herbert rearranged the tables, laid out some cards and took photographs, telling Scognamiglio he had better plead guilty. Scognamiglio did and soon afterwards entered into a financial arrangement with Herbert for advance warning of future raids.
In 1974 Geraldo Bellino entered the game as a partner. It was not the best time — that year Whitrod’s men managed to put an end to the corrupt “Joke” in the Licensing Branch. Bill Osborne, for years himself a member of the “Joke”, was put back in charge of the branch as inspector. Osborne, who it seems had been given a stiff lecture, told Herbert flatly, “There’s to be no jokes in the office, Jack.” Herbert told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that while other inspectors had been fooled, Osborne knew all the tricks and was prone to organising raids behind his back. Protection could not be guaranteed — the branch stopped accepting payments and even took action to prosecute those who offered them. Scognamiglio was one who was soon in trouble with the law: in December 1974, he allegedly attempted to bribe Licensing Branch constable Kingsley Fancourt to get advance notice of raids. In a conversation taped by Fancourt and listened to by other police Scognamiglio told Fancourt he knew “the boss”. Fancourt asked if it was his boss, and Scognamiglio said, “No, the one before.” Fancourt suggested another name and Scognamiglio said, “No, Murphy.” Scognamiglio said he had been friendly with Murphy, then out of the Licensing Branch, for seven years and had also been friendly with Detective Sergeant Jack Herbert for about five years. Scognamiglio was charged but didn’t immediately come to court. Murphy later sued Fancourt for defamation for recounting this incident but that action remains unresolved. Murphy denied any involvement in corruption to the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

Shirley Brifman’s Sydney television appearance in June 1971 and her sensational allegations of police corruption in two states gave Police Commissioner Whitrod and Minister Hodges the excuse they needed to move against corruption. Hodges took a proposal for a Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) to Cabinet in September 1971 and was a week later judged by the police union executive as unsuitable to administer the portfolio. The man picked by Whitrod and Hodges to head the new unit was Detective Inspector Norman Sydney Gulbransen who had served with the Consorting Squad in the 1940s and since then had become a noted detective in Brisbane and Toowoomba. Hodges took Gulbransen aside and told him he expected him to be
conscientious in the pursuit of corruption, also telling him he "would become one of the most unpopular police officers in Queensland". "Unfortunately, it came a little true at one stage," Gulbransen told the Fitzgerald Inquiry years later.

On the staff of the new section was Detective Sergeant Basil Hicks, who had been languishing in the post of a Children's Court prosecutor after having found himself offside with Murphy and Hallahan in previous years. He told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that a couple of days before he was notified of his new appointment in the CIU, Tony Murphy phoned him to arrange a meeting, asking him to "come up to the first floor (of CIB headquarters) by the back lift". Hicks did as he was told and when the lift reached the first floor, Murphy got in and pressed the button for the top floor. They continued on to the roof, where, on Hicks's account, the following conversation took place.

Murphy: "There's no need for us to be always fighting. Why don't you join us? There's nine of us — Terry, Glen and I are the main three and there's the other six. If you join us, you will be one of the main ones — there will be me, you, Terry and Glen."
Hicks: "What about Whitrod?"
Murphy: "We'll surround him."

An indefinite arrangement about a further meeting in a hotel was made. Hicks soon after reported the conversation to Gulbransen, who thought it too dangerous an approach to pursue. At the time Hicks recounted this episode to the Fitzgerald Inquiry, Murphy was not legally represented so his side of this story is not yet known; Murphy has however denied any involvement in corruption.

Assisted by Hicks and Senior Constable Greg Early, Gulbransen spent most of October 1971 — the first month of the CIU's operation — interviewing Shirley Brifman. She had already spent months answering more than 400 questions put to her by various police from New South Wales. Said Gulbransen: "The allegations of the prostitute Brifman ... a lot of those were unfounded. But, as I say, unfortunately I had proof to my satisfaction that she had told a lot of truth also." The first charges levelled by the CIU were against two police frequently mentioned by Brifman, Tony Murphy and Glen Hallahan. Altogether, the work of the CIU
resulted in about 20 charges against police for misconduct, of which none were proven. "We never won a case," Whitrod recalled years later. "At first I thought it was shoddy work on our part so I started reading the briefs myself and checking them through Crown Law so we weren't proceeding where our case was not strong. But we still kept losing. It made me wonder then and it still makes me wonder."

Detective Senior Sergeant Tony Murphy was charged in February 1972 with four counts of perjury before the 1963-64 National Hotel Royal Commission. All related to Brifman: his testimony that he was unable to establish she was a prostitute, that he knew something of an abortion involving hotel employee David Young but nothing about related inquiries in Sydney, and that he could not locate Brifman before or during the royal commission.

In his statement, Murphy said he had been charged because of "the untrue, malicious statements of Shirley Brifman, a drug addict, a self-confessed perjurer, prostitute and police informer who so obviously has fabricated certain statements about me hoping somehow to evade the consequences of the law with respect to her in New South Wales introducing her 13 year old daughter to the sordid life of a prostitute".

The case was remanded to 22 March. Brifman was due to face a charge of procuring her daughter, 14, for prostitution before a Sydney court on 17 March.

On 4 March, Brifman, then 36, was found dead in her flat in the Brisbane suburb of Clayfield. After reportedly dusting the flat for four hours in a fruitless search for fingerprints, police said there were no suspicious circumstances. The death was put down to a drug overdose. Whitrod told me that Assistant Commissioner A. B. Duncan had gone out and viewed the body before Whitrod arrived in the office that day. "It was very odd," Whitrod said. "There was no suicide note." The CIU's Detective Sergeant Basil Hicks was one of the first on the scene, and said later there was no doubt in his mind that Brifman had indeed committed suicide. New South Wales journalist David Hickie wrote in his book The Prince and the Premier (1985) that there was a story current in police and criminal circles afterwards that
New South Wales detective Fred Krahe had gone to Queensland where, with the help of a Queensland police officer, he had forced pills down Brifman’s throat through a plastic tube. No coroner’s inquest into Brifman’s death was ever held.

Murphy went to trial on the perjury charges. His barrister, Mr Des Sturgess, said the defence would show he had been charged maliciously and that it was “a prosecution of a political nature”. After four days of hearings magistrate Mr Martin found that no properly instructed jury could convict Murphy on the evidence presented and he was discharged. Murphy later said there was no evidence against him in the first place and the charges had been brought out of malice because of his police union activities.

Hallahan was in and out of court for months on the charges preferred against him by the CIU. He first appeared in December 1971, charged with corruptly receiving $60 from prostitute Dorothy Edith Knight. The trial dragged on for 10 months until August 1972. Gulbransen gave evidence that, while hidden in a caravan, he had seen Knight hand money to Hallahan, who later told him Knight, an informant of his, was repaying money he had lent her. Hallahan was committed for trial, but the Crown preferred alternative charges. After legal argument, Judge Broad ruled that tape recordings of conversations between Knight and Hallahan were inadmissible as evidence and said he would have to direct a jury to find Hallahan not guilty. The Crown dropped the charges.

In March 1972 Hallahan was before the courts again, charged with complicity in a 1970 bank hold-up in the Brisbane suburb of Kedron. The allegation was made by Donald Ross Kelly, who had been arrested in Melbourne and charged with the robbery. Kelly admitted doing the bank job, but said he had an agreement with Hallahan to give him one-third of the proceeds from jobs Hallahan arranged. Hallahan said it was he who had nominated Kelly as a suspect for the bank job and at the time of one of his supposed meetings with Kelly, he had been in Port Moresby. In June, magistrate Mr Jacobs found Hallahan had no case to answer on the charge of counselling Kelly to rob the bank. Hallahan, he said, had denied the allegations and, if guilty, could not be convicted on the uncorroborated evidence of Kelly, who
would be an accomplice. Kelly, who had spent half his life in jail and would have had many enemies, was found murdered outside Newcastle on 7 July 1988.

Hallahan was suspended for the period of his trials: just as in 1963, his suspension coincided with his giving evidence in other proceedings, this time a major murder trial. National Hotel manager Jack Cooper had been executed in an early morning ambush in a suburban street in September 1971. In November police arrested New Farm business man Donald John Maher — a search by Hallahan of Maher’s office had revealed a diary containing references to “a hit” and other details apparently connected with the murder.

In the Maher trial Hallahan was closely questioned by Mr Des Sturgess, counsel for Maher, on the diary and statements Hallahan allegedly made to Maher. Hallahan denied tearing any pages out of the diary, denied telling Maher that he had no alibi, and denied saying, “No matter what you say or do I’ll make sure you will be charged”. He also denied telling Maher, “This would take a lot of the heat off the town”. Maher pleaded not guilty but was sentenced to life imprisonment in May 1972 and served 15 years. Later, somewhat cryptically, he said he did not pull the trigger himself, but knew who did. Reporters who approached Maher following his release said he answered their questions with “I cannot talk”.

Hallahan resigned from the police in October 1972, on the day he was reinstated following his trials, and became a farmer on the Sunshine Coast. Between 18 December 1972 and 14 March 1973 his wife Heather Frances Hallahan held the authority to operate the post office agency at Kin Kin, a small town south of Gympie. She listed her occupation as the proprietor of a block of flats. A reference was required and Heather Hallahan nominated Judge John Shanahan, who as a barrister only months before had represented her husband in the bank robbery complicity trial. As a farmer, Hallahan was not a success — he filed for bankruptcy in 1986, listing debts of $180,118 and cash in hand of $100.

The subject of the greatest number of allegations by Shirley Brifman, Detective Sergeant Fred Krahe retired medically unfit from the New South Wales Police in May 1972, aged 52. It was
later reported that Krahe had been allowed to retire in advance of departmental charges being brought by those who had questioned Brifman. In retirement, Krahe went to work evicting squatters for property developer Frank William Theeman and was later mentioned in connection with the 1975 disappearance and presumed murder of heiress and journalist Juanita Neilsen, who opposed Theeman's Potts Point redevelopment plans.

Another New South Wales police officer who worked closely with Krahe and was an associate of Tony Murphy was Detective Sergeant Keith John Kelly, who retired on a pension in 1973. Royal commissioners and others were later to question Kelly closely on his associations with corrupt and criminal figures. In 1978 he and Krahe faced conspiracy charges with Frank and Ken Nugan over a shareholders' meeting for the Nugan fruit packing company of Griffith, New South Wales. Both former police were later discharged and Kelly eventually won compensation from the New South Wales Corporate Affairs Commission. He was involved with companies supplying equipment to both legal and illegal casinos and in 1981 joined the board of one of developer Frank Theeman's companies. In 1982 he was named in a joint police task force report as an associate of former New South Wales police officer Murray Stewart Riley, then serving time in jail for one of Australia's largest drug importations. In 1985 Tony Murphy told a Sydney defamation court that Kelly had been "a good friend" for 25 years. I detailed these associations in an article in the Courier-Mail in March 1988. Kelly issued a writ for defamation in Sydney. Murphy denied any wrongdoing in the opposition newspaper the Sun, and his solicitors later wrote to the Courier-Mail, threatening a writ for defamation.

When the opportunities came up, Whitrod and his men took action against those named in connection with the Rat Pack. Tony Murphy was removed from the Licensing Branch in 1971 and later sent to Toowoomba, where Whitrod once visited his Police Department house. "I found it very austere," he told me. Gulbransen thought it prudent to move quite a number of other Licensing Branch officers on as well, most notably Detective Sergeant Jack Reginald Herbert. According to Gulbransen's
later account, Herbert begged to forgo promotion and stay where he was, saying he had malignant cancer and would not be able to take the stress of CIB work.

Lewis, whose career seemed stalled during the early Whitrod years, reached inspector level in 1976. Whitrod, saying later it was "for the good of the force", sent him to Charleville, 770 kilometres west of Brisbane and centre of one of the largest and most remote police districts in the world. Whitrod told the Fitzgerald Inquiry however that he had sent Lewis west to broaden his experience. When Murphy reached inspector level later in 1976, Whitrod had sent him also as far west as possible, to Longreach.

On 17 April 1974, the regular mail-delivery driver from Gympie was robbed of $417,000 he didn't know he was carrying in what was to become known as the Beerburrum Mail Robbery. It was Queensland's largest robbery: the money was in the form of virtually untraceable used bank notes being returned to the Reserve Bank for destruction. It was revealed to the Fitzgerald Inquiry that, on the instructions of investigating police, the CIU put Hallahan's Sunshine Coast farm under observation for two days. One of those on the surveillance job was Detective Sergeant Basil Hicks, who told the inquiry that nothing untoward was observed.

In May, two men were charged with the robbery: Donald Frederick Flanders, an unemployed Caloundra man who was charged by detectives Rigney and Meskel; and Jack Edward Wilson, who was picked up in a Sydney hotel room with $136,000. Flanders, represented by Mr Des Sturgess, maintained throughout that he had been verbally by the police and had not seen his record of interview before it was presented in court. Wilson, the co-accused, said the money he was found with had nothing to do with the mail robbery, but refused to account for it. Both were convicted and sentenced to 10 years. After his release Wilson was implicated in other armed robberies, and in 1986 was found murdered in his car in the southern New South Wales town of Tarcutta. An Adelaide man was charged with this murder.

The CIU had no better results with its later cases than it had had with its earlier prosecutions of Murphy and Hallahan. The
most spectacular case it brought to court made Queensland legal history as the longest trial held to that date. It became known as the SP bribery case. Three men, fruiterer and alleged SP bookie Patrick MacIntyre, recently retired police officer Jack Reginald Herbert, and police constable Reginald Neal Freier, were arrested in December 1974 and charged with attempting to bribe Licensing Branch chief Inspector Arthur Pitts in November and December of that year. One of the police arresting Herbert noted on tape the entries in the teledex beside Herbert's telephone: there were, among others, a phone number for Don Lane, two numbers for Terry Lewis (one of them for his short-term posting to Redcliffe), and a Toowoomba number for “Tony”, later shown to be Detective Senior Sergeant Tony Murphy of Blue Hills Drive, Toowoomba.

Freier allegedly told his arresting officer, Inspector Jim Voight, the following: “I’m not like Hallahan and them, Jim. I was close to Glen and at the time I thought a lot of him. When he was charged I still stuck to him but I know now that he was in it up to the hilt. I’m not like that Jim. I’m not on any weekly payroll.” Voight denied telling Freier that some police thought Hallahan was “right for that big mail robbery up near Beerburrum” or that Donald Flanders, one of those convicted of the crime, had been one of Hallahan’s police informants. Freier’s counsel claimed that he told Voight that Hallahan “would not be right for something like that”. These alleged conversations between Freier and his arresting officer were aired in court in July 1976 and reported in the Courier-Mail. Hallahan sued the newspaper, claiming $500,000 for alleged defamation. The action was discontinued in December 1977.

Herbert’s involvement with the SP bookmakers was no surprise to the CIU — indeed Pitts had instructions to play along with bribe offers until Herbert surfaced. Herbert, Freier and their allies, according to evidence presented years later to the Fitzgerald Inquiry, turned their attention to setting up their accusers. Their first efforts to get the goods on CIU sergeant Basil Hicks were not notably successful then but were to be of future significance. Freier allegedly approached prostitute Katherine James, seeking a statement from her to the effect that
she had been involved in sexual relations with Hicks. Despite an offer of payment for her statement, Katherine James declined and, according to the CIU, later told them of the offer. Attempts to set up Pitts and members of the Licensing Branch in 1975 were to prove much more successful.

Herbert acquired a tape recorder from the United States. He supplied it to a former Licensing Branch colleague, plain-clothes constable Frank Davey, who taped Pitts and other Licensing Branch members organising evidence against two Southport SP bookmakers. In court, Davey suddenly turned hostile witness and accused police prosecutor Alec Jeppesen and Pitts of fabricating evidence and forging a warrant. Davey was asked if he had any witnesses to back up his allegations. "No," he replied. "I've got tape recordings." Davey told the court that he had become concerned that "things were being done contrary to law" after Pitts had taken over the Licensing Branch. The Crown contended that before Pitts's arrival "the tentacles of organised crime had virtually taken over the Licensing Branch". There had been only three prosecutions for telephone betting in the previous four years, but in just three months after coming to the Licensing Branch, Pitts had laid 17 charges.

The magistrate found that the police evidence was "tainted with illegality" and the defendants, Stanley Derwent Saunders and Brian Leonard Sieber, were discharged. The uproar spread to parliament, other complaints of police activities started to come in and the government announced there would be an inquiry. But not immediately. A number of others, most notably Freier and Herbert, were still before the courts. Opposition members took the view that this was only a delaying tactic. Liberal Party backbencher Don Lane asked whether the government would be pressing charges against Pitts and others responsible for bringing prosecution evidence found to be tainted with illegality. In August 1975 Bjelke-Petersen promised an inquiry into police corruption, saying, "The inquiry is to clear up once and for all the innuendos, slanders and slurs on the good name of the force." An inquiry in these terms never occurred. Two Scotland Yard investigators arrived to look at the force a month later and began an investigation which was never to be completed. More than a year
later another inquiry was commissioned, under terms of reference that focused on police procedures and precluded corruption.

The Southport SP Case was well over when District Court proceedings against Herbert, MacIntyre and Freier finally began in May 1976. Pitts spent a record 26 days in the witness box, telling the court that Freier had approached him to say an SP bookmaker had a proposition to put to him. Pitts, who agreed to meet the bookmaker, in turn rang Assistant Commissioner Gulbransen and Detective Sergeant Basil Hicks of the CIU. Pitts’s home and telephone had been wired for sound by the CIU and his various conversations with defendants MacIntyre, Herbert and Freier recorded. Des Sturgess, for Herbert, put it to Pitts that he had initially approached MacIntyre and told him he would have to pay if he wanted to stay in business as an SP bookie. Pitts disagreed.

Sturgess then introduced other tape recordings, those made by Constable Frank Davey of his Licensing Branch colleagues on the recorder provided by Herbert, which had been introduced into the Southport SP Betting Case. Pitts agreed that these tapes gave “the appearance of conspiring to fabricate evidence”. The trial dragged on for a Queensland record of 126 days, but Sturgess had set the pattern: using the Southport case as an example, he kept challenging the credibility of police witnesses and evidence. Judge Helman took the unusual step of himself calling Constable Davey, the renegade police witness from the Southport trial. Davey, no longer in the Licensing Branch, was now a stablehand for police horses. He testified that well before either trial he had heard Pitts saying that Herbert was a “grafter” and that he, Pitts, would bring him undone. Freier explained his actions as trying to get evidence of corruption on Pitts and Sturgess told the court that Herbert was assisting Freier.

Herbert told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that he, Freier and MacIntyre were all guilty as charged. He also said that Tony Murphy had called on him and passed on $700 from Toowoomba SP bookmaker Bruce Bowd. Freier’s story, backed up by evidence from other police, was a complete fabrication, which Herbert said he was going to back up and further corroborate by
The Failure of Reform

giving evidence of meetings that never took place and notes that
were forged. Late in the trial MacIntyre revealed he had some
knowledge of the attitude of the jury. On the urging of Freier and
MacIntyre, Herbert decided not to give evidence, a decision that
caused some upset to his counsel, Sturgess. On 5 November
1976, the jury acquitted all three.

The result was a big disappointment for the corruption fighters,
whose time, unknown to them, had almost run out. In July 1976,
a senior police officer hit a young woman demonstrator over the
head with a baton. The incident occurred in full view of television
cameras and a major row quickly blew up. Whitrod, with the
support of Police minister Hodges, ordered an inquiry. However
Premier Bjelke-Petersen decided there would not be an inquiry
and the rest of Cabinet agreed. Two days later, Max Hodges was
demoted to minister for Tourism and the Tourism minister, Tom
Newbery, became Police minister. The premier made no sense at
all in announcing the changes when he said first that he was
satisfied with Hodges's performance in the difficult portfolio and
second that Hodges and Whitrod were ahead of their time. "We
were three parts there," was Hodges's only comment to this. The
police union, then headed by Detective Sergeant Ron Redmond,
had been loudly demanding the resignations of both Hodges and
Whitrod since the bashing issue first arose and speculation was
rife that Whitrod would be the next to go. But Bjelke-Petersen
told the press conference that Whitrod wasn't about to follow his
boss out the door. "I'm sure that he will seek to work with Mr
Newbery. He will have to," he said.

The speculation, however, was entirely accurate — Whitrod
was on the way out. Police used undue force to raid "a hippie
commune" at Cedar Bay north of Cairns in late August, and,
after some delay, Whitrod ordered an inquiry regardless of the
premier's wishes to the contrary. Summons on more than
twenty charges including arson were laid against four members
of the raiding party on 16 November 1976. Only one of these
police was ever brought to trial and he was acquitted.

Assistant Commissioner Norm Gulbransen, Whitrod's deputy
and key supporter, retired from the police force on 15 September
1976, opening a vacancy for a new assistant commissioner.
Whitrod put three names to Cabinet with Superintendent Vern MacDonald at the head of the list, followed by the slightly senior Superintendent Alec MacSporran. The police union, in a bid Whitrod described as “rather a new development in police administration”, also submitted a nomination to Cabinet — Superintendent MacSporran. Whitrod has vivid memories of his shock when Minister Newbery telephoned after the Cabinet meeting to tell him that the new assistant commissioner was to be junior Charleville inspector Terry Lewis.

“That’s astounding,” said Whitrod. “Can I call on you?” Newbery agreed to this. Whitrod tore over to the minister’s office and told Newbery he was “flabbergasted” at Cabinet’s decision to promote Lewis over 122 equal or more senior heads to be his assistant commissioner, particularly when “his name wasn’t put forward by me or by the police union”. Whitrod’s account of the conversation follows.

Newbery: “Well, that is how it is going to be.”
Whitrod: “That is pretty shattering to me because it is widely known in the force that Lewis was one of Frank Bischof’s bagmen.”
Newbery: “Oh, but that was when he was a detective sergeant — he is now an Inspector and wouldn’t do that sort of thing.”
Whitrod (amazed): “Is that Cabinet’s real thinking on this matter?”
Newbery: “Yes.”

Later, when asked about why the superior qualifications and proven ability of MacDonald and MacSporran had been ignored, Newbery said, “It was the Premier’s decision.”

Whitrod persisted as long as he could, asking to see the premier. “It is that important to me,” he said to Newbery. “I’ve spent seven years with Mr Hodges trying to establish a foundation of honesty in the police force and there are now a number of keen and enthusiastic police officers. If Lewis’s appointment goes through they will assume I am someway responsible for it and will regard me as a hypocrite.”

Newbery telephoned Whitrod three hours later, saying the premier refused to see him and refused to let him address Cabinet. Whitrod, who could see himself becoming increasingly isolated if he stayed, decided that he had no option but to resign. He told the Fitzgerald Inquiry years later:
I didn't have any power base. ... I hadn't aligned myself with any political party or with the Green Mafia (the Irish Catholics) or the Masons. I hadn't done any favours to significant figures. ... (The premier) could communicate directly with Assistant Commissioner Lewis and countermand any instructions I might give.

Within 48 hours Whitrod's resignation was before Cabinet, with the reputed greeting from Russ Hinze, "Let's grab it now before the bastard takes it back."

On 15 November, Joh Bjelke-Petersen announced that Whitrod was to resign and, later in the day, that an inquiry would be held into criminal law enforcement and the gathering of evidence by police, but not into allegations of malpractice or corruption. The premier also released a list of 35 promotions and transfers, showing that Inspector Terry Lewis was to become the new assistant commissioner. The inspector who had allegedly hit the woman demonstrator "by accident" in July became a superintendent. The rumour mill confidently asserted that the then Inspector Lewis would shortly have a further promotion.

In his final press conference Whitrod said he could no longer accept the political interference of the premier and the Police minister:

The government's view appears to be that the police are just another public service department, accountable to the premier and cabinet through the police minister and therefore rightly subject to directions, not only on matters of general policy, but also in specific cases. I believe as a police commissioner I am answerable not to a person, not to the Executive Council, but to the law.

A questioner asked whether he thought Queensland was getting to be a police state. "I think there are signs in that direction," said Whitrod. He denied that graft reached into the higher echelons of the Queensland Police and followed this with a reference to the term Rat Pack, which, according to Whitrod, was a very small group of police officers who took bribes from people like SP bookmakers and prostitutes.

The retiring commissioner was not in the least charitable about his announced successor Terry Lewis, saying he did not believe him the most suitable man for the position. "The new police commissioner believes he has the support of 98 percent of
the force," he said. "I hope that the other two percent — the small group of dedicated policemen — will follow my ideals and stick to them."

Assistant Commissioner Terry Lewis jumped another three heads to become police commissioner on 29 November 1976.
3 Gambling, Drugs and Vice

New police chief Terry Lewis faced a grilling on corruption at his first press conference on 14 December 1976. He was reported as handling the questions “with ease”. No, he had never been a bagman for a former police commissioner. No, he did not know why he had been so rapidly promoted. (“I’d like you to tell me,” he said.) No, he did not know why Whitrod had objected to his appointment — it may have had something to do with a clash over the running of the Juvenile Aid Bureau in 1972, he said.

He was also asked if he had ever heard of a group known as the Rat Pack and whether he was connected with it. Lewis said he had heard the words used to describe officers who spread malicious rumours about other police. When told it could also mean a group of corrupt police, he said: “To the best of my knowledge, I haven’t been connected with it. I may have been connected with it by the insane ranting of some people in the past — notably one commissioner.”

Lewis thought differently in 1985, to judge from the Supreme Court deposition lodged on his behalf: “Among police officers in Queensland the words ‘the Rat Pack’ had since the 1960s been used to refer to and include the plaintiff (Lewis), Anthony Murphy and one Glen Patrick Hallahan who had served with them in the Police Force.”

When Murphy reached inspector level in early 1976, former commissioner Whitrod had promptly exiled him to Longreach. New commissioner Lewis, himself just returned from exile in Charleville, now brought Murphy straight back and put him in charge of his old persecutors, the CIU. Inspector Murphy brought in some of his own men, notably Sergeant Alan Barnes,
and told the press that the CIU would now be responsible for monitoring organised crime. The Fitzgerald Inquiry was later told of an almost immediate cessation in the flow of raw intelligence on SP bookmaking to the Licensing Branch.

Inspector Basil Hicks, Whitrod’s last appointment as head of the CIU, took the function of investigating police misconduct with him to a new Internal Investigations Unit. Lewis had earlier questioned Hicks about his destruction of six sacks of CIU files on the instructions of Whitrod and, according to Hicks, Lewis had ended that conversation with the puzzling comment: “The government has given me a car, a good salary. I don’t need to be involved in anything else.” Hicks later told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that he received no directions on what he was supposed to do with the Internal Investigations Unit — he went and “squatted” in a room and had to “scrounge” for facilities. Hicks engaged in some correspondence with Lewis that he was later told to forget about, received one file from Cairns for a notation and otherwise, as he said, just sat there and twiddled his thumbs. Fitzgerald asked Hicks if he had any staff and he replied: “Well, there was another policeman down the end of the room with a secretary. I don’t know what they were doing — as far as police work is concerned.” Five months later Hicks went into uniform at Mobile Patrols.

Former Police minister Max Hodges and former police commissioner Ray Whitrod both took exception to the disbanding of the CIU as the anti-corruption unit of the force, saying that an internal investigations section without its own field investigative staff would be a paper tiger. They were proved right. Numerous officers who served over the years in “Internals”, as the section became known, gave the Fitzgerald Inquiry the clear impression that the job of investigating police misdemeanours was taken less than seriously.

Many of those associated with the CIU in the Whitrod years experienced serious career blight in the years ahead. One notable exception was Sergeant Greg Early, one of Whitrod’s personal assistants, who became personal assistant to the new commissioner Terry Lewis; he rose to the rank of superintendent — and very nearly that of assistant commissioner — before his career suffered at the hands of the Fitzgerald Inquiry.
Inspector Tony Murphy spent only eight months in the CIU before being promoted to superintendent and given the Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB), a job upgraded as he moved into it. While head of the CIU, Murphy had made a public statement expressing doubt that there were any legitimate massage parlours in Brisbane. "Any establishment that accepts girls from the streets and has them massaging men five minutes later must be considered highly suspect," he said. Few would have disagreed. Murphy now had overriding control for all the specialist detective squads, except the Licensing Branch. Lewis had given the responsibility for policing vice to long term branch member Inspector Alec Jeppesen, who with many of his men had shared in the discredit flowing from the Southport SP Betting Case and the SP Bribery Trial in Whitrod's last years.

In the Valley, illegal gambling was now centred on 142 Wickham Street — at Geraldo Bellino and Luciano Scognamiglio's top floor illegal casino. When the changeover of police commissioners occurred, Scognamiglio was facing charges over the alleged attempt to bribe Licensing Branch constable Kingsley Fancourt in late 1974. The Crown Law Office examined the case and, noting that some of the police witnesses involved had been criticised before other courts for obtaining evidence "tainted with illegality", decided not to proceed against Scognamiglio in early 1977.

Inspector Jeppesen and his men gave the gambling dens a particularly hard time in early 1977. New Zealander Roland Short boasted that the police would never get into his Matador Club in South Brisbane, but they did. He and a number of his employees, including one Geoffrey Luke Crocker, were charged and ultimately fined. The club closed, Short disappeared from the Brisbane scene and Crocker went back into the prostitution business.

One night in October 1977, 40 police battered their way into the 142 Wickham Street casino and arrested 55 people. Geraldo Bellino was charged with keeping a common gaming house and later fined. Antonio Bellino, Santo Rizzo and Vittorio Conte were among those fined $50 for being found "without lawful excuse in a common gaming house". Telegraph reporter Pat Lloyd sought
a comment from new police commissioner Lewis, who said there would never be any toleration of organised illegal gambling in Queensland. "I want everyone considering setting up anything to know this," he said. "We will just keep up the raids."

The record shows, however, that the raids were not kept up. In May 1987 I researched 20 years of large-scale casino raids, finding that in the 10 years before Lewis's promise there had been 14 "sledgehammer and blowtorch" raids with an average of 29 arrests each. In the almost 10 years since, there had been six raids with an average of 17 arrests each. Up to October 1977, police had mounted the raids and then invited the press along to photograph the damage. After October 1977, three or possibly more of the raids were a consequence of the press first pointing a finger at the thriving casinos. The October 1977 raid earned Geraldo Bellino his one and only conviction for keeping a common gaming house, for which he was fined $350. (He later admitted to the Fitzgerald Inquiry that he had made $1 million a year from his illegal casinos.)

The policing of vice had been one of the major topics of two inquiries that Lewis inherited from Whitrod. The first had been promised in the wake of the 1975 Southport SP Betting Case but the government took some months to bring out the two Scotland Yard detectives who conducted it. When they arrived, they found many of the main characters still embroiled in the SP Bribery Trial. Herbert, Freier and alleged SP bookmaker MacIntyre were not acquitted until November 1976, and partly as a result of the controversy surrounding their trial and the earlier Southport SP Betting Case, the government ordered a judicial inquiry into the administration of the criminal justice system on the same day it announced Lewis's appointment as police commissioner. Significantly, the brief for the judicial inquiry did not include corruption.

Considerable mystery surrounded the Scotland Yard investigation for years afterwards. Investigators Commander Terence O'Connell and Detective Superintendent Bruce Fothergill interviewed 298 people in eight weeks, including every member of the Licensing Branch, but found themselves hampered by the continuing trials. O'Connell gave evidence to the judicial inquiry,
wrote a report, gave it to the government in March 1977, and left. The report disappeared, with the government refusing to release it.

The judicial inquiry's report was released but next to nothing was done about its recommendations. It started well in early 1977. The government had chosen a promising team: Mr Justice Lucas of the Supreme Court, one of the judges who had ticked off Hallahan in 1963; barrister Mr Des Sturgess, in the previous few years acting in most of the notable trials involving police, appearing for Murphy, Hallahan and Herbert, convicted murderer Donald Maher, convicted Beerburrum mail robber Donald Flanders, and alleged Southport SP bookmaker Stanley Derwent Saunders; and retired police superintendent Don Becker, formerly closely associated with Whitrod's CIU. The promising team were also quick workers. The government had a report containing 57 recommendations by April. Many of the recommendations were aimed at ending the abuses uncovered in the Southport SP Betting Case and the SP Bribery Trial and making the work of police easier.

Barrister Sturgess spent some time interviewing his former client Jack Herbert and the Lucas committee in its report was notably sympathetic to the problems faced by the Licensing Branch, in that officers were exposed to temptation while enforcing laws that were often socially unpopular. They recommended limited terms of service and special attention to recruitment, particularly for the inspector in charge. "Control of (the Licensing Branch) should be regarded as one of the most prestigious positions in the entire force and should be reserved for officers of outstanding integrity" was one recommendation. It was sage advice, but for the greater part of the next 10 years little heed was paid to it. Sturgess, however, was in later years to demonstrate that he had a long memory and his next inquiry into matters to do with the Licensing Branch was to help lead to the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

The Lucas Report was shelved. In retrospect, the implementation of recommendations on the video- or tape-recording of confessions might have saved the police, and the government, considerable anguish over the years. The police union initially
objected to the recommendations but went on to desire the implementation of all of them. Lawyers and civil libertarians were in favour of anything that would threaten the time-honoured practice of verbalising but thought other recommendations amounted to an unwarranted extension of police powers.

Police powers were extended in any case, with Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen bringing in Draconian street march legislation just months before the 1977 state election. Said Bjelke-Petersen on 5 September 1977: "The day of the political street march is over. Anyone who holds a street march spontaneously or otherwise will know they're acting illegally. . . . Don't bother applying for a permit. You won't get one. That's government policy now." The declaration naturally provoked renewed protest and ugly confrontations between police and demonstrators more often than not marching for the right to march. In the next two years there were hundreds of protests, more than 2000 arrests and more than 4500 charges laid by police.

In March 1979 a young constable, Michael Egan, resigned after intervening in a struggle between police and a woman demonstrator of his acquaintance. He then accused the Special Branch of being deliberately provocative during demonstrations, "running through the crowd and stirring them up, pushing people over and going hysterical". In July 1979, a confidential National Party state executive report pointed out that: "Up to the time that the street march legislation became law, there had been no illegal street marches of any consequence. The existence of this legislation is now seen by a large section of the public as being provocative." From August 1979 permits for street marches became more readily available. Historian Dr Ross Fitzgerald commented in the following manner.

During struggles against the (street march) ban, the Queensland police force had been in effect converted into a political machine, forming an arm of the executive. Processions became conflicts between opposing camps; one camp uniformed and vested with the unfettered power of the state, the other camp seen to be anti-authority. Persons taking part in processions were then identified as "political criminals". (From 1915 to the Early 1980s: A History of Queensland (1984))
Fitzgerald’s view is confirmed by the diaries of Terry Lewis, which record the premier’s extremely close interest in the marches, the Special Branch, the numbers of arrests and the bail set for demonstrators:

7 December 1978: “Premier phoned re bail set for demonstrators ... To Lang Park re briefing for 1100 (police) men and women. ... 339 arrests. Phoned (Police minister) Hon Camm re march. Premier phoned.”

Many doubted that former commissioner Whitrod would have allowed the police force to become such a political arm of the government. In February 1978 Lewis asked the premier directly for “permission to use my official car 52 weeks per year at all times including leave”. Not surprisingly, the diaries for this period also record — fleetingly — the protests of the two successive Police ministers, Newbery and Camm, “re the Premier contacting me directly”. In June 1979, Police Commissioner Terry Lewis became a member of the Order of the British Empire (OBE).

As the commissioner eased himself into his new position the problem of drug trafficking was becoming prominent as a social, political and law enforcement issue. This occurred fairly suddenly, public debate and government action alike being stimulated by the drugs-related murder of a political candidate in New South Wales in 1977.

By the mid-1970s, the New South Wales Riverina town of Griffith had attained some notoriety as a centre for the growing of marijuana. On Friday, 15 July 1977 local business man, Liberal Party candidate and anti-drugs campaigner Donald Bruce Mackay was murdered. The event focused national attention on the drug problem, most notably in three royal commissions and other inquiries and trials that continued for nearly a decade.

Mr Justice Woodward of the New South Wales Supreme Court was appointed to head a royal commission on drug trafficking soon after Mackay’s disappearance and he reported two years later in 1979. Woodward identified a number of drug syndicates, including one he associated with a former Queensland judge’s clerk, John Edward Milligan. Woodward’s knowledge of Milligan
The Road to Fitzgerald

came initially from an informant and was incomplete, but the mention sparked off a chain of events which led to a royal commission in Queensland examining allegations of involvement in the drug trade by politicians and senior police.

In the mid-1960s John Milligan was a gregarious law student noted for regaling his associates with lurid tales of his underworld connections. He was widely disbelieved, but it seems there may have been some truth to his stories. Ex-detective Glen Patrick Hallahan was later to say that before his retirement in October 1972 Milligan had been one of his informants. As the clerk of Judge Seaman of the Brisbane District Court, Milligan was once handcuffed by an associate as a prank and was mistakenly arrested by police looking for an escapee in the court precincts. Mr Justice Woodward found that prior to 1971 Milligan had shared interests in real estate and call girls with noted Sydney standover man John Stuart Regan. After breaking with Regan, he went into the drug smuggling trade.

Customs and Narcotics Bureau officers caught former Brisbane baccarat school operator Tony Robinson Junior in Perth in May 1972 with three colleagues and 28 kilograms of hashish. Information from this operation enabled Customs officers at Brisbane airport to intercept a consignment of Thai silk wrapped around another 2.6 kilograms of hashish addressed to a fictitious company at a Fortitude Valley premises. The major tenant there was Pinocchio’s, the Bellinos’ nightclub; Geraldo Bellino had earlier been associated with Tony Robinson Junior in an illegal baccarat school. John Edward Milligan appeared to collect the parcel of silk in July 1972 and was arrested. The Bellinos were questioned and denied all knowledge of the package. The charges against Milligan, who had not opened the package when he was arrested, were later withdrawn.

Milligan was involved in various drug smuggling ventures with French nationals and others from Brisbane and Sydney until 1977, when royal commissioner Woodward assumed he went into business on his own account. However, Milligan later said he had then engaged in a number of importations on behalf of a person he initially called “the unnamed man”, whom he later identified as Glen Patrick Hallahan. This was no surprise to
Narcotics Bureau officers — by the time they were ready to arrest Milligan in September 1979 for three heroin importations they had a record of telephone connections between Hallahan’s Obi Obi farm and Milligan’s Brisbane and Sydney units.

One of Milligan’s 1977 heroin importations had many of the elements of comic opera. Heroin bought in Thailand was couriered to Port Moresby and then loaded into a light aircraft. The pilot dropped it on to the top of Jane Table Mountain near Cooktown in far north Queensland, where it remained lost for several weeks while Milligan and various associates searched for it. They found only part of the consignment — the rest fell into the hands of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics after a barramundi fisherman tried to sell it. This was then the largest seizure of heroin in Queensland but the Narcotics Bureau dallied in investigating it. A newly arrived senior officer, John Shobbrook, was asked to authorise the destruction of the heroin a year later and instead began an investigation under the title of Operation Jungle. Shobbrook and his team found that Milligan had been in contact at key times with Glen Patrick Hallahan — before and after Milligan’s flights to Papua New Guinea, before and after Milligan’s trip to Thailand to supervise the purchase of the heroin, and before and after the several trips to search for the drugs lost on the mountain. Milligan had also sent money to Hallahan during the importation and after the heroin was recovered and sold.

The New South Wales Police and the Sydney office of the Narcotics Bureau commenced independent investigations of Milligan in 1979. These investigations into schemes to import heroin through the Philippines and Noumea also disclosed that Milligan contacted Hallahan at key times. Milligan’s fingerprint also turned up inside a false-bottomed suitcase containing documents and traces of heroin. The net around him tightened.

He was arrested in Sydney on 10 September 1979. Hallahan’s farm was raided within hours and before any admissions had been made by Milligan. Bureau officers found no evidence linking Hallahan to drugs but did find the key to a Brisbane motel unit and a direct-line work telephone number for CIB superintendent Tony Murphy. Hallahan was questioned and said he had known
Milligan for 15 years, but since leaving the police force had only seen him in 1977 when he said Milligan wanted to buy some land from him, for which he said he had been paid $26,000. Milligan was to arrange all the documentation for the sale, he said. Hallahan denied knowing then that Milligan was involved with drugs.

Milligan, being interviewed in Sydney, mentioned the unnamed man, whom he described as "very dangerous". He was charged and the bureau opposed bail, which led Milligan to approach Shobbrook outside the court. According to Shobbrook, Milligan became emotional and told him, "You don't know how big this is". Milligan then claimed to Shobbrook that Hallahan, Police Commissioner Lewis and Superintendent Murphy were all involved in crime and demanded that this information be passed to the bureau chief. Shobbrook refused, instead demanding that Milligan give up a passport in a false name. Milligan obliged, the passport was found and so were diary notes and other material referring to Hallahan, or GP, as he was often known.

Shobbrook and other investigators taped Milligan's allegations against Hallahan, Murphy, Lewis and others and passed the tapes on to Canberra. Milligan also said that Hallahan told him he would say Milligan had bought land from him. The tapes have never surfaced publicly but garbled accounts of them began to circulate. These found their way into the Courier-Mail and state parliament as a result of statements by junior Brisbane Narcotics Bureau officers who were upset that the Williams Royal Commission on Drugs had recommended the incorporation of the bureau into a new Federal Police Force. Some Queensland politicians and some unnamed senior police were mentioned before parliament as being involved in the drug trade. Faced with allegations of this gravity the government did act, and act promptly. Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen asked Mr Justice Williams to extend his royal commission and investigate the allegations as a matter of urgency. The contents of the Milligan tapes were noted by Williams in these words: "Lewis, Murphy and Hallahan operated as a three man team in controlling aspects of crime in Queensland. Hallahan was identified as the person who did the dirty work." It was also noted that many of
the allegations were wild and referred to matters of which Milligan could have had no direct knowledge.

The diary entries over the ensuing months of Police Commissioner Lewis revealed that he had considerable contact with two Queensland police officers who were then working as investigators for the Williams Royal Commission — Inspector Pointing and Detective Sergeant Barry O'Brien. Other entries are also of some interest.

9 November 1979: "—deleted—; bugging Murphy and Hallahan's phones; Hallahan still claiming friendship with Murphy and me and an anonymous call re me heading drug smuggling ring."

26 November 1979: "Inspector T. Pointing called re interview with a Mr Milligan wherein he stated that ex-Det Hallahan said that he would have me give any necessary assistance to Milligan."

This last reference is mysterious and does not correspond to anything in Inspector Pointing’s known evidence before the commission. In relation to Hallahan Lewis said in evidence: "He resigned from our force, I understand, in 1972 and I have not seen him or spoken to him or communicated with him in any way since 1972." Murphy said in evidence that he knew of Milligan, but did not know him. Hallahan, giving evidence, essentially repeated what he had earlier told the Narcotics Bureau investigators about Milligan purchasing land from him.

Milligan asked to give his evidence to the royal commission in camera, but his request was refused. On his first day of evidence before the royal commission in January 1980, Milligan denied that he was "Mr Big" and said that Hallahan was. He refused to answer a question on whether Hallahan was involved in drugs. In early March 1980 Milligan, who had pleaded guilty to two of the heroin importations, was brought before the courts in Sydney for sentence. He was asked if he would give evidence against Glen Patrick Hallahan and said, "Yes". On 19 March he was sentenced to 18 years' jail and later wrote out and signed a five-page statement alleging Hallahan's financial involvement in the Jane Table Mountain heroin importation, which was to become confidential exhibit 741 at the Williams Royal Commission.

However, at the royal commission hearings on 20 March,
Milligan gave contradictory evidence about Hallahan, which included a denial that he knew anything to Hallahan’s discredit in relation to drugs. His statement the previous day on Hallahan’s involvement was not put to him.

Mr Justice Williams reported on 17 April, clearing of all allegations the named politicians and senior police — identified as Police Commissioner Terry Lewis and CIB superintendent Tony Murphy. In relation to Hallahan he said:

The connection between Milligan and Hallahan was based not only on what Milligan said, but also upon undeniable evidence that Milligan had, over a period of time, transferred some $25,000 to Hallahan and that the phone in Milligan’s unit had on a number of occasions been connected to Hallahan’s phone at Obi Obi.

Hallahan claims the association with Milligan was completely innocent and although Milligan is recorded on tape as asserting that he and Hallahan were involved in criminal activity over a long period of time, in sworn evidence before the commission Milligan said there was no substance at all in this allegation.

The commission was made aware that officers of the Australian Federal Police have not concluded investigations into the association between Hallahan and Milligan . . . the fact that these investigations have not concluded makes the commission very reluctant to embark on an analysis of all the evidence relating to Hallahan and his association with Milligan.

Hallahan has never been a senior police officer and has not even been a police officer since 1972. The commission merely records that evidence presently available to it falls far short of establishing, as even a reasonable possibility, that Hallahan has ever been involved in wrong-doing in connection with illegal drugs.

Hallahan said he was “bitterly disappointed” at not being totally cleared by the finding and said, “The suggestion that I am still under investigation is wrong.”

The Australian Federal Police had indeed ceased the Operation Jungle investigation into him on 26 March 1980. In mid-1988 I investigated the circumstances under which this occurred. Shobbrook had resigned from the force in April 1980, noting in his letter of resignation: “I was instructed to cease my investigations on a major drug trafficking syndicate which I had been investigating continuously for the previous thirteen months with considerable success. . . . I now find myself unable to come down
to the standards of the Australian Federal Police”

In the course of my duties I compiled a brief of evidence against that fourth person (Hallahan). I had submitted that evidence to the Commonwealth Crown Solicitor’s Office for an unofficial opinion as to whether a prima facie case existed against this person — I was informed there was sufficient evidence.

When senior officers within my own department were informed that this person’s arrest was imminent, I was ‘requested’ in the name of harmonious relations between (the Queensland and Federal police forces) to terminate the investigation.

A barrister briefed by the Deputy Crown Solicitor in the prosecution of Milligan confirmed to me that he was a party to discussions about the prosecution of Hallahan, and whether proceedings should be launched in New South Wales or Queensland.

A Federal Police spokesperson denied that the Operation Jungle investigation was stopped because it might have affected co-operation between the newly established Federal Police and the Queensland Police. He told me over the telephone that there was insufficient evidence for the investigation to proceed, and that advice on the matter had been sought from the Director of Public Prosecutions. When I pointed out to him that the office of Director of Public Prosecutions had not been set up until four years after the investigation had ended, there was confusion on the other end of the line. I was later put through to a “senior officer”, whom I identified as the one who had ordered Shobbrook to cease the investigation. There was more confusion on the other end. My follow-up calls yielded only the original bland denials of any fear about jeopardising co-operation with the Queensland Police.

The diaries of Police Commissioner Terry Lewis for the period February to April 1980 reveal a number of contacts between Lewis and senior Federal Police and contact with others including the premier about the Federal Police. One entry — “re ex-Narcotics Squad still working together” — related to a telephone call to the Federal Police chief, Sir Colin Woods. I detailed the whole Operation Jungle saga in an article in the *Courier-Mail* on 9 August 1988 under the headline “Milligan’s Mountain”. When
this book went to press, neither Glen Patrick Hallahan nor the Federal Police had made any response to the article.

In 1980 Tony Murphy had sued for defamation over the media coverage of the Williams Royal Commission and the events leading up to it. He was paid the fairly nominal settlement of $7500, including costs, by Queensland Newspapers three years later. His next brush with a royal commission — that headed by Mr Justice Stewart into the Mr Asia heroin ring — was a little more serious.

In June 1978 a number of people at a Brisbane motel were arrested for being in possession of firearms. The man who had booked into the motel as J. Petersen, MP was found to be Terence John Clark, wanted in New Zealand to face a heroin smuggling charge. Clark told police he was involved in drugs, but wasn't charged — perhaps because the attention of police and Narcotics Bureau officers was then focused on the Cairns yacht Anoa, then being shadowed down the Queensland coast with 2.7 tonnes of cannabis aboard in an operation masterminded by former New South Wales police officer Murray Stewart Riley. Clark allegedly tried to bribe a Queensland police officer with $50,000 to prevent his extradition but his Brisbane solicitor, John Robertson, later said:

Everyone was in a hurry to get Clark out of Queensland and back to New Zealand and that included the police. . . . I have the feeling that everything was being done in tremendous haste. My instructions from Clark — and I can only accept instructions from him — were that he wanted to get back to New Zealand.

Clark was extradited to New Zealand and later acquitted of charges.

However, two of the others arrested in the motel, drug couriers Douglas and Isobel Wilson, were secretly taped confessing to police that they were involved in a major drug smuggling ring. Clark was the ringleader, they said, and Christopher “Mr Asia” Johnstone his main associate. It was an amazing story, involving the murder by Clark of one Harry “Pommie” Lewis and a leak in the Narcotics Bureau.

Murphy was then under some pressure, with Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen wanting to replace him as head of the CIB with
former Whitrod man Inspector Basil Hicks. In an article in the
*Sunday Mail* he claimed credit for the *Anoa* drug bust and in the
*Sunday Sun*, in the wake of the Wilson revelations, the Queensland
Police were credited with smashing “a $160 million heroin
gang”. Both claims were nonsense: federal and New South Wales
authorities were responsible for the *Anoa* bust and no member of
the Mr Asia gang had been or ever was convicted of a drug
offence by the Queensland Police.

When the body of Harry “Pommie” Lewis was found in northern
New South Wales in March 1979, Murphy contacted *Sunday Sun*
reporter Brian Bolton. His 25 March article referred to
“secret tape-recorded evidence which linked the murder to a mas­
vive international drug smuggling syndicate”. The Mr Asia drug
ring couriers Douglas and Isobel Wilson were not identified in the
articles, but were last seen alive in mid-April 1979. Their bodies
were found a month later in a shallow grave at the Victorian
bayside town of Rye. In October 1979, after another murder,
English police took just a fortnight to break up the Mr Asia gang.

Mr Justice Stewart reported on the events of the late 1970s in
February 1983. He said it was “unwise” of Murphy to have told
Bolton that the Queensland Police had tape recordings of conver­
sations about the principals of an international drug ring. Mr
Justice Stewart said: “The commission believes that (Bolton’s)
article contained sufficient material to confirm to a suspicious
and vengeful Clark that the Wilsons had definitely informed on
him.” Murphy reacted angrily to the report, saying that if the
criticism of him was valid, the commission itself had placed other
informants at risk by publishing the evidence it heard from a
Queensland Police undercover agent.

The agent in question was Detective Constable James George
Slade, a former officer of the Commonwealth Police who had
joined the Queensland Police in the last days of Whitrod. When
Murphy was brought back from exile by Lewis to head the Crime
Intelligence Unit he had gone looking for suitable intelligence
operatives. He found Slade, a man whose ability in the difficult
and shadowy world of police intelligence was to be appreciated
by six inspectors in charge of the unit, three royal commissions
and the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence.
Jim Slade is the sort of unassuming bloke who could get lost in any crowd. His outlook on life is generally uncomplicated, his manner of expression often fairly coarse. Nearly every sentence is prefaced with “Oh mate” and conversation tends to be a string of anecdotes. His great-grandfather was sent out from Ireland for blowing up a police post but he became a police officer in the colony of New South Wales and pursued, among others, the bushranger Ben Hall.

In the early days in the CIU, Slade was close to Murphy and continued to answer to him in many ways even after Murphy went to the CIB and later to Cairns. He was aware of rumours but tended to discount them. “I had Murphy up on a pedestal,” he said. Later, after the CIU changed its name to the Criminal Intelligence Squad (CIS) and then the Bureau of Criminal Intelligence (BCI), Slade began to have doubts. Murphy’s public statements referred to “monitoring organised crime” but, as Slade said, “We weren’t allowed to work on organised crime, we were restricted to hit jobs.” Police officer Tom Noonan wrote an extensive report on upgrading the BCI to make it an effective instrument against organised crime generally, but the report, according to Slade, was canned by Murphy and Lewis.

When Slade’s intelligence work, particularly in North Queensland, led him in the direction of the Bellino family, he was told to leave them alone. He remembers Murphy telling him, “The Bellinos are the best informants in the world.” His workmate Alan Barnes simply said, “Leave the Italians alone.” Other older and more experienced officers cautioned him to “look upstairs” before getting too involved in some operations.

One of these officers was Assistant Commissioner (Crime) Bill MacArthur, described by Slade as “so straight it interfered with agent provocateur operations”. He gave Slade responsibility for North Queensland, where Murphy was then stationed as regional superintendent. Significant members of the Bellino family were also there.

Much of Slade’s work on his extensive northern tours was conducted for the Williams and Stewart royal commissions. As he became an expert on the marijuana and heroin trade in the north, he became increasingly reluctant to pass information through
Gambling, Drugs and Vice

particular officers of the Queensland Police. Much was sent to the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence (ABCI) which began to draw links between the Calabrian communities of Griffith in New South Wales and those around Mareeba in North Queensland. In 1984 Slade's work in North Queensland culminated in a document which later became known, inevitably, as the Slade Report. It too went to the ABCI and was a major impetus for Project Alpha, the bureau's study of the Calabrian crime problem.

The report is a dynamite document, received as a confidential exhibit by the Fitzgerald Inquiry, except for the mention of the names Geraldo and Vincenzo Bellino. It was headed "Summary of activities and associates of an organised group of persons in north Queensland responsible for the growing and marketing of cannabis in southern states and the importation of buddah sticks, hashish and heroin into Australia through far north Queensland". It detailed some of the alleged organisation behind the propagation of 240,000 marijuana plants a year and the annual importation of 20 kilograms of high-grade heroin, the circumstances of a murder, and a meeting held in a Cairns hotel to plan a takeover bid for the northern heroin trade. The following excerpt shows the style of the document.

Since the early 70s until his death in a motor vehicle accident in May 1982, LAZAREVIC had been involved in growing Indian hemp crops for Calabrians. The informant said that LAZAREVIC would receive his instructions from an Italian known to her as the "Marble Man". Enquiries show that the Marble Man is Vincenzo BELLINO of 31 Ponticello Street, Cairns. When LAZAREVIC contacted Vincenzo BELLINO within two days usually around 2 a.m. or 3 a.m. in the morning, Gerry BELLINO or Antonio BELLINO would deliver two 1 gallon jars of cannabis seeds to LAZAREVIC.

Slade concluded his report with the words: "As can be seen a good base of intelligence exists for consideration to be given for the commencement of a major operation."

Slade's work was criticised by certain Queensland police, before the Fitzgerald Inquiry and elsewhere. His informants were said to be unreliable and Inspector Col Thompson told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that Slade's reports were exaggerated.
Thompson, however, also admitted submitting a number of reports praising Slade and his work. The ABCI and later the National Crime Authority seem to have valued his work but their attempts to work in Queensland were long frustrated by the Queensland Police. In 1986, the Queensland Cabinet was briefed on Project Alpha and the Bellino family was mentioned. Antonio, Geraldo and Vincenzo Bellino have denied any involvement with drug growing or trafficking before the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

While drugs were a continuing problem, vice and illegal gambling again became a topic of public concern in the late 1970s. In Brisbane and on the Gold Coast, the number of massage parlours was on the increase. Periodically during the early Lewis years state government ministers had declared their intention to curtail prostitution but the statements were not followed by any of the promised new legislation or crackdowns. Ironically it was an unnamed prostitute who told the Courier-Mail that the Licensing Branch was proceeding against the owners of premises used for prostitution. In October 1978 the 23-year-old woman said four parlours had recently been closed and the frequency of "pinches" for the working girls had gone from one every three months to one a month. Official confirmation of the new campaign was still some way off when the Licensing Branch became the subject of new allegations of internal corruption.

It had been headed since January 1977 by Inspector Alec Jeppesen, previously noted for being the subject of criticism during the 1975 Southport SP Betting Case and the subsequent Lucas Inquiry. Jeppesen, to all accounts, ran the much criticised branch according to the law and in his early months as its inspector had presided over the aggressive campaign against illegal casinos that had seen Geraldo Bellino receive his one and only gaming-house conviction. SP bookies had been regularly prosecuted and prostitution kept from falling into the control of only one or two large operators.

Early in 1978, after an incident in which a number of Consorting Squad police visited a brothel and alluded to an impending takeover of the policing of prostitution by the CIB, Jeppesen began to collect information on corruption, past and present. He was, in any case, the main recipient of information in the office,
but now he was recording some of his informants. The officer who first got wind of the threats that the CIB, then under Superintendent Murphy, would move into the licensing area was plain-clothes constable Brian Marlin. As well as discussing corruption with Jeppesen and other colleagues, Marlin raised the issue with National Party backbencher John Goleby, who had the ear of the premier.

At Marlin's urging, Jeppesen met Goleby and played him a number of his taped conversations with informants, after which Goleby said: "You'll have to be careful about these informants, otherwise they'll end up with cement boots." Some of Jeppesen's tapes referred to the Herbert trial of 1975-76, and the alleged collection of money from SP bookmakers to pay for Herbert's defence. Tony Murphy was allegedly involved in this but he denied any involvement to the Fitzgerald Inquiry and said he was in Toowoomba or Longreach at the material times. However, a Toowoomba police officer, Detective Basil Glover, told the inquiry that in 1975 he had seen Herbert, Murphy, Inspector Terry Lewis and Detective Senior Constable Alan Barnes drinking together at a Toowoomba Hotel.

Lewis noted in his diary in April 1978 that Bjelke-Petersen had instructed that the responsibility for policing prostitution was to remain with the Licensing Branch. Lewis in turn advised Murphy that his men in the CIB were to stay out of the massage parlours "at this stage". Lewis also went to see Jeppesen, who considered the visit a veiled warning. Jeppesen alleged that Lewis told him that two officers from his Licensing Branch were giving information to outsiders and that such officers could find themselves transferred to a country centre "where it would cost a lot of money for a trunk line call to politicians in Brisbane". Jeppesen told Lewis about some of the information he had and also of his suspicion that his home was being watched. Lewis reputedly told Jeppesen that he did not want police investigating police but assured him that rumours of his impending transfer were without foundation.

In mid-July 1978 a meeting was arranged between the premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, Police minister Ron Camm, Goleby, Marlin and Jeppesen. The meeting was held in some secrecy at Lenons
Hotel and ended with an unresolved discussion about who should investigate the allegations. Jeppesen objected to the commissioner and some other senior officers on the grounds that all were friends of Jack Herbert. He suggested Superintendent Jim Voight, but Minister Camm objected on the grounds that he was a Whitrod man.

Inspector Basil Hicks, then of Mobile Patrols, received a call from Goleby on 4 September telling him to meet the premier at the Zebra Motel. It wasn’t his first contact with Bjelke-Petersen — he had earlier investigated a 1974 report from Detective Leadbetter that a prostitute had claimed to have visited the premier at the same motel. He had traced a Joh look-alike to Melbourne and later told a grateful, and puzzled, premier about it. Now the premier told Hicks he was worried that CIB superintendent Tony Murphy was going to become involved in prostitution again. Joh allegedly told Hicks he wanted him to take charge of the CIB from Murphy, but that the policing of prostitution would be left to Jeppesen and the Licensing Branch. Hicks warned Joh that when the news of his promotion leaked “they” would bring up statements to show him as “the greatest villain in the world”.

Hicks had been told back in April that Commissioner Lewis had a handwritten statement by Detective Leadbetter to the effect that a prisoner serving time on drug charges, Katherine James, was claiming she had a sexual relationship with Hicks at some time. Soon after, Hicks received a call from an old police colleague, who said he had been asked by the commissioner to sign a statement alleging various serious misdemeanours by Hicks. “The best news was he said he did not sign it,” said Hicks to the Fitzgerald Inquiry. But the diaries of Police Commissioner Terry Lewis contained a notation that the officer did sign the statement.

Police minister Ron Camm arrived at the meeting but when the premier told him of the plan, he wanted no part of it. “You put him (Lewis) there, you make the arrangements,” Camm told the premier. Camm’s response to Hicks was puzzling. He allegedly told him: “They followed me to the airport. I was taking a lady down to the plane.” Hicks said Camm appeared very worried but
did not elaborate on the comment. The premier asked Hicks to report back to him with a list of suggested transfers and also asked where Murphy should go. Hicks suggested he be put in charge of the Stores Depot, replacing disgraced former Licensing Branch inspector Arthur Pitts.

Katherine James was brought from Brisbane Jail to police headquarters on 6 September and a statement on her alleged involvement with Hicks was taken by Deputy Commissioner Vern MacDonald. It detailed the supposed incident in 1974 when vice and gambling operator Roland Short and private detective John Ryan had photographed her and Hicks in a compromising situation. Prison documents authorising Katherine James’s temporary release from the jail establish that this statement was taken on 6 September, but the statement itself, witnessed by Deputy Commissioner MacDonald and acting prison superintendent Ron Borinetti, bore the date 27 April. Police Commissioner Lewis, who kept this file in his safe (where it was later found by Fitzgerald Inquiry investigators), also noted in his diary that he had been shown the statement on 27 April. This and other statements gathered on Hicks were shown to Bjelke-Petersen and Hicks was later told by a senior colleague that “a job had been done on him with the premier”. (The Fitzgerald Inquiry heard later evidence that James was interviewed by MacDonald on 27 April. Two handwriting experts said signatures by James on the statement appeared to be forgeries.)

Hicks went to the jail with police officer Lorrelle Saunders on 21 September to see Katherine James. She had little to say to Hicks, but allegedly told Saunders during the visit that there were no compromising photographs of her and Hicks. According to Saunders, James said that Superintendent Tony Murphy and detectives Barry O’Brien and Graham Leadbetter had told her to say that there were photographs. James later told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that photographs did exist but private detective John Ryan, the alleged photographer, denied taking them. Murphy and O’Brien denied any involvement in wrongdoing before the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

Hicks, now out of contention for Murphy’s job, soon afterwards accepted a punitive transfer to Rockhampton and retired
early from the force. Lorelle Saunders faced serious criminal charges two years later and spent months in jail before being eventually acquitted. One of the principal witnesses against her was later convicted of perjury after a tape recording used in evidence against Saunders was shown to have been fabricated.

In September 1978 Lewis and other senior officers told a mystified Jeppesen that a transfer and promotion proposed for him had been blocked by Cabinet. Jeppesen refused a demand that he apply for a transfer; he later was warned that attempts would be made to set him up and noted that the Licensing Branch became the subject of adverse newspaper publicity. Constable Brian Marlin turned on his colleagues following an incident in October at the Cleveland Sands Hotel. An associate of Tony Murphy named "Snowy" Collins was charged with assaulting Marlin, but in state parliament it was alleged that Marlin had "pistol-whipped" Collins. Some of Collins's legal costs in the matter were allegedly picked up by the Police Department. According to his diaries, Lewis saw Marlin on 24 November:

24 November: "About 1.15 p.m. saw Marlin who said that Jeppesen and Dautel give (former minister) Hodges information which he passes on to (Labor member) K. Hooper, MLA. Jeppesen and Hicks meet twice a week in McDonnell and Easts under steps. Jeppesen has latest electronic devices knows who visits my office. Jeppesen, Dautel and Lumsden taking moieties money (used for paying police informants) for own use. Marlin and Newman approached to join group. Jeppesen hates Murphy and me. Jeppesen instructs staff to brick suspected SPs. Has staff watching Robertson and Pickering and Consorters."

Three days later, Lewis saw Marlin again:

27 November: "Saw Marlin re info that Jeppesen and Det Sgt Neilsen were feeding Goleby that Herbert, Freier, Leadbetter, Bellino were involved in drugs and gem racket. Allen Grant being able to confirm it. Marlin said it was conspiracy to get rid of Murphy and embarrass administration and that he told Goleby this yesterday."

The next day, Lewis saw Jack Herbert "re moieties generally and an Allen Grant who is in unit above him". (Herbert told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that about this time he commenced payments to Terry Lewis for the protection of illegal gambling on in-line
amusement machines. Before the inquiry Sir Terence Lewis denied the allegations.) On 11 December Marlin called on Lewis with a typed list of alleged misappropriations by Jeppesen of moiety money. Assistant Commissioner Hayes, Superintendent Atkinson and, later, Superintendent Murphy began an inquiry into the administration of the Licensing Branch and the alleged misuse of moiety money.

The worst predictions of Jeppesen's informants seemed to be coming true. Threats were made against some of his officers and the finger of suspicion pointed to Marlin. A car belonging to an officer caught fire and there were suggestions that the fuel line had been tampered with. A junior officer was charged departmentally and later sent out west. Jeppesen's pet dog was shot — a description of the vehicle that was possibly involved pointed to Marlin.

In January 1979, at the instigation of Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen, Cabinet overruled a recommendation from Police Commissioner Terry Lewis that Jeppesen be moved out of the Licensing Branch. The Opposition raised allegations of the misuse of money in the Licensing Branch but all Police minister Ron Camm would say was that police internal investigators had recently completed a probe into allegations about payments to undercover agents. Five weeks later Cabinet changed its mind and moved Jeppesen on, using as a pretext the Lucas Inquiry recommendation that no-one should stay very long in the Licensing Branch. Most of the rest of the Licensing Branch men who had served with him were also moved on, many to western police stations. Jeppesen was warned that Jack Herbert was involved in moves to have him included in civil action over the 1975 Southport SP Betting Case being mounted by alleged SP bookmaker Stan Saunders. This also happened. It would seem, looking back, that those who predicted disaster for Jeppesen had at the very least a good track record. Jeppesen retired on medical grounds in September 1979. Marlin was better looked after, according to Lewis's diaries:

5 May 1980: "Murphy called re Marlin wanting CIB and his meeting with Camm."

22 May 1980: "Advised Marlin of appointment to CIB."
Marlin eventually ended up in the Mackay CIB. The Fitzgerald Inquiry heard evidence that in 1986 Marlin and another officer were involved in sharing in the proceeds of a marijuana crop, interfering with investigations and court cases and offering money to other police.

A month after Jeppesen's departure from the Licensing Branch, state Opposition MLA Keith Wright read an extraordinary document into the record before state parliament, some extracts from which follow.

Just before last September Stan S, Queensland's biggest bookmaker and head of the biggest syndicate, stated that he would have the green light to move the centre of his operation back from Tweed Heads to Queensland. He claimed Inspector Jeppesen of the Licensing Branch was to be moved and that within a short time the other officers who were involved actively in investigating SP bookmakers would be moved. Shortly after this (an extremely senior police officer) called Jeppesen in and told him if he wanted promotion to apply to get out of the Licensing Branch.

S has moved back to Queensland and is now operating on three Gold Coast numbers and two in Brisbane.

S syndicate includes SP bookmakers Wesley John E (ex-NSW detective and drug runner), C and others.

Another large syndicate is operated by Brian M (Gold Coast) and Mick F (Brisbane). . . . Another leading light in this syndicate is Dr C.

Bob B is the head of another syndicate. He has had SP premises in Brisbane. B has been charged twice. He is associated with a woman Alice T in running a "Prices Information Service". He was employing 14 persons each race day in his business. . . .

Jim B runs another syndicate of SP bookies. His premises have been raided. One of his premises was raided and it was found that he had a payout of a quarter of a million dollars over three months.

In North Queensland Mick K in Cairns is the syndicate head and organises the SP business in North Queensland. He has a number of agents in hotels and one even in the brothel at Cairns. Not a lot is presently known of this syndicate. This syndicate was completely reorganised by police officer H while he was in Cairns.

In Mackay John H organises the SP bookies in Central Queensland including the mine areas of Central Queensland.

In Toowoomba B organises the SP bookies of Toowoomba and the Downs. . . . This organisation was actually set up by police officer M when he was a detective senior sergeant at Toowoomba. A senior police officer at Toowoomba drinks at an hotel in Toowoomba and the SP bookie for that hotel takes bets and settles in front of him.
Heads of the SP syndicates in Queensland have made an approach to police officer M with an offer to establish a fund of $60,000 as a pool with all syndicates contributing. This fund was to be sustained in advance and a weekly payment made to the police to protect the operating of SP betting in Queensland again. The police for their part are to nominate one person as a representative. This person was to inform the 'Fund' of any pending Licensing Branch raids on the premises of any contributor in sufficient time for any person not wanting to be convicted to be replaced at the premises by a nominee. The weekly payment to the police is to be $5000. The police are to concentrate their efforts on non-members of the "Fund".

The syndicate SP bookmakers have been hit hard by Jeppesen and his present squad members. There were 126 convictions under the Racing and Betting Act last year. The syndicate blame Jeppesen for their being unable to operate in Queensland. They are frightened they will go to gaol if Jeppesen continues to raid them.

Recently the Police administration tried to put Detective Sergeant L back in the Licensing Branch. Jeppesen would not have him back there. L with ex-Detective Sergeant H was the principal organiser of graft in that section before Jeppesen went there. They also want the Licensing Branch under CI Branch Superintendent M so he can transfer men in and out at his will.

The second form of protection is for the SP bookies to know who might inform on them. The only way they can obtain this information is for the police administration to insist that members working in the Licensing Branch record the correct names and addresses of informants. It simply is a matter then of a dishonest police officer obtaining this information and passing it on to the syndicate members.

It is interesting to note that the two senior police officers appointed to investigate Jeppesen were H who recently organised SP betting and gambling in the North Queensland area and A who has conveniently overlooked the activities of S on the Gold Coast.

While H was in Cairns the B brothers of Brisbane — well known organisers of betting and gambling — moved to Cairns and openly commenced gambling in premises known as the "House on the Hill".

Police Minister Ron Camm responded to this detailed barrage of information with the words: "It was obviously a cheap political gimmick. I can assure the House the Government has complete faith in Commissioner Lewis." SP bookmaker Stan Saunders and Superintendent Syd Atkinson went to the press with their denials. Nine years later the Fitzgerald Inquiry was to show much more interest in the unsigned document and try to establish who the author might have been. Jeppesen was asked
if he had written it and said on oath that he had not. Queries to his senior officers drew the same answer.

The campaign against the brothels did not long survive Jeppesen’s departure from the Licensing Branch. It was for a time spearheaded by Detective Sergeant Ron Lewis, an old Whitrod CIU man who had once lost out on a promotion after appeals which found support from Tony Murphy and former police union president Ron Redmond. In July 1979 Roland Short’s former associate Geoffrey Luke Crocker was fined $1100 for renting out two premises used as massage parlours. In August 1979 the “new tactics” of proceeding against the owners of premises were confirmed officially when Detective Senior Sergeant Jack Kimmorley told the *Courier-Mail* that police had forced the closure of seven parlours in six weeks. “We are going after the people who lease these buildings,” he said. “We are getting results.”

The most celebrated case, against a well-known Brisbane real estate firm, showed clearly that police faced no legal problems in closing down massage parlours. The company retained barrister Mr Des Sturgess to represent them but the magistrate found the police case adequate enough to fine the company $300. In later years police and successive Police ministers were to claim repeatedly they had inadequate power to act against massage parlours. They were also to claim that the number of massage parlours in the Brisbane metropolitan area had been reduced from 24 to a static figure of about 14.

Public perception at the end of the 1970s was that police had the vice scene firmly under control. The reality was that the stage had been set for its largest and most organised expansion.
4 The Crime Bosses

In 1978 former Sydney prostitute Anne-Marie Tilley arrived in Brisbane to negotiate a lease on a Fortitude Valley massage parlour owned by Geoff Crocker, who told her that the local police were then “straight”. Soon after she was joined by her de facto husband Hector Brandon Hapeta, ostensibly the owner of a Sydney petfood business. Early the next year Tilley bought the Top of the Valley massage parlour once owned by Katherine James. These were small and inauspicious beginnings but the pair were to revolutionise vice in Queensland, help fund the wholesale corruption of the Licensing Branch and eventually be exposed, first by me in the Courier-Mail and then before the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

Anne-Marie Tilley, then just 23, had been a Sydney street prostitute from an early age. Her criminal record is somewhat delicate in its treatment of this, merely noting that she had been before the courts on three occasions before her 17th birthday, charged twice with being exposed to moral danger and once with loitering for prostitution. After she attained legal adulthood at age 18, the charges became more frequent.

Hapeta, a huge New Zealander with a name more distinctively Maori than his appearance, was 36 when he joined Tilley in Brisbane. His life in crime also started early, with a conviction at age 15 for wilful damage, theft and burglary. In 1966, he breached probation and served a month’s jail. The New Zealand police file on Hapeta lists some associates, including Mr Asia gang member Peter Fulcher, now serving time for trafficking in heroin, and Rainton Hastie, known colloquially as the “Auckland Strip King”. Unlike them, Hapeta never made
it big in his native land and in the early 1970s he went to Sydney.

There he worked as a nightclub bouncer in Kings Cross, and on Tilley’s account they became common law husband and wife in 1973 when she turned 18. Tilley continued to work as a street prostitute, although she also said she and Hapeta had once tried to open a massage parlour at Granville, in Sydney’s western suburbs. Hapeta went into the petfood business. Police intelligence reports paint a slightly different picture. They associate Hapeta with Sydney criminal identity and one-time ALP figure Joseph Ladislaus Meissner, alias Karate Joe, alias Ivan Meissner, alias Ivan the Hoon, alias Machine Gun Joe. Tilley said she had some familiarity with the name but not the person.

Meissner is quite a well-known figure in the annals of New South Wales crime. A former Australian karate champion and unsuccessful candidate for ALP preselection, Meissner was once charged with but not convicted of conspiring to rig council elections and was interviewed in connection with the bashing of left-wing ALP state and now federal politician Peter Baldwin. These are complicated matters, now part of folklore: “The Love Boat Case” refers to claims, later withdrawn, by Meissner’s de facto Virginia Perger that she had been for a sex romp with unnamed political figures on Sydney Harbour; and the “Enmore Conspiracy Case” refers to the charges laid and later dismissed against Meissner, Perger and three others over machinations in the Enmore branch of the ALP.

A 1981 New South Wales Police crime intelligence report alleges an association beginning in 1979 between Meissner and Sydney business man Abe Saffron in pinball and electronic amusement machines. The report also said: “Hapeta and Meissner have been partners in the prostitution business since 1973 when they both ran a parlour in the western suburbs of Sydney. Hapeta went to Queensland around 1975 (sic) and has remained in close contact with Meissner ever since.” But Hapeta was certainly in Sydney in 1977 when he was charged with living off the earnings of prostitution there. Tilley implied that she and Hapeta came to Brisbane for the climate and the business opportunities.
On first indications, Brisbane may not have seemed any easier — Hapeta and an associate were convicted of possessing concealable firearms, namely automatic pistols, in August 1979 and Tilley was several times convicted of prostitution offences. And in December Hapeta fronted up to court again to face a charge of living partly off the earnings of prostitution. In this instance, however, the police did not proceed. It was a sign of things to come.

From January 1980 the Licensing Branch was headed by Inspector Noel Dwyer, who initially told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that he was very much against men being involved in organising prostitution. Later he admitted in evidence that the men organising prostitution were among those paying him off. Dwyer said the central figure in his corruption was Jack Reginald Herbert, the former long-term Licensing Branch officer who resigned from the police in 1974 and was acquitted of corruption charges in 1976.

Dwyer, a Catholic whose daughter and son-in-law followed him into the force, had heard of the Rat Pack when he was a Mackay detective and unhesitatingly identified the people involved as Terry Lewis, Tony Murphy and Glen Hallahan. He thought it a derogatory term but did not attach much other significance to it. Dwyer said that before going to the Licensing Branch he was not in any way corrupt but the Fitzgerald Inquiry heard evidence that he took part in weekly collections from an illegal gambling establishment in Mackay.

Herbert next approached Dwyer on the eve of his appointment as an inspector in 1980 and asked him if he would be interested in the Licensing Branch. Dwyer, who was not interested in a country posting, said he was. To judge from the evidence he gave to the Fitzgerald Inquiry Dwyer was a fairly incurious person but on this occasion he did query Herbert on why an ex-police officer seemed to be vetting police appointments. "I was supposed to see you first," said Herbert, by way of not too much explanation. Dwyer was told he was expected not to come down heavily on some protected games in Fortitude Valley.

Herbert gave a different account. He said that he had mentioned the possibility of protecting SP bookmakers to Police
Commissioner Lewis some time after he started paying Lewis for the protection of illegal gambling on in-line machines in about late 1978. Herbert said they would need an inspector or senior sergeant on-side in the Licensing Branch, but said he played no part in the removal of the incorruptible Inspector Jeppesen. When Jeppesen was on the way out, Lewis allegedly showed Herbert a list of inspectors who could be put in charge of the Licensing Branch. Herbert’s nominee was chosen, but did not respond to Herbert’s approach about “getting something going”. When that inspector moved on after only a year, Lewis again allegedly showed Herbert a list of eligible inspectors and Herbert chose Dwyer. “Are you sure this time?” was Lewis’s alleged comment. Dwyer got the job.

Herbert went to see him and told Dwyer he had recommended him for the position. Herbert said he thought they could get something going in the branch and he had a few SP bookmakers ready to enrol in a protection system. Dwyer agreed, the first SP bookmaker was enrolled shortly afterwards and the payments started. Just months later, according to Herbert, Geraldo Bellino and Vittorio Conte started paying protection for the illegal casino at 142 Wickham Street in Fortitude Valley at the rate of $4000 a month — Herbert monthly gave $2000 of this to Dwyer to spread around the Licensing Branch and passed $1500 to the police commissioner. Lewis denied the allegations of Herbert.

Among those who served as sergeants to Dwyer were Barry O’Brien, Ron Lewis, Harry Burgess, Peter MacFarlane, Allen Bulger, Neville Ross, and Graeme Parker. Ron Lewis, who in 1979 had proceeded successfully against the brothel owners, was to try and move against Tilley. Burgess was to serve an unusually lengthy term in the branch. Parker and Bulger were allegedly recommended as suitable senior sergeants by Herbert in conversations with Police Commissioner Lewis and became the next two inspectors of the Licensing Branch. O’Brien, close to Murphy and a veteran of investigative work for two royal commissions, possibly knew a little more about organised crime than most of his colleagues. He thought it objectionable that Hapeta, suspected even then of drug links, was organising so much of Brisbane’s prostitution and submitted reports and
running sheets about him. They were not appreciated and after an uncommonly short period in the branch O'Brien was moved on.

One constable who served under Dwyer and then Parker also became a significant figure in later years. Nigel Donald Powell had been a police officer in rough and tumble Birmingham in England before coming to Queensland where he joined the force in 1979. He was soon posted to the Licensing Branch and served two terms there, in 1979 and from 1981 to 1983. The tall, dark Powell was somewhat of a loner in the branch, developing sources and wanting to pursue leads. I was to find him a kindred spirit, uncomfortable with what he saw around him and keen to do something about it.

In the late 1970s, some effort had been put into prosecuting SP bookmakers or their agents. Ron Lewis chalked up some successes in this way. Powell, typically, started following the SP leads upwards, joining the Queensland Bookmakers Club and there developing a drinking relationship with the penciller for a large legal (and also illegal) bookmaker. He went to Dwyer with the proposition that he should appear to be sacked from the police to keep pursuing this line of inquiry. According to Powell, Dwyer, initially reluctant, took the proposal to the assistant commissioner and returned with the negative answer that it would be too hard to arrange. It would also upset “too many senior police and too many important people”. Powell, disturbed, approached Dwyer again, who this time denied saying anything about people of importance being upset. In giving evidence to the Fitzgerald Inquiry, Dwyer said he could not recall any of these incidents.

At this time, while the government was intent on appearing to crack down on the SP bookmakers, the police it seems were doing the opposite. TAB general manager Mr Charles Harriott told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that a system where the TAB agents reported SP activities in writing to the police was dropped on the instructions of Assistant Commissioner Syd Atkinson. After the change, there were many fewer prosecutions and the TAB found it correspondingly harder to get action, or even information, from the police. Police and Racing minister Russ Hinze made much in
1981 of changes to the Racing and Betting Act which increased the minimum SP betting fine to $15,000 and the maximum to a hefty $50,000. However, the legislative changes also removed any provision for fine defaulters to go to jail and the Fitzgerald Inquiry was told seven years later that most convicted SPs had yet to pay their fines. A deterrent it wasn’t — the SP bookmakers who had been forced south of the border by Jeppesen’s successful campaigns continued to move back into Queensland. Few large-scale operators were caught under the new legislation in any case, and Mr Justice Connolly observed in a judgment in 1985: “It seems odd that the resources of modern technology and the records of the telephone system cannot identify someone more prominent in the system than a 71 year old pensioner acting as treasurer of a $2 a week betting club of 10 persons.”

One SP bookmaker who had been charged was Terry McMahon, alleged to have been involved in a three-state betting operation. Police and Telecom investigators seized telephone equipment, took a number of bets over the telephone and charged McMahon. Plain-clothes constable Salvatore Di Carlo told the Fitzgerald Inquiry he thought it “one of the best cases, if not the best, we ever had”. But while Di Carlo’s brief was being readied for court the warrants were replaced with others that were not only incomplete but unsigned. Terry McMahon and his wife told the Fitzgerald Inquiry they had found such warrants in their yard after the police raid. However, inquiry legal officer Bob Marxson said in evidence that he had retrieved copies of the completed and signed warrants from the Justice of the Peace who had issued them. Di Carlo was soon afterwards given a punitive transfer to a uniform position. Despite reports commending his ability for undercover work, Di Carlo was unsuccessful in numerous attempts to be transferred back to plain-clothes work. After more punitive transfers he was boarded out of the force with a supposed psychiatric condition of paranoia in May 1987. One of the psychiatrists who made this finding about Di Carlo later told the Fitzgerald Inquiry: “I have had to change the notion of his having a paranoid disorder to his having what I would regard as a healthy suspicion.”
Sergeant Ron Lewis examined the McMahon brief and reported that the case was weak. The former CIU man from the Whitrod days was somewhat surprised to be told later by Dwyer that Commissioner Lewis had "appreciated the advice". Dwyer said it was Herbert who told him that Police Commissioner Lewis wanted the charges against McMahon dropped. Herbert, McMahon and Dwyer met in a city motel carpark. Dwyer said that Herbert told him the commissioner would have no trouble "pulling the charges" but Herbert said it was merely an introduction. Dwyer said Herbert later gave him his first bribe of $800 soon afterwards with the words "Sorry it is not more. The Commissioner is like a shark and he takes the big bite." Herbert denied this, saying he was already paying Dwyer and had said no such thing. Lewis denied receiving any payments.

Hapeta and Tilley meanwhile had been buying property in Brisbane's inner suburbs and setting themselves up in the escort agency game. Tilley was the brains, Hapeta the brawn, and he also held the purse strings. The operations of individual houses were entrusted to manageresses. The woman now known to fame as Katherine James claimed to have held such a position but Anne-Marie Tilley was later to say she thought James had never risen above receptionist.

James had gone straight for a period after her release from prison. Then, like many other prostitutes, she found that serving behind counters and the like had little to offer in the way of either excitement or remuneration. She looked up the massage parlour advertisements in the *Courier-Mail* and discovered that some thirty telephone numbers for "staff wanted" translated to only two addresses for interviews. At one address, she met with Hapeta and Tilley. At the other, she was interviewed by Geoff Crocker. She decided to go with Hapeta and Tilley and was back in the game.

In early 1981, less than two years after Hapeta and Tilley came to town, Sergeant Ron Lewis estimated that the income from their identified escort operations alone was running at the level of $250,000 a year. A major raid on Tilley's operations was set down for April 1981. Nigel Powell was one of the constables detailed for preliminary observations and it was while doing this
that he first laid eyes on Hapeta. He also saw and detailed some of the visits of Katherine James.

The raid went badly wrong. According to James, Tilley came down to one of the houses, rang all the others and told them to send the girls home by 7 p.m. She allegedly told James that Burgess had told her there would be a raid, but the next day's shift was to start as normal. Tilley herself told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that the tip-off had come from a female driver who had been told of the raid by her probation officer. Powell recalled that the entire Licensing Branch staff and a few former staff were brought in for the 7 p.m. raid, a large and, one would think, memorable operation. Dwyer, however, told the inquiry he could not remember it.

Powell later recounted that 15 minutes before the raid Burgess was called to the telephone, following which he went into Dwyer's office and then came out with the news that the raid was off. Later that night he told a group of police, including Powell, that the telephone call was from Tilley who said she knew of the raid, had closed all her premises and thrown a party for the girls. According to Powell, Burgess later nominated another officer as being responsible for the leak. Powell believed Burgess was responsible.

Burgess had a different story. He told the inquiry that from about 6 p.m. the police agents who were to make "bookings" for prostitutes had rung in to say the escort telephones were not answering. Then he had received the call from Tilley who told him she knew he had warrants on all her places "to get at Hector". The next day Burgess said he met Tilley in a city hotel and then brought her back to see Dwyer at the Licensing Branch office.

Tilley was breached on the basis of her previous convictions and, unexpectedly to all concerned, jailed for eight weeks by the magistrate. Hapeta left town.

Later in 1981, he came back and he and Tilley resumed their empire building. Powell's evidence was that his first knowledge of Hapeta's return was to see him walking the length of the Licensing Branch office and going into the inspector's office. Dwyer denied he received such a visit, and Burgess did not recall
it either. Burgess did agree that Hapeta had been in the office, to see him, but put the date a few months earlier.

For Powell, some clues to the puzzle were to come from an informant, Ron Feeney, a huge man and colourful character with a criminal history a mile long and an insider’s knowledge of a fair proportion of Australian jails. Feeney’s story was that Hapeta stayed with him in Melbourne while on the run from his fear of joining Tilley in a Brisbane jail. Other complications brought Feeney to Brisbane where he met with Dwyer and arranged for Hapeta’s safe return.

Powell, astute as he was, had little knowledge of the real story. He did realise that whatever it was that did happen in 1981, Hapeta and Tilley were from then on left to go about their empire building largely undisturbed.

In the background was Herbert and the shadows behind him. Dwyer said in evidence that he met with Herbert and Geraldo Bellino’s business partner Vittorio Conte and was told that Hapeta wanted to come home to Brisbane but not to jail. For this privilege he was prepared to pay. Herbert suggested a figure of $5000. Conte, who was after all in the syndicate that would be Hapeta’s principal competitor, allegedly said, “Make it $10,000.” Dwyer thought the scale a little excessive, given that Hapeta would only face the possibility of an $800 fine. Conte allegedly explained that he and Hapeta owned four massage parlours or escort agencies each and what was being sought was police protection of their businesses.

Dwyer was then on an $800 a month retainer which he shared with Senior Sergeant Graeme Parker. Soon after Hapeta’s return, Herbert gave Dwyer $3000 and told him to bring Burgess on to the corruption payroll. Dwyer, who thought Burgess uncommonly close to Anne-Marie Tilley anyway, gave Burgess his share of $1000 in $20 notes, telling him all he needed to know was that Police Commissioner Terry Lewis was in on it and everything was okay. According to Dwyer, Burgess simply said, “It’s about time.” Burgess’s account of this event didn’t entirely square with this except in his amazing lack of curiosity about where the money came from and what, exactly, he was expected to do to earn it. Herbert’s
monthly payments to the Licensing Branch went up to $2500 a month.

These weren’t Herbert’s only payments. Some of the Licensing Branch sergeants also got a bit on the side as well, which appeared in Burgess’s case to be related to Herbert getting some independent intelligence on the activities of Hapeta and Tilley.

However, Tilley had quite a different story when the Fitzgerald Inquiry finally got her into the witness box after she had spent nearly a year on the run. She said she had been to see Dwyer on her release from jail, despite being told not to do so by Burgess. She had asked for Hapeta to be allowed to stay in Queensland and for them both to be allowed to continue operating. Dwyer allegedly said, “I’ll send someone to see you.” That someone, according to Tilley, was Geraldo Bellino’s partner Vittorio Conte who visited her home, spoke to Hapeta, and allegedly collected either $5000 or $10,000 to ensure that Hapeta could stay in Queensland without being charged. But Hapeta was unhappy with the rest of the deal and told Tilley, “I’m not going to work with these Italians.” Back Tilley went to see Dwyer and this time he allegedly told her, “Well, I will send you someone else. Wait for a phone call. He will be called Tom.” “Tom” rang and arranged a meeting in the Valley and Tilley later identified him as Jack Herbert. He took a down payment of $4000 and granted permission for Hapeta and Tilley to open their premises again. According to Tilley, Herbert also encouraged the pair to expand their business — and the monthly payments, which reached a peak of $39,000 a month. Herbert’s account of the circumstances of his meeting Tilley was rather different but he did agree that the initial approach came from Dwyer who asked him, “Are you interested in a red shilling?” Herbert, knowing this to mean graft from prostitution, agreed and met Tilley. However, he was not totally forthcoming in telling Police Commissioner Terry Lewis where the new money was coming from — Herbert said it was from a perfectly respectable business man who had a few massage parlours. Soon afterwards, Vic Conte and Geraldo Bellino started paying for the protection of their prostitution outlets. Herbert said the largest payments from Tilley and Hapeta were $23,000 a month and those from the
Bellino syndicate, which included gambling, rose to a maximum $17,000 a month. Only Tilley has admitted making such payments and Police Commissioner Lewis has denied receiving any of the proceeds. Herbert denied encouraging Hapeta and Tilley to expand.

Expand they did, with or without encouragement. A new parlour, Bodymates, had been opened in the downtown Valley area, ostensibly operated by Jenny Feeney, wife of Ron. Behind the Feeneys — if not then but soon afterwards — stood Hapeta. Then, on the southside, Fantasia opened, the first of a new breed of Brisbane brothels that made no pretence whatsoever of being a massage parlour. Another, Cosmo, opened not long after that opposite the Mater Mothers' Hospital in Stanley Street, Woolloongabba. Tilley and Hapeta were setting the pace, the "Syndicate" — allegedly Geraldo Bellino, his partner Vittorio Conte and Geoff Crocker — was following suit, and the small handful of independents had no choice.

How prostitution, 1980s style, operated was best described to the Fitzgerald Inquiry by Katherine James, with corroborating detail given by Anne-Marie Tilley, Nigel Powell and other police officers.

In the new parlours the massage benches had gone and double beds had come in along with locking doors, deep pile carpet, spa baths, fully stocked bars, mirrors in the ceilings and videos in the rooms, as well as piped music and blue movies. The charade of the $10 compulsory massage fee had also disappeared — now the customer chose his delicacy from what was quaintly termed a menu before choosing the girl to provide it. One such menu, for Bubbles Bath-House, turned up as a talking point in state parliament. Reproduced next page, it is typical of its kind.

In Whitrod's days police had insisted that girls working in massage parlours be able to produce some qualifications in massage. They so insisted no longer and Katherine James was to find herself not infrequently massaging the great bulk of Hapeta at least partly because she alone had qualifications or competence in therapeutic massage.

Whereas police had once visited only in search of a booking or information, now they often just visited. Whereas parlour
operators were once told that having alcohol on the premises would result in charges, now the police were poured a drink or could even help themselves. Alcohol apparently was not all they helped themselves to. Katherine James was one of several prostitutes to give evidence to the Fitzgerald Inquiry that police helped themselves to the girls as well. The girls were still paid, but by the house — no payment was expected from the enforcing officers. James named a number of officers, all of whom denied the allegations. Tilley also named police officers but was restrained by counsel for the inquiry when she started to go into the sexual preferences of various officers. According to plain-clothes constable Bob Shambrook, who gave evidence of police other than himself having sex with prostitutes while on duty, Detective Sergeant Harry Burgess once castigated his squad with the words: “The grog and rooting bill over at Fanny’s (Fantasia) is too high and you guys are going to have to pull your finger in.” Tilley also told the inquiry that at times the police made a little too free with their “freebies”. On one occasion she had tried to deduct a payment from the money going to Herbert but he had told her that she couldn’t. After another occasion on which she complained to Herbert, the Licensing Branch inspector issued an
instruction that there was to be no alcohol in the parlours. However, this equally affected paying clients — Tilley again complained to Herbert and the alcohol ban was lifted.

Charging the girls with the offence of using premises for prostitution had become infinitely more genteel. While Police ministers and the press were still being told that officers had to demean themselves and get into compromising situations to detect prostitution offences, the reality was that a rotation system operated with girls being regularly booked, or “written up”, in a police officer’s notebook. Powell and a number of other officers giving evidence to Fitzgerald effectively scotched any notion that there were difficulties in “gaining evidence”. The old methods — using agents, gathering towels and the like — were only used when the police were down on an operator, which usually meant it was one of the independent brothels. Said Katherine James:

I was told by Hector (Hapeta) that (bookings) would happen around every six weeks. The money he paid to police was so that he wouldn’t be prosecuted and (booking the girls) would be done in a nice way without having to kick doors in. Really, it was just like the girls paying tax — if they put $50 a week away that would pay their fine every six weeks.

James said that with her past experience she soon found herself managing the brothel in inner city New Farm. Tilley could not recall this but said it was possible James had been the receptionist there. This ordinary looking weatherboard house had nothing in particular to distinguish it apart from a subdued red light at night. Inside, it was considerably more plush. James described two lounges, one for the clientele, another for the girls and visiting police. Her office boasted seven telephones, mostly to service the escort trade.

There were also some spa baths, the daily release of water from which caused the downhill neighbour some anxiety. The Health Department assured him he would be unlikely to catch anything from the water gushing across his lawn. The Brisbane City Council referred him to the police. The police, according to a document tendered to the Fitzgerald Inquiry, knew of no brothel there, only of a house used as an escort agency base.
Just a block away on the other side of the road was the New Farm police station. Two doors away, in an adjacent block of shops, was a sex shop, first known as The Keyhole, later as The Red Light. The New Farm brothel itself housed the main office for Hapeta's chain of sex shops, most of them situated conveniently close to one of his brothels.

After paying all the wages and bills in cash, James was left with about $5000 each week in profits. Once a week, at 10 a.m. each Wednesday, all the manageresses trooped over to the Spring Hill home of Hapeta and Tilley for the weekly accounting. Something like $75,000, earned largely through the labours of some 250 prostitutes, passed across the table each week, with Hapeta apparently often grumbling about how much would have to go to the police. Said James: "I suppose it was really Anne-Marie that was in charge but Hector thought he was in charge."

Hapeta nicknamed Sergeant Harry Burgess Harry the Bagman. From what James was told, she was under the impression that Burgess picked up the police take. Herbert she did not know, although she had heard Tilley talk of "The Man". Burgess, who denied picking up the brothel payments, said he also had heard Tilley talk of The Man and concluded this was Herbert. Tilley told Burgess that The Man had told her the "rent" on her individual premises was to be $1000 a month.

Tilley, however, told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that a matter of months after she started payments to Herbert, Burgess pressured her for "a couple of thousand a month". She recalled that his words were: "You'll have to be looking after me as well. I'm the man in the field." Tilley, who denied having had a sexual relationship with Burgess, did not give the impression she greatly objected to the demand and continued paying well after Burgess had left the Licensing Branch on the loose understanding he would one day come back as its inspector.

Katherine James herself earned more than $500 a week as manageress, once getting a $500 bonus after Hapeta advised her that she would be booked by the police. When she left Hapeta's employ, she went to work with one of the independent operators, where she noticed the police were around far more often to breach her and the other girls. The police didn't hang around to
socialise and certainly did not take off into the rooms with any of the girls.

James was saving her money, intent on opening a business of her own but unsure whether it would be a massage parlour or a hairdresser’s. She decided on a massage parlour and, on her account, contacted Sergeant Nev Ross at the Licensing Branch. The branch was then in a state of uncertainty. Dwyer, having been on sick leave for some time, was to retire and Senior Sergeant Allen Bulger, the replacement for Graeme Parker who had been promoted out of the Licensing Branch as an inspector in November 1981, had held the chair in Dwyer’s absence. (Dwyer said he had not wanted to involve Bulger, a personal friend, in corruption but was instructed to do so by Herbert. However, Herbert said he had recommended Bulger to Police Commissioner Lewis at the request of Dwyer and that Bulger had previously been receiving monies from SP bookmakers at Wynnum. Bulger denied all corruption to the Fitzgerald Inquiry.) Ross advised James to hold off opening her own parlour until it was known who the new inspector would be. It was to be Graeme Parker, the branch’s former senior sergeant.

Parker, like Dwyer, gave evidence to the inquiry of a hardly orthodox appointment procedure. He had been first offered the post in a meeting with Assistant Commissioner Syd Atkinson. On his appointment Burgess had told him, “Shortly you will get a call from a friend of yours you have not seen for a long time”. The “friend” was Herbert, who was able to tell Parker all the details of his meeting with Atkinson, which Parker took as confirmation that “top police were happy for the system in place to continue”. By way of further confirmation, Herbert handed Parker $2000 and, according to Parker, the pay envelopes for Burgess and Bulger. Bulger has denied receiving any benefit or favour in the course of his police duties.

Parker kept in touch with Herbert, whose initial instructions had been not to “over-police” gambling and prostitution and to protect six big SP bookmakers. Regularly Parker received calls from a Mrs Eaton, actually Mrs Herbert, to advise him of a meeting. He would attend, usually at Herbert’s home, and there on his own account take pay envelopes initialled for sergeants
Bulger, Burgess, brothers Neville and Trevor Ross, and Rodney Moore. Of these, Burgess has admitted corruption and Bulger and Moore have denied receiving any benefit or favour in the course of their police duties.

According to Katherine James, Sergeant Neville Ross came back to her with the news that since it was Parker who had been appointed it would be all right for her to open up, as long as she went to Fortitude Valley or Woolloongabba. James found a place just up the road from Hapeta's Cosmo brothel and, like it, close to the Mater Mothers' Hospital and the string of bus stops lining Stanley Street used extensively by private school students. Ross allegedly inspected the premises and approved, telling her the fee to open would be $10,000 and the payments thereafter $2000 a month.

James said that before the new brothel, Xanadu, opened, Ross took her to see Inspector Graeme Parker who set down guidelines for telephones, advertising and operations in general and cautioned her about drugs. Parker said this meeting did not take place. James spent $35,000 fitting out Xanadu and opened for business with about ten girls. She told the inquiry that before opening up she put $10,000 into a postal jiffy bag, took it across to the carpark of the nearby hotel and gave it to Sergeant Nev Ross. A few weeks later she allegedly put $2000 into a jiffy bag and again met Ross. A month later she did the same.

The routine was disrupted two days after that. According to James, Licensing Branch senior constable Brian Bastin appeared at the brothel, said that Ross had been transferred to another crew and that he would now collect the monthly payment. He demanded another $2000 of James who objected, not unreasonably, on the grounds that she had only just paid for the month. Bastin allegedly made it clear she did not have any choice. Before the Fitzgerald Inquiry, Bastin denied any involvement in corruption.

According to James, the Licensing Branch then started “coming down really heavy, coming in and telling the girls to leave there and go and either work for Hector (Hapeta) or Geoff (Crocker)”. James took a call at home from her receptionist asking her to come down to the premises. When she got there,
Bastin was waiting to book her with the more serious charge of keeping premises for prostitution.

Said James to the Fitzgerald Inquiry: “I tried to find out what was going on. I made several phone calls to Nev Ross, none of which he returned. I rang Nigel Powell because Nigel was Nev Ross’s partner at the time.” James said that Powell knew she was having a personal relationship with Nev Ross. He passed on the message but the calls James was making “three or four times a day for a couple of weeks” were not returned. Half a dozen times she tried to ring Graeme Parker — he also did not return the calls.

A new officer appeared on the scene, using the old tactics to gain evidence, sending in agents, confiscating towels, parking a police car outside to discourage patrons and arresting rather than summoning girls. Detective Sergeant Colin William Maxwell Dillon was a contrast to the rest of the branch and as a result was always something of an outsider. He was most obviously different in being part Torres Strait islander. Dillon also had more than a touch of the idealist about him. He lectured his men on the dangers of the temptations they were exposed to and worried about the prostitutes, many of whom he did not think capable of making a Vegemite sandwich.

All Dillon had ever wanted to do in life was join the police force. He joined up in 1965 and modelled himself on a superior officer, Keith Harris, who eventually retired as far northern regional police superintendent. Said Dillon: “I admired him so much for his honesty and integrity I pretty well tried to follow in his footsteps.”

Dillon was told that James was involved with drugs and that the brothel was unacceptably close to the hospital and school bus stops. He went about stolidly enforcing the law. Parker, who had been told by Herbert that Hapeta and Tilley were most upset about James’s new parlour, instructed Dillon to find and visit the brothel’s landlord. Dillon did so and was shocked when the landlord revealed a recent conversation with Parker. Pressured by Dillon nevertheless, the landlord eventually issued an eviction notice after being threatened with charges himself.
Katherine James had meanwhile received another visitor—her old employer Hector Hapeta, owner of the Cosmo brothel and sex shop just down the street. Hapeta offered her $10,000 for the brothel she had spent $35,000 fitting out. She refused and he offered her the position of manageress, with him getting 70 per cent of the takings. According to James, he said: "You'd better think about it seriously or you'll be closed in two weeks and you'll lose everything anyway." James wasn't persuaded. Her landlord pulled the plug three weeks later.

The plug on Col Dillon's world was pulled soon after. Just before Christmas 1982 Burgess followed him out the door of the office and asked: "Would you be interested in making some easy money? The beauty of it all is you don't have to do anything for it." Dillon was amazed. He later told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that he thought Burgess was joking. But Burgess pressed on regardless of Dillon's uncertain reaction.

"I'm talking about $400 a month, $400 a month and all you have to do is you don't see certain things happen and you don't be in certain places at certain times," Burgess said. Dillon was horrified but Burgess ploughed on: "Nobody will know about this. You could be walking into the toilet one day, I might pass you on the way and bump into you and you'll have $400 in your pocket. There's no need for you to know who is paying or where it's coming from."

Dillon stalled for time, saying he needed to think about it, and Burgess assured him there would be no hard feelings no matter what he decided. In reality Dillon had no need to think about the offer. As he later said: "I knew to accept that offer would be terribly wrong and I wanted no part whatsoever of what he'd offered me." Not unreasonably, he thought Burgess part of a larger whole of which his boss, Parker, might well be a part. He could think of no-one in the force whom he felt able to trust. He rang his old mentor, Keith Harris, who advised him either to try to expose Burgess or decline the offer apologetically in such a way as not to appear a risk to Burgess and whoever stood behind him. Dillon's instinct in the face of the unknown was to follow the second course. A week later he told Burgess: "I've thought
about it hard and I have decided no. I’ll just continue on and do my own thing.”

One morning closer still to Christmas Day, Dillon came in, clocked on and went to his locker. He had, he thought, the only key. He expected to see only his revolver, ammunition and documents. Inside the locker was a bottle of Chivas Regal Royal Salute whisky in its velvet drawstring bag. “Did you get your Christmas present?” asked Burgess not long afterwards. “I beg your pardon?” said Dillon. “There’s a bottle of scotch in your locker and it’s good stuff too,” said Burgess. “Thanks,” said Dillon. Later he queried Burgess about the origin of the bottle. Burgess told him not to worry, it was a present. Almost five years later Dillon produced the bottle to the Fitzgerald Inquiry where it became Exhibit 194. Said Dillon then: “I used to speak to that bottle every night and say, ‘Why did I ever bring you home?’”

Dillon wasn’t the only outsider in the branch. There was Constable Nigel Powell, who was also going through mental torture. It says a lot about conditions in the branch that they did not trust each other. One day, in the privacy of a police car, Powell made a tentative approach to Dillon, telling him of his concern about the growing control of vice by Hapeta and Tilley and the influence of others like the Bellinos and Conte. Dillon made an unspecific promise to help Powell gather the evidence. Privately, Dillon was distrustful because he thought Powell was already engaged in the undercover work and reporting directly to Parker. Dillon had already raised the name Hapeta with one junior officer and was told: “You don’t discuss that name around here.”

Powell was doing undercover work, but despite rather than because of his superiors. He had developed good contacts in the underworld and should have been as prized for his ability as Dillon should have been for his integrity. Both were shunned, Powell ultimately to leave the force in disgust, Dillon to put on 12 kilograms in weight in less than two years with the Licensing Branch.

Powell’s information flow from Feeney dried up after Burgess visited him on the Gold Coast, where Feeney was then living.
Powell had got as far as questioning Feeney about links between Hapeta and Burgess and had urged him to come to Brisbane and pass on his information to Parker, superior officer to both Powell and Burgess. Burgess discovered this no doubt alarming information about Powell's activities and passed it on to Parker.

Powell by then had other informants and his picture of the Hapeta organisation continued to grow. But little came from within the Licensing Branch. Burgess in particular seemed concerned to scotch any talk that Hapeta was involved in prostitution or that Tilley was prominent in the industry. At Parker's request Bulger interviewed one of Powell's informants who alleged links between Hapeta, Abe Saffron and some of his associates. Bulger also admitted reading a BCI report describing Hapeta as a significant organised crime figure and detailing his Sydney links. Later he told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that his information was that Hapeta was not significant in the prostitution industry. Powell had then been two years in the branch on his second stint. Rumours that his position was under threat led him to check his future with Parker, who gave every impression of being quite happy with his work. Powell continued in pursuit of Hapeta and Tilley despite the growing hostility of Harry Burgess.

His reports were submitted directly to Parker, who however declined Powell's requests for him to be detached to work full-time on Hapeta and Tilley. Powell twice asked to be allowed to work on gathering evidence to breach the pair — Parker twice refused the request, telling Powell he was mistaken and that his own information was that Hapeta was not involved in prostitution. The second time around and in some of his reports Powell raised the possibility that Hapeta had a mole in the office. Parker told Powell not to concern himself with Hapeta.

Powell took no notice. In April 1983, he reported that the escort agencies were paying protection money to Hapeta of up to $1200 month. He also said that Hapeta was himself answerable to people in Sydney. A few days later he said his informant had named those people as Peter Farrugio, Abe Saffron and "Gus" and he predicted that Hapeta would within two weeks to a month open an unlicensed club in the city area.
Hapeta did open a club, Pharaoh’s, in the specified time but the quality of Powell’s intelligence was not impressing anyone of authority in the Licensing Branch. Powell recalled to me his distinct impression at the time that any visits he made to the new nightspot would not be welcomed in the branch. At the time, he believed he had found a weak link in the Hapeta network — a truck-driver cum escort agency operator named Tony Woodford.

In early June, Peirker telephoned Powell at home and told him his name was on a transfer list for a uniform job at the Woolloongabba police station. Powell, not surprisingly, wanted to know what he had done wrong. Parker said he had done nothing wrong.

Powell, with little to lose, now visited Pharaoh’s in the city. He adopted a pretext from information he already had, mainly to cover his partner from any repercussions. Hapeta, Tilley and the proprietor of one of Brisbane’s main orthodox nightclubs were there. So was Woodford, whom Powell knew to be ready for a trade of information. Tilley was anxious that Powell not get into a huddle with Woodford and kept sweeping him on to the dance floor. Much later on he was asked how well he knew Tilley. “Well enough to dance with,” he said.

He wrote out what was to be his final report and slipped it under Parker’s door. Parker thrust it back at him with some annoyance, telling him to pass it to the CIB on the basis of the minor criminal matter he had used as the pretext for visiting Pharaoh’s. Powell was disgusted — the report more pertinently dealt with Hapeta, who should have been a subject of much interest to the Licensing Branch, and indicated the possibility of cracking the organisation through the weak link, Woodford.

Powell, more than a little upset at his impending transfer, had applied for one of six vacancies, an unusually high number, at the CIB but saw them filled by officers he thought junior to himself in terms of service and experience. He went back into uniform, in police forces everywhere considered a demotion. But his time supervising roadworks was fairly brief — ability soon put him into the Prosecutions Branch where he was well regarded by the newspaper journalists covering the courts. He resigned from
the police force in February 1986 to study geography at university.

Dillon soldiered on for a while longer. By chance he found evidence which appeared to show links between Hapeta and Tilley and the supply of heroin to prostitutes in the brothels. He also found scant interest in it shown by his superiors.

Girls in the brothels often dropped the name John the Jeweller but strongly resisted any questioning about him. And the man, whose frequency of mention suggested he must also have been a frequent visitor to a number of brothels, seemed to have the happy knack of never being around when the police were — except once. On this occasion Dillon had changed his routine and went unexpectedly into Tilley’s Fantasia brothel. There he saw a man bending over an expensive and distinctive briefcase, a man he knew from five years previously as John MacKinnon, alias Price, self-confessed heroin addict and pusher.

“What are you doing here, John?” asked Dillon. “It’s cool, it’s legit, I am selling jewellery,” said MacKinnon. Dillon had some doubts about this but declined an invitation to inspect the goods on the grounds that he “couldn’t tell a piece of glass from a diamond”. He did, however, order MacKinnon’s car and person to be searched but when nothing was found, had to let him go. Two days later and quite coincidentally another police squad found MacKinnon with drugs and a large sum of money and charged him.

Dillon shortly thereafter went to Pharaoh’s where he told the manager that he believed him to be employed by Hapeta and Tilley. The manager alleged that he didn’t know who owned the club, who employed him or who paid him. Dillon requested that the interview be continued in the man’s office. There he recognised a familiar briefcase, but, predictably, the manager did not know who owned it or how it came to be there. Dillon, in typical fashion, lectured the manager to the effect that he had a responsibility to find the owner of such an expensive briefcase.

Dillon confiscated the briefcase and, removing the locks, discovered a lot of keys and a bound foolscap book inside. Dillon turned his attention to the book, finding the names of massage parlours, the names of various women, references to jewellery and amounts and percentages of money. And there was a note:
Lisa will help you sort out this mess. Sorry it comes to you at a bad time. I just got mixed up in the heroin again. It is quite a disease. Please give Lisa a chance as she has about 300 clients and ready access. She can write up as much as myself with a little training and guidance from yourself — thanks mate.

Dillon was familiar with the name Lisa — it was a pseudonym used by Anne-Marie Tilley. Tilley, when she finally appeared before the Fitzgerald Inquiry, could offer no explanation for the note, except that the Lisa mentioned may have been MacKinnon’s girlfriend. She said she knew MacKinnon, but only as one of a number of people hawking anything from jewellery to paintings through the brothels.

Dillon did not think it likely that girls he doubted could make a Vegemite sandwich would be buying jewellery with the regularity or to the extent indicated. Parker instructed Dillon to pass the information to the Drug Squad. He wasn’t overwhelmed by their response, but was surprised when Parker told him to go ahead and interview his main suspects, the untouchables Hapeta and Tilley.

Dillon took off for Hapeta’s Spring Hill home and was most surprised to find that “Anne-Marie Tilley bounced out as if expecting us”. Hapeta was inside, sitting behind a large desk which matched his size. According to Dillon there was “quite an elaborate telephonic system, far better than what we had back at the Licensing Branch”. The interview didn’t go very far — Tilley went next door and returned to say she had been in contact with a solicitor and Hector’s only responses were monosyllabic grunts. Dillon, however, did note the presence of another similar briefcase. After some prompting before the Fitzgerald Inquiry, Tilley recalled Dillon’s visit but said she was not expecting him. She thought it may have been Harry Burgess she rang, not a solicitor, and it was Burgess’s advice that neither she nor Hapeta was required to answer Dillon’s questions.

The telephone was ringing as Dillon re-entered the Licensing Branch office. He heard on the other end of the line a “mature male voice” saying, “I believe you have a briefcase there. My solicitor has advised me I can seek its return.” Parker said there
was no reason to hold the briefcase taken from Pharaoh's. End of investigation.

Katherine James, out of a job but still intent on the oldest profession, went to see Geoff Crocker. She started at a Kangaroo Point brothel, Pinky's, working for the organisation known generally as the "Syndicate", older and more diversified than Hapeta's outfit.

The "managing director", as employees sometimes called him, was Geraldo Bellino, a person already familiar to Katherine James from the days when she allegedly worked at the illegal casino above Pinocchio's nightclub in the early 1970s. According to the account given by James to the Fitzgerald Inquiry, Geraldo Bellino was effectively the head of the "Syndicate". He admitted to a prominent role in Brisbane's illegal casinos but denied any connection with prostitution. Off to one side, said James, was his brother, Antonio Bellino, who was to deny any connection with any illegal enterprise. Vittorio Conte filled a slot as "executive director" but principally concerned himself with gambling operations. Geoffrey Luke Crocker, assisted by his wife Julie, could be equated with "general manager, flesh trade operations". His deputies were Allan Keith Holloway, who also filled a managerial role in the sly grogging division, and Kim Ryrie, eventually promoted to "manager, North Queensland marble processing operations". Also in Cairns was elder brother, Vincenzo Bellino, also often known as "The Marble Man".

With such a weight of executives the "Syndicate's" operation was highly centralised. Hapeta had given significant local responsibilities to his manageresses, but here, under the "Syndicate", Katherine James was not promoted beyond part-time receptionist.

However, according to James, this did allow her to attend some of the weekly board meetings after a few months. These were held at 142 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley, which was, in any case, the hub of the Brisbane operation. On the top floor was the largest of the two Brisbane casinos at that time owned by the "Syndicate". On the ground floor, with a painted window giving some indication of what was on offer, was Bubbles Bath-House, brothel.
Said James: "Bubbles would put sometimes 80 clients through of a Friday or Saturday night because of the gambling upstairs. They used to use it in such a way that if someone lost a lot of money upstairs they would give them a free visit downstairs to ease the pain." In the basement there was a substantial laundry operation where "Crocker Cleaning Services" washed loads of towels a day, different colours for different massage parlours. There was also furniture in storage — mainly brothel furniture currently excess to requirements. And the boardroom, no less.

Granted, the boardroom furnishings were spartan when compared to many a less profitable large company, but the basics were there: a table, a safe, a board with 60 spare keys and a number of telephones (though not as many as an escort agency). The "Syndicate" adopted much from the aggressive and innovative Tilley, the brains behind Hapeta. It is not known whether it also adopted the meeting time, 10 a.m. on Wednesdays.

Geraldo Bellino was generally in charge, with Antonio Bellino standing in when he was absent. Books and receipts were checked, mainly by department heads. Geraldo often seemed to be mainly concerned to discuss gambling with Vittorio Conte, who has since written a book on the card game blackjack.

Katherine James remembered some snaps of the discussions. Pinky's, the Kangaroo Point brothel was to be renovated. Julie Crocker was allowed about $30,000 for the improvements and if there were any budget over-runs the extra money would have to be drawn from the takings. "Gerry Bellino always had to OK that money being spent," she told the Fitzgerald Inquiry. Geraldo and Antonio Bellino both denied any involvement in prostitution in evidence before the inquiry.

The renovation of Pinky's had an interesting sequel. When the work was done, Geoff Crocker held a party to celebrate and, on Katherine James's account, invited a number of Licensing Branch police and token representation from the nearby Woolloongabba police station and the Drug Squad. James was one of 10 girls paid an all-night booking fee to pander to the needs of guests and she told the inquiry that the party had a gangster theme. She named a number of police, all of whom
denied being present. She said some of the same police had later been to a Melbourne Cup party at Pinky’s, but all of those she named also denied their presence there.

Relations within the “Syndicate” were not always harmonious; Allan Holloway in particular seemed to incur the wrath of more senior executives. On one occasion he had been responsible for organising a bucks party above the East Brisbane brothel Caesar’s. The crowd had run amok, overfilling baths and flooding the brothel downstairs. On James’s account, Gerry Bellino headed the party of senior executives which inspected the damage and a decision was made at a weekly board meeting that no bucks parties were to be held upstairs while the brothel was open for business. That this had occurred was denied before the inquiry by counsel for both Bellino brothers.

I had joined the *Courier-Mail* in July 1982, a very junior reporter with a background in student newspapers, suburban throwaways and motorcycle magazines. A certain adeptness at finding and interviewing derelicts, streetkids, prostitutes, homosexuals and Aborigines led to some of my colleagues dubbing me “Raincoat”. It was in this guise that I made occasional visits to the casino at 142 Wickham Street, following up the visits with the occasional story beginning, “There is an illegal casino operating at . . .” which typically would be followed by a reaction—but no action—from the police. After my marriage broke up I moved from the suburbs to the fringes of the Valley. In a sense, I lived among my contacts.

Perhaps because I had recently lived in squeaky clean Canberra and perhaps just because I had a distinct enjoyment of mischief, I enjoyed writing about the venal corruption of public and official life in Queensland. On the “raincoat round” I picked up names like Gerry Bellino, big in gambling, and Hector the Protector, big in vice. I also quickly discovered the conventional wisdom among journalists that in Queensland the whole system was corrupt and especially the police force. Particularly in regard to the police, conventional wisdom had not resulted in much action to expose corruption.

There were exceptions, of course. In state parliament the ALP’s Kev Hooper had inherited Col Bennett’s responsibilities
for annoying the police in general, and Minister Hinze, Commissioner Lewis and Assistant Commissioner Murphy in particular. Hooper, a rabble rouser with the figure and manner of a Queensland cop in caricature, took on this role with particular relish. He died suddenly in March 1984, aged 56. Many things he raised came up later in evidence before Mr Fitzgerald QC, so much so that some of his supporters advocated calling it the Kev Hooper Memorial Inquiry.

Among Hooper's more notable sallies into the field of organised crime were identifying Roland Short — he called him "nothing but a standover thug" — and continually warning of the crime and drugs links with massage parlours. He nominated three illegal casinos in Fortitude Valley and in 1981 named Geraldo Bellino and Vittorio Conte in parliament as the "Mafia" figures who ran them.

The Police minister, Russell Hinze, had two responses to this: the casinos were non-existent and anyone who said they did exist was a liar. The next day Courier-Mail reporter Matt Robbins described 142 Wickham Street in an article under the byline "By a staff liar" and offered to take one of Hinze's staff on a tour. The offer was declined. The Fitzgerald Inquiry later heard that Hinze had asked the police to show him where the casinos were and that police had provided Licensing Branch inspector Noel Dwyer as a tour guide for the drive around Fortitude Valley.

Hooper later went further, identifying Sergeant Ross Beer of the Consorting Squad as a frequent visitor to the casinos. Beer, he later claimed in parliament, had taken meals up to Geraldo Bellino when he was in hospital. Beer denied the allegations and the government, as usual, ignored them. Bellino later told me he had never been in the private hospital concerned.

In March 1982, the ABC programme "Nationwide" broadcast extensive allegations of police corruption, mentioning the group called the Rat Pack but not the names of those allegedly involved. Those making the allegations on camera were two former Licensing Branch police, Kingsley Fancourt and Bob Campbell. They spoke about alleged attempts to bribe police by Geraldo Bellino's associate Luciano Scognamiglio in 1974 and 1977. This did provoke reaction, not least from Murphy and
Lewis who identified themselves and Glen Patrick Hallahan as
the Rat Pack and issued writs for defamation against the ABC,
Fancourt and Campbell (these were still unsettled in mid-1988).
Detective Sergeant Reginald Neal Freier, who had been charged
with Jack Herbert in 1974 and later acquitted, also identified
himself as one of the unnamed police in the programme; he sued
for defamation and later picked up a settlement of $30,001 from
the ABC.

A tide of abuse was the initial reward for Fancourt and Camp­
bell. Police minister Russ Hinze called the “Nationwide” pro­
gramme a “soap opera on a par with ‘General Hospital’”. In
almost the same breath he announced he would seek Cabinet’s
approval for a permanent tribunal to look into complaints
against police. But this would not have given Campbell and
Fancourt much comfort. Hinze went on to say: “I am giving
further consideration to ensuring protection against frivolous or
unfounded malicious accusations being made before the tribunal
by people with undesirable interests.”

Hooper called for a royal commission. Hinze ignored him, and
found an unlikely ally in barrister Des Sturgess QC, who said the
material presented by the former police did not warrant a royal
commission. The Queensland Bar Association dissociated itself
from Sturgess’s remarks, with president (and later Federal Court
judge) Mr Bill Pincus QC saying the claims should be investi­
gated and not met with a “barrage of personal vilification”.
Sturgess took the unusual step of resigning from the association.

The Police Complaints Tribunal was announced within the
month. It was to be headed by Judge William Carter of the Dis­
trict Court, keen racing man and chairman of the Catholic Social
Welfare Commission. The other members were Redcliffe magis­
trate Mr Phillip Rodgers and police union president Senior
Sergeant Col Chant. The bottom line, however, lay in the tri­
bunal’s charter — if it thought an investigation warranted, it was
to be carried out by the police Internal Investigations Unit. In
the words of more than a few critics, this meant police investigat­
ing police, and not in public either.

Hinze, the huge, rough-and-tumble “minister for everything”,
did not long survive as Police minister after his gaffe in calling
the Valley casinos “non-existent”. In December 1982 Hinze, developer, gravel pit owner and racehorse owner became the minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing. The Police portfolio was given to William Hamline Glasson, 57, former far western drover and minister for Lands and Forestry. Glasson’s response when his daughter was let off a traffic offence a few weeks after his appointment was to march her down to the police station and insist that she be charged. But the straight shooter was soon in trouble with the entrenched interests of the police force who marched deftly behind his back to report directly to the premier. Down at the Port of Brisbane Authority one could easily imagine a wry smile crossing the face of Max Hodges, the last straight shooter Police minister.

In an April 1983 interview with *Sunday Mail* political reporter Nick Maher, Glasson made the entirely reasonable observation that the open operation of massage parlours and casinos was linked in the mind of the populace to toleration and perhaps worse on the part of the police. “I’ve been told that some police go to these places to get pay-offs,” said Mr Glasson. “Police are shocked that Mr Glasson should make a statement like that,” said union president Senior Sergeant Col Chant, who as a member of the Police Complaints Tribunal added that the tribunal had “not even heard a whisper about corruption” in its twelve-month existence. The union sought an official apology and put Glasson in Coventry, saying they would talk to the premier instead.

They did, and Premier Joh talked to Glasson. After the conversation Glasson said if there was corruption in the force it was very minimal and he would work together with the police union on the problems of organised crime and police corruption. Premier Joh denied any special link with the police union.

In June 1983 Judge Carter of the District Court became Mr Justice Carter of the Supreme Court. His place on the Police Complaints Tribunal was taken by District Court judge Eric Pratt. Judge Pratt was a close personal friend of Police Commissioner Terry Lewis whom he had met when he was a police officer in Victoria. Since then Pratt had joined the Papua New Guinea Police and had then gone to the bar in Papua New Guinea in
1965. He was admitted to practice in Queensland in 1972. In that year he had been charged in Papua New Guinea with encouraging a person in lawful custody on a criminal charge to escape custody after police had intercepted a telephone call. A minor scandal erupted over the practice by police in Port Moresby of putting telephone taps on lawyers, and questions were raised about the legality of the taps and the interpretations put on the results. Liberal MHR and later Defence minister Sir James Killen revealed in *Killen: Inside Australian Politics* (1985) that he had visited Port Moresby and later spoken to the new Australian Labor government's attorney-general Lionel Murphy about the issue; in 1973 Murphy directed that the proceedings against Pratt cease.

The closeness between Lewis and Pratt was highlighted when the police commissioner's diaries were released before the Fitzgerald Inquiry. On 16 December 1979, Lewis noted in his diary: "Eric Pratt phoned re QC appointment. Phoned Hon Lee (minister for Administrative Services) re same." Pratt became a Queen's Counsel on 31 January 1980. In August 1982 Lewis spoke to Pratt and Transport minister Don Lane about Supreme Court vacancies. Pratt became a District Court judge on 29 October 1982.

A number of diary entries record Pratt's progression to the position of chairman of the Police Complaints Tribunal.

12 May 1983: "Sir Edward Lyons phoned re speaking to Premier on Pratt."
22 May 1983: "Phoned Judge Pratt re complaints tribunal."
30 May 1983: "Hon Lane phoned re Judge Pratt for tribunal."
22 June 1983: "Phoned Pratt re appt to Police Complaints Tribunal."

Judge Pratt was appointed to head the Police Complaints Tribunal on 7 June 1983. His term was controversial and many of the tribunal's decisions attracted criticism from legal circles and in the media. Lewis's diaries suggested that he and Judge Pratt discussed cases before the tribunal or incidents likely to become the subject of complaint. When the diaries were released Judge Pratt denied any improper action and said any references to him in the diaries were "innocuous or incorrect".
The system by now seemed almost armour-plated to the water-line. Hapeta and Tilley had built a thriving and profitable empire, rivalled only by the “Syndicate” with whom they co-existed happily enough. Those who had tried to attack this monopoly — like Nigel Powell or Katherine James — were now in positions where they could do no harm.

Terry Lewis was in unchallenged control of a police force which had withstood every attack made on it with a comfortable margin of safety. Relations with the police union were by and large harmonious and there was the security of the often denied but nevertheless very special relationship with the premier which could, if necessary, bring troublesome ministers to heel. In the lead up to the 1983 state election, Police Commissioner Terry Lewis was quoted as saying: “The people of Queensland and the Police Force owe the Premier a very deep gratitude. The free enterprise policy of the Bjelke-Petersen government has been responsible for Queensland’s tremendous growth.”

For a senior public servant to make such a public declaration in the context of a closely contested election would have been unthinkable anywhere else in Australia. But this was Queensland and, politically, 1983 was an extraordinary year. The Liberals, whose time as coalition partners had been marked by only occasional but still quite troublesome pangs of conscience at the numerous departures from Westminster convention, were ejected from the coalition by the premier in August after Liberal minister Terry White voted with the Opposition, was sacked by his party leader Dr Llew Edwards and then defeated Edwards in a party room leadership spill. Premier Joh called an election five weeks early and the Liberals were reduced from 22 members to 8. On election night the Nationals were just a whisker away from being able to govern on their own. Two former Liberal ministers, Brian Austin and former police officer Don Lane, quickly defected to the National Party, giving Joh the numbers. He had achieved the impossible and now dominated the political scene to the extent that favours could now be bestowed and favourites appointed in surprisingly open fashion.

The police and their political masters were, however, about to be attacked from a different angle. High moral tone was about
to be confronted not just by the spectre of homosexuality but by its official condonement and even its appearance in blue uniform.

For the forces of darkness, although they did not know it at the time, it was to be the beginning of the end.
5 Sex for Sale Scandals

Not the least cause of the new problems for the police and government was Hector Hapeta, then as big in vice rackets as he was physically. When Brisbane’s once furtive homosexual community had grown big enough and bold enough to service a number of late-night venues in the Valley he moved in to take over the newly established homosexual brothels and escort operations.

One of the original proprietors of Brett’s Boys and the House of the Praetorian, holders of franchises from Sydney, was later to tell Chris Masters of the ABC “Four Corners” team what happened. Speaking from the shadows to the “Four Corners” camera, he said:

My associate and I operated for a very short time in this side of the field. We had difficulties with the police, we had difficulties getting ads placed in magazines, we had difficulty placing ads in the Courier-Mail and the Daily Sun. We went and saw Hector at Trinity’s night-club... we struck a deal and um... then that was it, we no longer owned the business.

When Masters asked how much Hapeta was paid the former brothel operator said 70 per cent of the gross earnings. In reply to Masters’s astonishment at this he said: “Well, 30 per cent of something is better than nothing.” The size of Hector’s personal cut was never revealed but the operator said he was told some of the money would be “spread among the boys at the Queensland Police Force”.

This unequal joint venture was profitable enough, the signs of which were increasingly blatant activity and increasingly blatant advertising. Two Courier-Mail journalists, Tony Koch and
Matthew Fynes-Clinton, moved in to investigate. On 10 December 1984 Koch, Catholic family man, solid son of a solid Queensland police officer, and one of the most able reporters in Queensland, began a story: "A child pornography and male prostitution racket is operating in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast. Some of the children and prostitutes involved say the ring leaders pay off crooked policemen so the racket can operate."

That day, the House of the Praetorian and Brett's Boys, the two brothels, torched records which included index cards on customers. Two days later the police descended. Police spokespersons accused the Courier-Mail of jeopardising sensitive investigations, which was viewed by journalists as a fairly routine and predictable response. The story caused a storm, adding further weight to an already raging controversy centred on sensational allegations of paedophilia and child pornography involving, among others, a prominent radio announcer and an equally prominent police officer.

A week later, on 18 December 1984, David Moore, a just-retired 29 year old police constable, appeared in court charged with indecently assaulting two youths. Moore had been for some years the most widely known police officer in Queensland with a higher public profile than Commissioner Terry Lewis. A regular churchgoer and eventually the father of five children, he was the face of the force's extended public relations section and a local television star. Allegations about him had first surfaced two years before but had been buried. The television station which featured Moore twice a week on children's programmes had queried Commissioner Lewis about him and been told he had "a clean bill of health". The police union executive had also raised the allegations with Lewis who allegedly said he did not care about Moore's after-hours activities because he was doing such a good job in public relations.

In parliament, the Opposition had raised the cover-up again and again. Bill Glasson, the straight but somewhat flatfooted Police minister, was faced with a barrage of well-informed questions about the then unnamed police officer from the ALP's shadow Police minister Wayne Goss. Goss alleged, Glasson spluttered, and then confirmed embarrassment after
embarrassment. Parliament rose early, as it often did when the government was taking a hammering, but this had been one of the worst sessions many members could recall.

Ultimately, after trials and appeals that dragged on for years, Moore was convicted of sexual offences against youths and jailed. Closing parliament did not have the desired effect of easing the discomfort of government or police force. The furore surrounding Koch’s articles and the charging of Moore in December 1984 was such that the state government, as ever reluctant to inquire into anything, went overboard and ended up with two inquiries. Sir Joh, for some of this time in London, weighed in with the usual comments that there would be no inquiry but he too eventually accepted the inevitable.

The first to inquire was Judge Eric Pratt, head of the Police Complaints Tribunal which had discretionary powers, rarely used, to investigate on its own initiative. Koch repeated what he had been told of police involvement in the gay brothel scene. What the tribunal made of it no-one knows. Probably no-one cared much, because the headlines soon switched to the government’s inquiry into child sexual abuse, pornography and prostitution which was headed by Des Sturgess QC. Sturgess, who had served on the Lucas Committee, was given reponsiblity for the new inquiry in January 1985, a month before he was due to take up his new appointment as Queensland’s first Director of Prosecutions.

He wrote an interim and then a final report for the government. In November 1985 the Justice minister Neville Harper commented that child abuse and molestation appeared to be more prevalent than anyone thought and then refused to release the report. When it was “released” soon after, by Tony Koch rather than Harper, it turned out to be something of a two-day tabloid wonder. Sir Joh and Terry Lewis later said they had not read it and neither gave any impression they thought this a dereliction of duty. Critics said the report would not pass a Psychology I exam and the legal profession baulked at recommendations aimed at overcoming the problems of children giving evidence in court. Certainly it was not greeted with the rush of activity promised by the headline-seeking Harper.
But the report did provide one of the departure points for the media investigations that eventually forced the Fitzgerald Inquiry upon a reluctant government. As part of his research, Sturgess had dispatched his clerk to gather information on the prostitution industry from advertisements and title searches. Without too much difficulty the clerk had found more brothels than were admitted in the police annual reports and the names of the owners of the premises. In his report, Sturgess identified these people by numerical code and referred to their apparent immunity from prosecution. He was just as scathing about the Licensing Branch’s failure to police prostitution as he had earlier been in the Lucas Report. Nothing had happened then, and nothing happened now. While lawyers, clergy, social workers, politicians and commentators discussed the report back and forth the police were very, very quiet.

The release of the Sturgess Report in November 1985 and media interest in the brothels had a dampening effect on the vice industry. This was very short-lived — it soon became clear that the government and the police intended to continue their previous policy of masterly inactivity, and business in brothels was soon thriving again. As the Fitzgerald Inquiry later heard, the Licensing Branch went from excess to excess. It became not uncommon for a proprietor such as Geoff Crocker to hold a party for police officers, with girls thrown in. The occasions varied but an officer’s retirement or a new extension to a brothel were some of the events that were celebrated.

Licensing Branch inspector Graeme Parker was promoted to superintendent and out of the branch in August 1985 and replaced by Inspector Allen Bulger, his former senior sergeant. Early in Bulger’s term, Assistant Commissioner Ron Redmond required him to act against Brisbane’s thriving sex shops. The Licensing Branch closed down four of the pornography outlets, leaving Hector Hapeta with a near monopoly on the business with his four. Parker became the Assistant Commissioner (Crime) in January 1986 and assumed control over the Licensing Branch from Redmond in July. With the new responsibilities he went back on to Jack Herbert’s payroll — at the rate of $1000 a month.
Bulger's longest serving senior sergeant was Noel Kelly, who like many Licensing Branch officers was previously posted to the Wynnum CIB. Kelly later told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that he, Bulger and Harry Burgess all received payments of $50 per Saturday afternoon race meeting from a local SP bookmaker, Frank Keenan, during their various terms at Wynnum. Kelly told the inquiry that during his service at the Licensing Branch Jack Herbert was paying $2000 a month to the inspector (Bulger), $1600 a month to the senior sergeant (Kelly), and lesser amounts to sergeants and one senior constable. Herbert said he collected up to $55,000 a month and passed up to $10,000 monthly to Police Commissioner Lewis and $6,000 monthly to Assistant Commissioner Parker. Herbert also detailed payments to other police whose service records included Homicide, the Bureau of Crime Intelligence, the Drug Squad, and various royal commissions. These included Alan Barnes, Pat Glancy and Barry O'Brien, all close associates of former assistant commissioner Tony Murphy. Before the inquiry, Lewis, Murphy, Bulger and O'Brien denied any involvement in corruption or wrongdoing.

In December 1985 I took National Party backbencher Leisha Harvey on a tour of Fortitude Valley. Gay bars were in the news in the wake of the Sturgess Report and in a number of articles I had detailed their patronage by under-age streetkids, among whom prostitution was increasing. Harvey, a National Party member whose statements of social concern sometimes put her offside with the supporters of true development, had sought more information from me so I challenged her to come down to the Valley and see for herself.

As we toured the Valley I pointed out to her the thriving casino at 142 Wickham Street and I also took her to a strip club and a sex shop operated by Hapeta. In no uncertain terms I told her that the open operation of vice in the Valley brought ridicule at the very least on the police force and lent credence to the persistent stories of graft and corruption. At her invitation I wrote a report which was circulated to a number of government departments, including the police. A senior police officer wrote a confidential answering report, largely discounting my
observations and allegations. He later telephoned me and to my surprise professed some agreement with a number of my assertions. What was in his report, he said, was what he had to say. Without any clear purpose in mind at that stage I began to cultivate contacts in the Valley and on the fringes of crime.

The Moore fiasco and the damning Sturgess Report apparently hadn’t hurt the standing of Commissioner Lewis in the premier’s moral eyes. The knighthood denied Lewis in 1982 because Buckingham Palace felt it was too close to the OBE awarded to him in 1979 was awarded in the New Year’s honours list of 1986. The diaries of Sir Terence Lewis were later to show that, at the very least, the knighthood came as no surprise to him.

23 November 1982: “... Then Premier phoned re speaking to Hinze then re speaking to Governor re honours.”

20 August 1985: “... Premier said he would submit my name on Honours recommendation but I must maintain secrecy.”

10 November 1985: “Sir Edward Lyons phoned. He said he had more than three hours with the Premier and discussed knighthood, E. Pratt and Hon Hinze.”

11 November 1985: “… (Governor) Sir Walter Campbell asked me if I would accept a Knight Bachelor from the Queen and of course I said yes.”

12 November 1985: “… Saw Sir Edward Lyons re possible knighthood and possible new political party.”

Murphy kept up frequent contact with Police Commissioner Lewis after his retirement in 1982, Lewis’s diaries showing that Murphy rang or was consulted on matters of police promotion and transfer after that date. They also show the two men lunching together with others including Jack Herbert, former superintendent Horrie Robertson and publicans Barry Maxwell and Reginald Tegg. Two of these lunches coincided with Tegg being on criminal charges. Controversy arose at Tegg’s trial when more serious and uncontested burglary charges were dropped by the Crown; Murphy appeared to give character evidence for him and a reference was produced from Lewis. Murphy also spoke to Lewis about TAB agency vacancies and Lewis in turn spoke to TAB chairman Sir Edward Lyons. Murphy was later awarded the TAB agency at Dunwich, on Stradbroke Island where he had
set himself up as a horticulturist. TAB general manager Charles Harriott told the Fitzgerald Inquiry he had falsely recommended Murphy to the TAB board for this position on the insistence of Sir Edward Lyons. Murphy also campaigned for the police union secretary’s position, but later withdrew to throw his support behind successful candidate Tom Mahon. Jack Herbert told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that Murphy, on the eve of his retirement, said: “If you hear of anything illegal Jack, don’t involve me.” Murphy also allegedly said he had received an approach to become involved in an illegal deal with Gold Coast SP bookmaker Jack Meekin but had turned it down.

Glen Hallahan emerged from farming retirement in early 1986. In March he was given the post of chief insurance investigator for Suncorp, the not really independent state government insurance company. Tony Murphy entered the business of insurance investigations soon afterwards, using Jack Herbert as one of the referees for his private investigator’s licence. Former superintendent Horrie Robertson also worked as an insurance investigator for Tony Murphy on the Sunshine Coast after his retirement in 1984. Robertson, Murphy and Hallahan were all linked in various ways to business man Des Scanlan from way back and all four men were prominently mentioned by Shirley Brifman in her 1971 records of interview with Whitrod’s CIU. Scanlan and Brifman had given nearly identical evidence to the 1963–64 National Hotel Royal Commission. In 1976 Robertson had become the second-largest shareholder in Scanlan’s Sunshine Coast tourist development The Big Cow. Scanlan went on to become a millionaire developer on the Sunshine Coast and in Brisbane. Herbert gave evidence to the Fitzgerald Inquiry that, on behalf of a third party, he had paid Hallahan $3000 for “fixing” an insurance investigation in 1986. Hallahan has denied any impropriety before the inquiry.

Jack Herbert gave evidence that in 1984 the Police Commissioner, Terry Lewis, had said to him that they needed someone in the Bureau of Criminal Intelligence and mentioned the name of Senior Sergeant Alan Barnes. Herbert approached Barnes, who readily agreed to his request to provide any information on
Geraldo Bellino and the game in the Valley. Herbert paid Barnes the first monthly instalment of $500 on the spot. Lewis has denied the allegations of Herbert. In early 1985 Barnes allegedly attempted to bribe undercover BCI officer Jim Slade. The bribe attempt was bungled, and in any case Slade declined to be bribed. But the incident came to the notice of ABC "Four Corners" reporter Chris Masters 18 months later.

Slade's service in North Queensland had left him increasingly disillusioned and distrustful of some of his colleagues in the Bureau of Criminal Intelligence and he had passed more and more information directly to his federal contacts. On 21 November 1984 he submitted his intelligence report on the North Queensland drug trade which mentioned the alleged involvement of members of the Bellino family.

On 8 February 1985, while a number of BCI officers were drinking at the Police Club in Brisbane, Alan Barnes engaged Slade in a quiet conversation, of which Slade gave this account to the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

Barnes: "How would you like a bit of extra money?"
Slade: "Yes, every little bit helps."
Barnes: "As you know, I have got my ear to the ground and I can organise most transfers that people want."
Slade: "Yes, I am aware of that."
Barnes: "Do you know that Graeme Parker, Harry Burgess, and Judge Pratt and the Bellinos meet at Jack Herbert's house and this is where most of these things are sorted out?"
Slade: "Oh, shit."
Barnes: "Terry Lewis knows all about these meetings. So a bit of extra money wouldn't go astray?"

Slade told his partner, Detective Constable Ian Jamieson, and one of his federal contacts about the conversation. Later he warned his superior, Inspector Col Thompson, that there might be a leak in the office and later told him too of the conversation. Slade was now caught in the bind he had been trying to avoid for years. He had some knowledge of Barnes receiving calls from inspectors and sergeants about appointments and then taking these matters up with Murphy, both while he was the assistant commissioner and after he left the force in 1982. He
had no way of knowing whether meetings occurred at Herbert's house as described by Barnes. In evidence to the Fitzgerald Inquiry, Herbert, Parker and Pratt all denied any such attendances or meetings and it seems extremely doubtful that any such meetings occurred.

On 30 March 1985 Senior Sergeant Barnes picked Slade up at Brisbane airport on his return from a court appearance in North Queensland. Slade later told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that before Barnes started the car, he fished in his pocket and came out with a bundle of $20 notes and said, "While I think of it, here you are." "Thanks mate," said Slade. "From Uncle Gerry. Have a drink," said Barnes. "That's great," said Slade. Two days later he told Inspector Thompson what had happened. More significantly, he also told his wife Christine who doled out his pocket money at the rate of $30 a fortnight. Slade later told me he had no intention of "being owned by Gerry Bellino for a lousy $100 a month". The money, for the time being, went into an exhibit bag and under the waterbed while Slade wrestled with the dilemma of not wanting to dob in a mate and not wanting to accept a bribe.


Slade told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that he saw a much more concerned Barnes later the same day. Barnes called him aside in the Police Club and told him, "The boss (Thompson) put it on me that I had told you to lay off Gerry." Slade said, "Oh shit, mate, that's not right. . . . Mate, I haven't breathed a word to anyone." Later Barnes wanted him to "swear on a stack of bibles" that he had not told anyone. Slade again said he hadn't but professed concern about Thompson's queries. Barnes now reassured Slade, saying, "The bloke I get the bread off knows I give $100 of the $300 to another bloke in the squad but he doesn't know your name."
Slade, willingly or not, was collecting evidence. He had put both payments into exhibit bags with the time and date recorded, shown them to his wife, and placed them under his bed. He began taking notes of the conversations and informed Inspector Thompson and his partner, Detective Constable Jamieson. Slade was not prepared to put a tape on Barnes, fearing that would lead to his own undoing in the police. But Jamieson put a tape on Slade — it was later submitted, with all Slade’s habitual coarseness of language, to the Fitzgerald Inquiry. Christine Slade suggested he speak to someone outside the force, like Director of Prosecutions Des Sturgess. A meeting with Sturgess was arranged by a solicitor, at which Sturgess advised Slade to go back to Thompson with the money. Slade saw Thompson without the money and later told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that while Thompson was upset at what was happening in the branch, he did not give him the guidance he was seeking.

The end of May approached without any further payment from Barnes. Slade next heard from him a few days into June when he rang and arranged to visit Slade at his home in Logan City on the southern outskirts of Brisbane. Christine Slade was unhappy about this arrangement, so when Barnes called in to the Beenleigh police station to seek directions to Slade’s house, Slade had someone tell Barnes to meet Slade at a shopping centre. Fearing a set-up and the possible presence of other police, Slade grabbed two guns, told Christine to ring Inspector Thompson if he wasn’t back by a particular time, and left the house.

But Barnes was alone and, according to Slade, drunk, tearful and harmless. As the time limit approached, he brought him back to his house “so Col Thompson would know that he did not have two dead police officers on his staff”. There Barnes admitted in front of Christine that he had given the money to Slade and mentioned the name Bellino. “There was nothing in the money I gave you,” he said. “I never asked you to do anything or not to do anything.” Why had Slade dobbed him in, he kept wanting to know. Slade did not admit to dobbing him in. Christine Slade at one stage thumped the table and said to Barnes, “Why the hell have you done it? Why have you done this
to us?” She later offered him the use of the couch for the night but he drove off not long before dawn. Barnes told the inquiry he would not give evidence unless subpoenaed.

Thompson had by then seen Assistant Commissioner Ron Redmond and an internal investigation had started. Inspector Roland Dargusch was later to tell the Fitzgerald Inquiry that in the course of the investigation he interviewed Slade, Barnes and Geraldo Bellino but had never been told by Thompson of the meetings at Herbert’s home. Thompson passed on his information that Parker was allegedly involved but destroyed his notes on the allegations of the meetings. He also ruled out any surveillance operation on Herbert’s home on the grounds that Barnes would either be doing it or get to hear about it.

Barnes told the investigation that the money was a personal loan to Slade and asked for it back. Dargusch passed on the request and Slade complied. Dargusch considered there was insufficient evidence to prosecute but that Barnes should be transferred out of the branch because of the morale problems he was said to be causing.

Slade later told me it was a mistake to tell anyone in the police force. Of the internal investigation he said: “They were just going through the motions.” He told the Fitzgerald Inquiry he regretted reporting Barnes and was sorry for what he had done to him. Soon after the internal investigation Thompson told him, “Sorry Jim, you have to go.” Slade had heard talk of western Queensland, which was in fact where Barnes ended up going, and put up quite a performance. He was called up before Parker who asked him to pick some CIB position in the state and apply for it. He picked Beenleigh, near his home, where there were then no vacancies. “I was surplus to requirements for 14 months,” he later told me. “That’s unheard of.”

At Beenleigh the CIB boss was Senior Sergeant Ross Beer, who, according to Slade, told him, “Anyone who does what you did deserves whatever he gets.” However, Inspector Sullivan at Beenleigh took a quite different attitude, telling Slade he expected the loyalty that Slade had given Thompson. Slade sat down at Beenleigh, shunning the Police Club and any visits to Brisbane he could possibly avoid, and hoping the whole episode
would fade away without further damage to his career. It wasn’t to be so. The story of the improbably bungled attempt to bribe Slade started to circulate, eventually reaching the ears of Walkley Award winner and ABC “Four Corners” reporter Chris Masters, who had excellent contacts among what he called “a network of honest cops”. Two years later Slade was destined to recount these events from the witness box at the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

The Nationals had governed Queensland on their own since 1983 and had to face the voters again in 1986. In many ways their tenure had been troubled. Central to many of the scrapes the government had got itself into was Sir Edward Lyons, a close personal associate of Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen and Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis. Lyons had long been known to have great political influence — he was a trustee of the National Party, was knighted in 1977 for services to commerce and finance in Queensland, and, over Liberal Party objections, became chairman of the TAB in 1981. He was reputed to have had a backroom role in the elevation of Florence Bjelke-Petersen, Joh’s wife, to the Senate in 1980 and the controversial elevation of Mr Justice Dormer Andrews from seventh to second in seniority on the Supreme Court in early 1982. Sir Edward Lyons also claimed to have prevailed on an allegedly unwilling premier to allow himself to be nominated by his government for a knighthood in 1984.

Sir Edward’s career was always controversial. In late 1981 he refused police a roadside breath analysis test and was taken to the city watchhouse for a test which revealed a blood alcohol content of 0.12 per cent. He telephoned Police Commissioner Terry Lewis and was released without being charged. The documents were retrieved from a rubbish bin and found their way into the hands of journalist Ric Allen at the *Sunday Mail*. Sir Edward was later charged on summons, pleaded guilty to the charge and was fined $175 and barred from driving for four months.

He later survived two dishonourable mentions in state parliament over the investment of $6.5 million of TAB money with a merchant bank of which he was the chairman, and an attempt to have the TAB buy for $700,000 a building which a company
chaired by Sir Edward had previously been unable to sell for $485,000. Racing minister Russ Hinze announced he would oppose any further extensions to Sir Edward’s term as TAB chairman.

When irregularities were revealed in Sir Edward’s telephone betting account in April 1985 the TAB board voted for his removal. Sir Joh considered disbanding the board and sacking Hinze but, in the end, it was Sir Edward Lyons who went. Two days later he also resigned as deputy chairman of the board of Queensland Television Ltd. This was another controversial appointment, with both premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen and executives of the Bond Corporation denying that there had been any political interference in the appointment of Queensland directors. The Broadcasting Tribunal at first agreed, but has since found it necessary to inquire into the settlement of a defamation action in favour of the premier for the unusually large sum of $400,000. In May 1985, after an ultimatum from the National Party executive which went very much against the wishes or arguments of the premier, Sir Edward also resigned his position as a National Party trustee.

He was involved in further controversy a year later when, without calling tenders, the government announced a proposal to sell most of the Lindeman Island national park to a subsidiary company of East-West Airlines chaired by Sir Edward. Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen was typically unperturbed by the public outcry but it was an election year and many of his backbenchers and the party organisation did not share his views. East-West pulled out of the deal with the state government after three weeks of damaging headlines, and Sir Joh told reporters: “Congratulations. You’ve lost 2000 jobs.”

The state election campaign in late 1986 was to all appearances one long series of disasters for Joh and the Nationals. Another National Party trustee, Sir Roderick Proctor, shocked the establishment by appearing on ABC television to accuse the government of cronyism, socialism, shonky tendering practices and high state taxes. A succession of polls suggested the National Party government would be out on its ear after only one term,
the most likely result being a return to coalition government in partnership with a resurgent Liberal Party.

Election day was Saturday, 2 November. The Nationals looked to be in deep trouble, despite the latest redistribution. All the reporters in the tally-room knew which seats to watch — the Nationals would survive or go down with the Brisbane metropolitan seats they had taken from the Liberals last time around. Early figures were, as always, confusing and the Sunday Sun led off its first edition with the headline "Joh in peril". Even as the paper was hitting the streets reporters were watching the tally-room boards with increasing disbelief: with one exception the city Nationals were hanging on and the government was riding back into power.

Sir Joh emerged to the loud cheers of his supporters with the words, "I have some wonderful news for Queensland — we will have a strong and stable government for the next three years." It was a sombre and subdued gathering of journalists after the counting finished that night. For some the only bright spot was that Transport minister Don Lane was in trouble, hanging on in Merthyr by just 50 votes. Lane had been one of the two Liberal ministers who defected to give the Nationals government in their own right after the 1983 poll. Now it seemed that the Liberals might take back his seat. It was nearly two weeks before Lane could claim a 22 vote victory, later lifted to a 31 vote victory after a recount.

December came. The politicians went off to their electorates or the Gold Coast, the courts closed down and the new Courier-Mail chief of staff Bob Gordon went through all the usual contortions required to keep journalists gainfully employed. Gordon, recently arrived from Canberra, developed a fascination with a small triangular-shaped building in the Valley which housed the Top of the Valley massage parlour, the Love Art sex shop, a tattooist, and the so-called Talent Plus photographic studio. He detailed a journalist to find out who owned this "sin triangle" and an interview was conducted with an elderly Greek couple who didn't appear to do extraordinarily well out of owning the building.

This story wasn't published and Gordon handed the assignment on to me with the words, "Find out who owns Sin
Triangle.” I pedalled my bicycle down to the Valley. At the massage parlour, a place where I had previously been evicted while working on other stories, the receptionist again declined an interview. At the sex shop, the manager was rather more talkative about his good relations with the Licensing Branch but claimed not to know whom he worked for. I went back to the office.

Despite this hardly encouraging beginning I somehow had an idea I should profile the whole sex industry in the city. I told Bob Gordon vaguely what I wanted to do and set to work identifying massage parlours from their newspaper and telephone directory advertising. Something in me rebelled at the use of the euphemism massage parlour so I rang each in turn to establish whether it would fit a working definition of a brothel. Over the telephone the various receptionists were quite co-operative in telling me what was available and for how much. Most, however, baulked when I revealed my true interest. The more friendly ones among them said confidently that I wouldn’t get anywhere. Others just hung up. But they had helped me draw up a list of 21 brothels operating in the Brisbane metropolitan area.

I resisted the temptation to write a story straight away, drawing a contrast with the Police Department Annual Report claim for the last three years that the number of massage parlours remained constant at 14. My list instead was carted around the offices of the Brisbane City Council and the Valuer-General’s Department until I had a list of 21 owners of buildings. Prominent among them were Allan Holloway, Geoffrey Luke Crocker, Hector Hall and Anne-Marie Tilley, names which meant nothing to me then. Holloway and Crocker seemed to be in some sort of partnership and some of the buildings they owned were connected in advertising to a company named Timcorp Pty Ltd. Down at Corporate Affairs I found that Holloway was the secretary of Timcorp and that Vittorio Conte had been a director before resigning in favour of Kim Ryrie. I also found that Hector Hall was a company director and his partner in one company was an Anne-Marie Hall.

The paper trail was getting interesting. I hadn’t searched any business names, thinking that the operator of an obviously illegal business would hardly be likely to register a business
name. But I was wrong. Anne-Marie Tilley, or, rather, Mary Hall, was especially jealous of her business names and lived at the same address as Hector Hall, company director. Vittorio Conte had held the business name of the World by Night strip club for a while before passing it on to a company. Back to Corporate Affairs. The company’s principal executive officer was Geraldo Bellino, who seemed to share an address with Allan Holloway.

With Hector the Protector and Geraldo Bellino I was back to names I had heard before. Looking at my list of brothels again I had what appeared to be two syndicates with majority control of vice and just a few independents. I started checking my new knowledge carefully with street and police contacts and the next big break was a hurried look over the criminal records of prostitution’s big six: Hector Hall, whose real name was Hapeta, his partner Anne-Marie Tilley and the “Syndicate” of Geoff Crocker, Allan Holloway, Vittorio Conte and Geraldo Bellino. I wrote the details down in a frenzy and tried to fix the faces in my mind. I had some doubts about this. Geraldo Bellino, for example, the person I had seen in the Valley, looked nothing like the Geraldo Bellino on the file.

I next looked up relevant sections of the Sturgess Report and compared my names with his code numbers. I contacted Sturgess and checked with him seven identifications of his cryptic code numbers. One only, and that a minor player, I had wrong. It was now early January and I had been working on the project on and off for the best part of a month. The draft, naming who was who in organised vice and pointing to police inaction against the principals, was received quite nervously by chief of staff Bob Gordon. He suggested I rewrite the story as a catalogue of brothels, to be safe. I thought this would be unreadable and have no impact, and refused.

I was sent to see the Courier-Mail’s defamation solicitor Mr Doug Spence. He removed three lines to remove the danger of writs from a fast-food chain and from Inspector Allen Bulger of the Licensing Branch. The story was returned to a still very uncertain office. “If any of this is wrong, Dickie, it is more than your salary,” said the editor David...
Smith. I went on holidays with the assurance it would be published.

Published it was, a trifle apologetically I thought, on the front page of the Courier-Mail on Monday, 12 January 1987, under the headline "A year after Sturgess, sex-for-sale business thrives unchallenged" (see overleaf).

The story, appearing with no warning, caused a storm. I had no idea what it would contribute to in the next 12 months — the downfall of a premier and two of his most senior Cabinet ministers, his hand-picked police commissioner, an assistant commissioner of police and the beginnings of the remaking of Queensland society. To all appearances, however, the public official reaction was routine. Police minister Bill Gunn said there were only 14 massage parlours in Queensland and there was no evidence that prostitutes were working in them. It was vintage National Party rebuttal along the lines of Mr Hinze's "non-existent casinos" of a few years before.

The jelly had once again been shaken but not disturbed. Or at least that is how it appeared to me when I returned to work later that month.
A year after Sturgess, sex-for-sale business thrives unchallenged

One year after the Sturgess Report lifted the lid on prostitution in Queensland, Brisbane's sex industry is thriving.

In the metropolitan area alone, 21 clearly identifiable brothels are operating, well above the official police claim of the last three years that only 14 brothels are operating under the guise of massage parlours in Brisbane.

When the confusing multitude of escort agencies is taken into account, some estimates put the number of prostitution outlets in Brisbane as high as 60.

Two groups can be identified as controlling most of the brothels. Both appear to have extended their influence since the Queensland Director of Prosecutions, Mr Des Sturgess, QC, released his report on sexual offences against children.

The key figure in the largest group, linked with eight brothels and associated escort agencies, two sex shops and a strip club (now for sale), is Hector Brandon Hapeta, also known as Hector Hall.

Hapeta, 44, a New Zealander, was identified in the Sturgess report as (67), a man prominently involved in the organisation of prostitution in south east Queensland.

In 1979, the year he came to Queensland, he was charged with living partly off the proceeds of prostitution but police did not proceed with the case.

His principal associate appears to be his one time de facto, a 31 year old former Sydney prostitute going under the names of Anne Marie Tilley, Mary Hall and Ann Marie Hall.

Of her, the report said: "The career of (71) is a good example of how things are happening. Before her 17th birthday she had been before courts on three occasions, twice charged with being exposed to moral danger and once with loitering for prostitution. "Since then she has been charged on 51 occasions with prostitution offences and has either been convicted or forfeited bail with respect to all charges. However, despite the fact that her involvement is continuing, she was last charged in July 1982."

In the past year, Ms Tilley has assumed control of the Golden Angels brothel at Darra, formerly operating from premises owned by a Vietnamese woman and a Greek woman.

She and the Toowong post office box and Spring Hill and New Farm addresses used by her, Hector Hall and associate Dianne or Samantha Lewis link the group with the Top of the Valley massage parlor and associated sex shop, the New Farm brothel and associated sex shop and a Woolloongabba brothel adjacent to a sex shop.

Hector Hall is the owner of a brothel at 608 Wickham Street, near the Fortitude Valley police station, and is the principal of companies running two brothels at Kangaroo Point and one at Woolloongabba and the Love Inn (formerly Kitten Club) strip club in the Valley.

The group has recently disposed of one brothel in Spring Hill, only houses away from a brothel owned by independent interests which was destroyed by fire late in October.

The other major group, linked to the famous Valley casino that didn't exist but which recently closed, has interests in six brothels and the well-known World by Night strip club in the city which operates close to another brothel.

The company tying all the threads together is Timcorp Pty Ltd, which in advertising material claims ownership of brothels in the Valley, Kangaroo Point, East Brisbane and Breakfast Creek.

The House of Elite brothel at Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley, also uses the old casino and Bubbles Bath House brothel address around the corner in Wickham Street in the same advertising material.

People who have spent time on the board of Timcorp include Allan Keith
Holloway, identified as (72) in the Sturgess report, and Vittorio Conte, of Bowen Hills, identified as (69) in the report.

Mr Conte, who arrived from Italy in 1971, was co-proprietor of the former Bubbles Bath House and the Wickham Street casino with Geraldo Bellino of St Lucia.

Conte and Bellino, who is identified in the report as (68), a man prominently involved in the organisation of prostitution in south east Queensland, also own the business name of the World by Night strip club.

Holloway, 35, who has been convicted of gaming offences in Cairns and numerous offences of selling liquor without a licence in Brisbane, is the listed proprietor of another brothel at Moorooka. At one time he used the address of Bellino’s St Lucia home.

Holloway is associated in Timcorp’s Club 29 brothel at Breakfast Creek with Geoffrey Luke Crocker, identified as (70) in the report.

Crocker, 39, of West End, who has served time in jail for keeping a common gaming house, is the listed proprietor of a brothel in Sylvan Road, Toowong, and the Timcorp establishment Pinky’s at Kangaroo Point.

The listed owners of property used by Caesar’s Roman Bath House and Massage, Timcorp’s East Brisbane establishment, are Mr Colin Wick and Mrs Josianne Wick, of Birkdale.

Sources within the industry described competition between the two groups as surprisingly harmonious but said independent operations and those trying to set up were sometimes subject to “action”.

One graphic record of co-operation on public record are two separate incidents on the night of November 8, 1983, resulting in Hapeta, Crocker, Conte or Thomas Butterworth being charged with stealing with violence in company, wilful damage to telephones and other property, breaking and entering, unlawful assault and assault occasioning bodily harm.

One set of charges was struck out after police offered no evidence. A nolle prosequi was entered on the second set of charges.

In his report, Mr Sturgess was critical of police inactivity, saying “... it cannot be ignored that there is sufficient power for police to put the proprietors out of business”.

Mr Sturgess said Section 8 of the Vagrants, Gaming and Other Offences Act also gave ample power to police to proceed against property owners “who knowingly allow” their property to be used for the purpose of prostitution.

“No owner of any one of those premises who had seen it in recent times could be unaware of the purposes for which it is being used,” he said.

“But ... the main offenders have, for years, enjoyed immunity from prosecution.”

The police Licensing Branch, which is responsible for prostitution, was asked last week whether Hapeta, Bellino, Crocker, Holloway, Conte or Tilley had been charged with any offences connected with prostitution, gaming or illegal liquor sales since the release of the Sturgess Report.

The answer, relayed though the police media section, was that release of such information would be an invasion of privacy.

Police were also asked if any action had been taken against the principals of prostitution identified in the Sturgess Report.

The answer was that the branch would not comment on any matters contained in the report.

In his report, Mr Sturgess said the Licensing Branch “has been the target of allegations of impropriety, on and off, for many years”.

Article by Phil Dickie, Courier-Mail, 12 January 1987.
Late in 1986 Nigel Powell, then a university student in straitened circumstances, resolved to do something about his experiences in the Licensing Branch. It was in this state of mind that he picked up the Courier-Mail on 12 January 1987 and read through a long list of familiar names. Like many police, Powell had an inbuilt suspicion of journalists. He had written to noted organised crime writer Bob Bottom and had seen the letter disappear into a vacuum. But on the strength of the Courier-Mail article he wrote to the paper, not just a brief letter but a 12 page life story.

The response hardly endeared the media to him any further. As I was on holidays the letter was referred to another journalist who wrote an article around Powell’s allegations. It was canned for legal reasons and put aside. It was some time after my return that chief of staff Bob Gordon mentioned in passing that some former police officer had written in about my article. I might want to look over it, he suggested.

When I got hold of Powell’s letter about five minutes later I felt as though I had struck gold. I had spent two weeks on holiday in northern New South Wales, thinking what I could do next. None of the detail of January’s article had been denied by the criminal figures named, the government, or the police, but it had run into the stonewall response. It was obvious there was a lot more work to be done. Instinct told me I was on the right track, that if I continued to build up a case so detailed it could not be denied it would at the very least badly damage the system and might even provoke some action from the government.

I had planned the next step. Having identified two crime syndicates I wanted to go into each one in detail. There were three
questions on my mind: What other interests did Geraldo Bellino and his associates have, particularly in illegal gambling? How had Hapeta's organisation grown so big in such a short span of years? What dealings did each group have with the police?

Powell's letter was a big step forward. As a former member of the Licensing Branch, he had extensive knowledge of Hapeta, in particular, and he seemed keen to speak out. I was on the telephone the minute I finished reading his long letter and arranged to meet him at my home that night.

He arrived late and apologetic at my small and messy flat. He was also understandably nervous about it all and felt mucked around in his dealings with the newspaper. Since he wrote the letter he had been to see a solicitor and he now wanted the solicitor to vet any article based on his story before publication.

I explained my feelings as well. Nigel Powell, principled ex-policeman, would make a great story. But I also said he could expect to be vilified, branded a disgruntled ex-cop and possibly worse. It had happened before. When former police officers Fancourt and Campbell made allegations of corruption on the ABC "Nationwide" programme in 1982 little had been achieved. Both men had litigation outstanding against them; and Fancourt had retreated to central Queensland and Campbell to Tasmania. A story on Nigel Powell would be a one-, two- or three-day wonder and everything would go on as before, except probably for the personal upheaval it would bring to his life. I told him I didn't want to be a part of that.

I thought the January story was a step in a different direction, round one in building up a detailed case to the point where the politicians could not brush the allegations aside and the police could not just deny them. If no sources were identified, the powers that be couldn't go gunning for them. Powell could help me most, I said, not by going public at this stage but by helping with the research. We started there and then.

Over the kitchen table I went through his letter, fleshing out details, adding names, thumbnail sketches of police, prostitutes and shady characters, and adding information about seedy premises and Powell's experiences policing them. It was a late night and we repeated the process on many occasions, at my home or
his, in vehicles while doing surveillance, in the office of Queensland Newspapers or a far corner of the staff cafeteria there. Crime and corruption weren't the only things we discussed — we had mutual interests in bicycles, the environment and philosophy. Powell, a superbly fit athlete, long-distance runner and former member of the police basketball team, also campaigned — fruitlessly I am afraid — against my smoking habit.

During the time we worked together, I developed a deep respect for Powell. It was another symptom of what was wrong with the police force that they could squander an officer of his obvious capabilities. Our collaboration was the origin of a group that later became known as “The White Hand Gang” — those whose investigations brought on the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

Powell had been thwarted by his superiors in his pursuit of Hapeta. Coincidentally I was turning up and talking to former employees of the group. One dissipated young man — I will call him Jimmy — was a frustrated musician who did odd jobs around Hapeta's establishments. It was difficult to get much reliable information out of him as he was excitable and high as a kite on drugs some of the time. A much better contact was his girlfriend “Sue”, a prostitute who was a drug dabbler rather than a drug addict. She dreamed of becoming, of all things, a journalist. In answer to my questions she described an operation that was sophisticated in that a two-way radio network linked cars and premises, and primitive in that escort girls scratched out credit card vouchers with a coin in motel rooms because only the receptionists were trusted with the imprinting machines. Sue had tired of being an employee but was visited by the heavies when she tried to strike out on her own. At this time the “Grim Reaper” advertisement was haunting the television screen and AIDS hysteria was running hot in the tabloid newspapers. Alarm over AIDS among Sydney parlour prostitutes somewhat predated the general hysteria and they insisted on the use of condoms. Sue said that in Brisbane, however, brothel managements were frowning on their use.

Information is of value to the degree it is specific. Jimmy and Sue provided quite a good description of Hapeta's car, a maroon Holden Statesman, some years old, with a car telephone. No,
they did not know the number plate. Sue recalled two names on the credit card vouchers — a 24 hour snack bar masquerading as a restaurant and Quick Courier Services.

I came across Hapeta for the first time by accident shortly after meeting his employees, Jimmy and Sue. He was in his car — the maroon Holden Statesman — waiting at a set of traffic lights and talking on the car telephone. I was on my way to a dinner party but I fell in behind him and followed the car to the Bodymates brothel (near Fortitude Valley police station) which I knew to be owned by Hector Hall. This confirmed my documentary evidence suggesting that Hector Hall and Hector Hapeta were one and the same person and that Hapeta was directly involved in the brothels. Two months later, senior police tried to convince me Hapeta was a Sydney resident involved in prostitution only as an absentee landlord.

Hapeta’s car was registered to Quick Courier Services, and so was Tilley’s black Celica, which I shortly afterwards found outside first one brothel then others in the Woolloongabba area. The business name Quick Courier Services was registered to the New Farm brothel, which was on company papers at least the residence of Hapeta and Tilley. The registered office of that company, Figchester Pty Ltd, which owned the Kangaroo Point brothel Sapphires, was in the Red Light sex shop, two doors up towards the police station from the New Farm brothel Tonight’s Delight. The registration papers of both cars were sent to a western suburbs post office box, as were the rate notices of an inner southside brothel and another one in the far western suburbs. The web was extending. The surveillance Powell and I were undertaking, sometimes on several nights a week, together or separately, was paying dividends.

Powell was horrified to learn that I was in the habit of parking across the road from the establishment I was watching. He took me in hand, showing me safer and less obvious surveillance methods. The most valuable result of the work we were doing was a growing list of vehicles of interest, the various sightings of them, and some of their movements. On more than a few nights I saw the sun come up. After a few hours’ sleep I would head into the office with the latest observations and try to sort
them into the growing jigsaw puzzle. I was starting to stretch my friendships in various government departments with requests to identify the owners of new properties discovered or vehicles of interest. The thrust of January’s article was confirmed, but the number of operating brothels rose from 21 to 26 and question marks were added to some of those I had previously labelled as independent.

Rupert Murdoch bought the *Courier-Mail* and a swag of other newspapers around Australia in late January 1987. In early March, Queensland Newspapers’ new management team arrived, headed by Ron Richards, a veteran newspaper man whose most recent post had been managing editor of the *Courier-Mail*’s tabloid competitors, the *Daily Sun* and the *Sunday Sun*.

The first meeting I had with Richards was encouraging. My daily work then consisted of covering a long-running District Court inquiry into a scam over the marketing of shares in jojoba plantations. A witness recounted an alleged attempt by the principals to bribe one of the staff of Local Government and Main Roads minister Russ Hinze. It was a good story, but Hinze and his staff objected to my way of reporting it and the next day sent the Crown Solicitor and a barrister into court to object. Judge Patrick Shanahan, after hearing the headline and first paragraph read out, joined in the criticism.

Inevitably the call came down to the newsroom for me to see the new managing editor in what I would have thought were hardly the best of circumstances. Richards had only one question for me, Did I stand by my story? It was encouraging.

Richards brought in Greg Chamberlin as editor of the *Courier-Mail*. Not long before, Chamberlin had been a popular and competent chief of staff; before that he had edited the Bundaberg *News Mail* and prior to that he had been a freelance journalist with a sound investigative and political reputation. It was a break in tradition for the paper — editors usually came from the sub-editorial or production staff rather than the reporters.

I met Chamberlin in passing one night and told him I was working on two follow-up stories to the January article. “I’d better see to our defamation insurance then,” he said. Again, I took this as encouragement and stepped up the night-long vigils, often
using an office car. I rejected the office Falcons on the grounds they looked too much like police vehicles. My favourite was a small manual Toyota Corolla. Driven aggressively it could keep up with most vehicles in city traffic and was fairly inconspicuous, except for the two-way aerial. The only office vehicles without aerials were underpowered for following work.

In the newsroom the main preoccupation was Sir Joh’s gathering push on the “Canberra socialists”, which was fast taking the form of an all-out assault on the coalition parties. When he claimed victory at the November 1986 state election Sir Joh had advised Prime Minister Bob Hawke to “make the best of it while you are there because you won’t be there much longer”. It now seemed he was to be taken seriously. By mid-January Sir Joh was taking the stick of personal abuse to federal Opposition and Liberal Party leader John Howard and was being scarcely less restrained in his comments about federal National leader Ian Sinclair. Sir Joh also started to talk of fielding teams of candidates in the federal election, though once again those who felt most under threat were from his own side of politics.

Sir Joh’s federal campaign took off in earnest in the southern New South Wales town of Wagga Wagga in early February. In this, his first foray over the border, five hundred folk from the rural and Liberal stronghold paid $20 a head to hear him described by a prominent local member of the Liberal Party as the future “saviour” of Australia. Southern commentators started to take the Queensland premier seriously, writing of “the conservative groundswell of support” for him. Sir Joh, however, still declined to be drawn on whether he himself intended to enter the federal arena. The two conservative parties, in coalition as the federal Opposition, held a handy lead in the opinion polls. Accordingly, the federal government was expected to hold off the election until the last possible moment, the end of the year.

A week after the Wagga offensive and a similarly rapturous welcome in Perth, Sir Joh declared his hand. He had a plan for becoming prime minister and would stand in a Queensland House of Representatives electorate. The term “white shoe brigade” was attached to those elements of the business community, particularly from the Gold Coast, who were said to be funding
the "Joh for PM" push. Said caustic Queensland political commentator Quentin Dempster in the *Sunday Mail*:

> Australians like to follow the leader, any leader. Now Hawke appears to be faltering. He is being challenged by a 76 year old renegade politician from a gerrymandered northern power base, whose government is as interventionist, centralist, protectionist, opportunist and expedient as the Soviet. . . . But what Sir Joh appears to provide to a significant sector of the population is strong leadership. It would take only a 2 percent swing to knock off the Hawke government. Federally there is a fair one-vote-one-value electoral system.

Despite some backtracking here and there, Sir Joh seemed to be rapidly approaching the pinnacle of his career. Not in my wildest dreams did I imagine that my "brothel creeping", as it was then being laughingly described in the newsroom, would have any effect on Queensland's entrenched political system. But I was about to find I was not alone — the ABC's national documentary programme "Four Corners", which was following up the Slade bribery lead, had also noticed the January article.

One day in late February reporter Tony Koch took a telephone call from Debbie Whitmont, who claimed to be an ABC "Four Corners" researcher from Sydney. Had Koch written the January article, she wanted to know. Aware of an office instruction to remain coy about my identity, Koch called me over. When all the identities were sorted out, I arranged to meet her and producer Shaun Hoyt, a former Brisbane journalist, that night for a tour of seedy Brisbane.

I pointed out the brothels and explained their ownership as I then understood it. Thirst threatened, and we repaired for a drink to the World by Night, the unlicensed strip club owned by Geraldo Bellino and Vittorio Conte which shared premises with a brothel known as Scarlett's. We were conspicuous among the audience of hungry men clustered around the stage. I didn't help matters by strolling around the club on the pretext of looking for the toilet. When I went up the steps towards the massage parlour entrance a staff member hurried up to order me down. Geoff Crocker, whom I recognised from his unusually accurate criminal record photograph, came in and entered into seemingly interminable conversation with the door staff. Shaun Hoyt and Debbie
Whitmont speculated about bringing in a camera, but I advised against it.

After two expensive cans apiece of illegally sold beer, we left for Fortitude Valley where I identified the two Bellino-linked casinos I then knew of. One was in the same premises as The Roxy nightclub. We went there for a while but co-proprietor Tony Bellino did not seem to be around that night.

Soon after our visit to the World by Night strip club, fire destroyed its interior one Sunday morning in March. I later learned that this, the first of three fires on the premises that year, forestalled some serious action by the Licensing Commission which, extremely impatient at the Licensing Branch’s inaction on this highly prominent sly grogging operation, was about to take the landlord to the cleaners. In previous inquiries to both commission and branch I had been told that the commission, responsible for the administration of liquor licences, had no power to act and that the police had no power to act in the absence of a complaint from the commission. The police, it seemed, were being less than truthful — the chairman of the commission told me he had made numerous complaints and that recently they had been in writing.

I held the greatest respect for “Four Corners”, which had a record for tackling and breaking difficult stories. Chris Masters, the front man for the team, had won several awards delving into Sydney crime and corruption. There was also a selfish reason I was pleased to see “Four Corners” on the scene — I felt safer. Brisbane’s other media had gone wildly off-track in following up the January story but “Four Corners” seemed to be as interested in investigating in depth as I was. Their programme, “The Moonlight State”, shown three months later, was to be the final straw in forcing the government to hold an inquiry into police corruption.

I pursued my own lines of inquiry, but unofficially there was a notable degree of cooperation between me and the “Four Corners” team. Nigel Powell now worked ex-officio for both media investigations. The two approaches complemented each other extremely well, with Powell and I concentrating on the nuts and bolts of the vice industry and its policing and Masters and his
team inquiring into recent police history by seeking out and speaking to numerous current and former police. The television crew came in for more than their fair share of unwelcome attention, particularly once they started to wave cameras around Fortitude Valley. It was much easier for me to be inconspicuous — my tools of trade were a notebook and pen.

Office secrecy notwithstanding, my name had been bandied about the Valley as the author of the January article. Catalogues for X-rated videos, impractical underwear and various sex aids began arriving in my mailbox at home soon after. If this was a practical joke, no-one ever claimed credit for it. Subtle threat? Perhaps, who knows. The catalogues continued arriving month after month. I left them in the mailbox, along with all the other uninteresting mail, like bills, until my visiting eight-year-old son decided to clean it out. I found him sitting in the driveway one day with a catalogue spread out in front of him. After that I took to throwing them out immediately. They stopped arriving about the time Fitzgerald began his inquiries.

The police were getting noticeably edgier. Chris Masters made his first contact with Jim Slade in February to speak about the alleged 1985 attempt by Senior Sergeant Alan Barnes to bribe him. Slade was questioned fairly shortly afterwards about his meeting with Masters, on the instructions of Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker. Slade admitted to the meeting, but not to being of assistance to the TV documentary team. There seemed to be particular concern that he had handed over to "Four Corners" the Slade Report on northern drug trafficking. Masters did have the report, but he had not got it from Slade, who did not possess a copy of it himself until I gave him one months later. Another police officer of my acquaintance was called in to face a panel of the police commissioner and his five assistant commissioners who questioned him about speaking to journalists.

Sir Terence Lewis raised the media inquiries in conversations with the premier, the Police minister Bill Gunn, the Transport minister Don Lane and former assistant commissioner Tony Murphy. According to his diaries there were other conversations with the premier's confidant Sir Edward Lyons and the Police
Complaints Tribunal chairman Judge Pratt in which the topic of discussion was not mentioned.

Sir Terence had one other run-in with the media in these months as well. His daughter, Constable Laureen Ireland, 25, was suffering "anxiety depression of such chronicity and severity" that she had to retire from the force in February 1987. On 3 March Sir Terence signed her superannuation cheque for $146,818, less $4696 tax. Later in March disgruntled police gave the story to the media. Sir Terence gave interviews to selected journalists on the general topic of police stress, on the condition that he was not asked about his daughter's case.

I checked frequently with the *Courier-Mail* police rounds reporters to see which police were currently alleged to be speaking to the media about corruption. There was some wild and woolly guessing going on on the other side — it was assumed, for instance, that we were talking to former police commissioner Whitrod. Certainly both Masters and I did contact Whitrod, but without much success. It was not until November, when the Fitzgerald Inquiry was in full swing, that Whitrod was prepared to tell me his side of the story. In March and April I found many former police were like Whitrod in that respect. While sympathetic, they did not believe the media inquiries would achieve any more than inquiries in the past had done, so they were unwilling to get involved.

I was concentrating my efforts on the handful of independent brothels I had on my list of 26 names, looking for links to either Bellino's organisation or Hapeta's. For a while I had problems placing an Albion dealer in second-hand goods, Robin E. White, son of Brisbane's first female alderman and, with twin brother Eustace, once a prominent member of Brisbane's social set. Later on he had fallen into minor disgrace when mentioned in state parliament in connection with a rort involving the subletting of Main Roads Department houses. In January, White owned premises in Coorparoo and Highgate Hill that were used for prostitution. His Coorparoo premises had advertising links to another brothel premises in nearby Camp Hill, also down on my list as an independent. The Highgate Hill premises shared advertising with a brothel in Toowong, owned by Geoffrey Luke
Crocker of the Bellino "Syndicate". Just how independent was White, I wondered.

Powell told me that in his time at the Licensing Branch, White's Highgate Hill premises were the headquarters of Geoff Crocker's escort agencies. I put the place under observation and quickly found vehicles moving between there and other Crocker-operated premises. A check of advertising in previous years also revealed the link described by Powell. White could either be the coincidental landlord of two brothels or be involved in the Bellino organisation, I surmised.

The latter guess was wrong. White's Coorparoo house, which was operating in January, was quite clearly closed to hungry male visitors in March. A sign on the fence warned visitors about a dog, hardly a thing one would associate with an operating brothel. But the telephone was still answered not by angry new tenants but by a soft female voice advising me that no, I couldn't go to them but they would more than happily come to me. Back in January, a similar voice on the same number had invited me around. Something didn't add up. I checked with Telecom, who told me it was technically impossible for the telephone to be shifted to the Camp Hill house because an exchange boundary intervened.

Nigel Powell filled in the first missing link. Late one evening, while checking the Camp Hill house, he noted the registration numbers of the vehicles there, in particular a gold Volvo coupe, a very flashy vehicle. A woman came out and got into the car. Powell followed. It was a short drive, only as far as a shop which to all appearances was a Coorparoo boutique. There was another car there — Hapeta's. Powell walked into the all-night laundromat next door and there heard on the other side of the wall voices, the ringing of telephones and what could have been a two-way radio. A night or two later, Powell and I repeated this exercise with me in the laundromat, him in the telephone box outside. I too heard the voices and telephones. We drove up to the Camp Hill brothel and saw there a car used by a prostitute working for Anne-Marie Tilley and Hapeta in Woolloongabba.

I found out who owned the shop and rang the owner. An elderly Greek woman told me that since February she had leased it
to a Kerry Reed, of the Camp Hill brothel address. I also turned up a business name for Aloha Escorts, owner Karen Reid, address Robin White’s Coorparoo house. A Karen Reed, I already knew, was the owner of the business name of the New Farm sex shop which was used as a business mailing address for one of Hapeta’s companies. We had enough to solve the puzzle. Robin White was not an independent operator of brothels, just a particularly obliging landlord for both Hapeta and the Bellino “Syndicate”. And the Coorparoo–Camp Hill operations were not independent after all — they were in the Hapeta group.

In the nature of these things more information tumbled in any way. Cross-checking my rapidly growing lists of vehicle registration numbers I found a few vehicles common to the Camp Hill brothel and Tilley’s Fantasia brothel in Woolloongabba. Not long afterwards one of the prostitutes confirmed that I had in fact fitted the pieces together correctly and added some rather unflattering commentary about some of the personalities involved and some totally unusable salacious detail on some of the clients.

Of the 26 brothels I had identified, I linked Hapeta with 11 and the Bellino “Syndicate” with 7. This left 8 “independent” brothels of which only 3 were of any size or significance. Escort operations were more difficult to sort out, but I credited Hapeta with 10 distinct agencies and the Bellino “Syndicate” with 7. Once again this accounted for most of the escort activity in Brisbane. There were independents in the escort field but many of them were no more than a woman, a telephone, and an answering machine for when she was working. When the Fitzgerald Inquiry used its impressive resources to untangle the links, it became evident that some I thought were independents weren’t nearly as independent as they at first appeared.

Untangling the Bellino “Syndicate’s” operations was harder work than untangling Hapeta’s various connections. Illegal casinos, unlike brothels, do not advertise for their clients. And, unlike Hapeta’s mob, the “Syndicate” did not have such a propensity for registering business names.

Casinos, where a significant proportion of the Bellino interests lay, were a relatively unexplored area. The one casino known to
be linked to Bellino, 142 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley, had closed down in August 1986 and the building had been sold in November. From checking advertising I knew that the massage parlour formerly housed therein had moved around the corner and up the road to the fringes of the Valley. Where had the casino gone?

There was another aspect to this search. In August 1986, Police minister and deputy premier Bill Gunn had instructed the police to close down the illegal casinos, a move cynics thought related to their effect on the profitability of the new Gold Coast legal casino, Jupiters. The announcement was best recorded by the Sunday Mail's Ric Allen, who wrote an article headed “Last bets order for the casino that doesn’t exist”, a reference to previous Police minister Russ Hinze's assertion in 1981 that there were no illegal casinos.

At the time of Gunn's announcement I was aware of three casinos — Bellino's at 142 Wickham Street, another and smaller independent operation in Ann Street, also in the Valley, and one at 719 Stanley Street, Woolloongabba, in close and well-remarked proximity to the police station. Shortly after the announcement, Ric Allen's prediction came true when 142 Wickham Street boarded up its doors. Police who were asked about its closure couldn’t offer any reasons. They certainly had not taken any action against it in response to the minister’s call.

When I started poking around the casinos in earnest in March 1987 I was particularly concerned to see if Gunn’s instructions to the police had resulted in any closures.

Generally my best sources of information on illegal casinos were the taxi drivers who ferried clients, ice and early morning newspapers to them. They told me 142 was now allegedly next to the railway line in Brunswick Street, which meant it had taken an even shorter journey around the corner than the brothel. A few nights' observation and chance conversations with clients confirmed this and also revealed that staff and some favoured customers used an undercover carpark at the rear of the building. I started on the job of collecting registration numbers.

When I rang the owner of the building to ask him who held the lease on the top floor, the answer was: “The people from the
Manhattan nightclub.” Paydirt. The people from the Manhattan I knew to be Geraldo Bellino and Vittorio Conte.

The mail arrived through a slot in the glass front door of the building some hours before the operators did and I saw no reason not to read the addresses on letters that happened to land face up. The casino apparently operated under the name of the Oriental Social Club, care of Mr Conte. Very few of the patrons or staff I saw entering the building night after night were in the least bit Oriental.

Nigel Powell told me that in his closing days at the Licensing Branch he had been keeping 142 Wickham Street under surveillance. One night as it closed and the managers and clientele drifted out he had heard Geraldo Bellino asking clients if they were going to “the other place”. Powell followed Bellino and others over to the Woolloongabba casino. Confirmation came from Tony Koch, the Courier-Mail reporter who two years earlier had uncovered the male brothels. One night when he was in 142 pursuing some line of inquiry, Geraldo Bellino had arranged for a car to take him to Woolloongabba. Nigel Powell supplied some documentary evidence of the link and I drew an inference from the fact that the owner of the Woolloongabba building was also the owner of the premises of the World by Night strip club. In this case I did not check the lease with an owner who seemed to have quite close ties to the “Syndicate”.

Something suspicious was also going on up a set of stairs adjacent to The Roxy nightclub owned by Tony Bellino and Robert Chan. I went up the steps as far as the doorway and far enough to see the security arrangements I expected of a casino. I made my usual checks with emerging clients and neighbours, which confirmed my suspicions and the gossip was that it was Tony Bellino’s game. A Melbourne company owned the building but when I inquired about the leases I was told, “None of your business”.

Early one morning Nigel Powell recognised the man locking up the premises as Santo Rizzo, whom he had spoken to years before in connection with gambling above a nightclub then known as the Valley Rocks. That nightclub was now The Beat, licensee A. Bellino. At this stage it looked as though the casino was
probably another Bellino operation, as gossip had it, but some loose ends remained.

Another taxi driver told me of a casino at 443 Adelaide Street in the city, in an office formerly used by the Custom Credit finance company. I went down for a look but on my first visit noticed only that observation was made difficult by the large number of vehicles parked in that area at night. The National Hotel lay in the next block and so did one of the city's better-known nightclubs. For what it was worth I passed the address on to Nigel Powell.

At 5 a.m. one morning he saw black and white uniformed casino staff emerging from the building, and later the manager whom Powell followed to the suburb of Annerley. Powell passed on the registration number to me which I checked and found the man was Henry Purcell, an Annerley resident. Now that the casino was confirmed at that locality I went through the ownership and leasing records to discover that a three-year lease had been taken out in December by Vittorio Conte.

Nigel Powell and I prowled the vicinity for another night and ended up with a fairly detailed picture of the casino's operations and some interesting detail from neighbours on the recent fire at the World by Night strip club. I checked the remaining two casinos, both of them in the Valley, one Italian and one Chinese, and found no links to the Bellinos.

I now had the lead for my article on the Bellino "Syndicate". When Police minister Gunn had ordered the casinos to be closed down nine months previously, there were three in operation with two controlled by the Bellinos. Since then the police had carried out his order so faithfully and well that there were now six illegal casinos in operation with four under the Bellino umbrella.

My next concern was to establish better links between the "Syndicate's" gambling and flesh trade operations. I had some documentary indications — Vic Conte's name on brothel company documents and dishonourable mentions of Geoff Crocker and Allan Holloway in connection with gambling in Cairns and brothels in Brisbane. It was nearly, but not quite, enough. What was needed were street observations to back up the documentary links.
A red Mazda RX-7 which had undergone recent surgery at the panel beater's gave me my first breakthrough. This vehicle was first seen acting as cockatoo (lookout) outside the Adelaide Street casino. A day or two later it rolled up to the front door of Queensland Newspapers while Nigel Powell and I were talking in the foyer. The driver bounded up to the advertising counter. Quite improperly I wandered over close enough to look at the classified advertising forms he was submitting — they related to massage parlours and escort agencies and I got a name and an address. I had had plenty of practice reading documents upside down, most of it in government offices.

The registration check told me initially that the car belonged to Crocker Car Sales of 29 Sandgate Road, Breakfast Creek. I knew of no car yard at that address. I did know that the "Syndicate" brothel Club 29 operated from those premises which were jointly owned by Allan Holloway and Geoff Crocker. Later, while watching Crocker's house in West End and the escort agency headquarters up the road at Highgate Hill where Robin White was the landlord, I saw the car again, and also another vehicle which I was able to link directly to the casinos.

By late March, with my next round of stories in an advanced stage of preparation and the "Four Corners" team filming in earnest, there was a noticeable rise in the heat on the streets and in the police force. Chris Masters and his team were staying in the Tower Mill Motel in Wickham Terrace. Typically, Nigel Powell noted that the building was under surveillance from across the street. As he left, so did the surveillance vehicle. Powell manoeuvred up beside it at a set of traffic lights, to the obvious discomfort of a pair of officers of the Queensland Police Force.

While Powell and I were watching the streets, Masters was contacting and interviewing people. After one of those he contacted was warned off, he suspected that his telephone may have been tapped. I received a telephone call out of the blue warning me that I too was under surveillance. Confirmation that at least something was afoot wasn't long in coming. I lived in a unit block at New Farm, close to the Valley, among mainly Asian neighbours. A man, who from the description reported to me was
more likely to be a police officer than a criminal identity, visited the block and questioned my neighbours. The caretaker, who knew what I was about, helpfully told him I no longer lived in the area. He would have gained little satisfaction from the Asians, whose command of English was not good. Later still my original caller rang again and advised me to be on my guard – the point was underlined when I was told what my movements of a few days before had been.

My office was also nervous about my movements and especially so after I arrived with a bruised forehead. A memo was demanded from me by way of explanation. Before dawn that morning I had been up a blind alley behind Hapeta's New Farm brothel collecting vehicle details when I was challenged by two men, whom I thought must have come down the rear stairs of Hector's sex shop further down the alleyway. The only way out was past them and that was the way I ran. I managed to duck but still collected a blow on the head from one, who though large, was also slow on his feet. Their efforts at chasing me were half-hearted, to say the least. However, my head hurt, so I made it the last call of the night. In the memo I explained that I doubted that my assailants knew who I was or what I was doing and that they probably thought I was attempting to steal a car. The office insisted that as far as possible I leave a note every night detailing my intended movements.

On 22 March, Masters, Powell and I were all in Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley. The film crew took up its station between Geraldo Bellino's Manhattan nightclub on one side of the road and Tony Bellino's Roxy nightclub on the other. Tony Bellino came out and wanted to know from us what was going on. He didn't get a very informative answer and went back inside.

Masters, Powell and I were all conversing near the entrance to the casino attached to The Roxy when Santo Rizzo appeared in the doorway. Thinking that I might have been too readily recognisable as a reporter, I quickly became fascinated by the window display of the adjacent disposals store. Rizzo recognised Powell and, not realising he had left the police, invited him up. Powell told Rizzo he had left the police force and asked if he could bring
up a friend. Rizzo agreed readily enough so Powell and Masters went upstairs.

Rizzo was hardly reticent. This was Tony’s game, he said. Geraldo’s was across the road. He was about to deal and invited Powell and Masters to join in. Powell said he didn’t have the money and shortly afterwards they left. In the meantime I had gone around to Wickham Street to check on the Chinese game being run in the old Valley Billiard Club rooms which now sported the new sign Asian Youth Social Club.

Tony Bellino had become increasingly agitated at the activities of the camera crew. He later told the inquiry he was trying to warn them that the “Vietnamese” who ran the casino attached to his nightclub might get annoyed by the camera being focused on the doorway and take action against the crew. As recorded on film, however, he sauntered over the road with a couple of his bouncers saying, “Break his camera and break his mouth too”. Fortunately, only the former instruction was obeyed.

Politically, the situation was volatile. Sir Joh’s push for Canberra had received an early setback when Northern Territory voters declined to support his breakaway National Party. But Queensland’s federal National members had moved closer to leaving the federal coalition. The federal National leader Ian Sinclair scored a minor victory at the end of March when, with talk of an early election in the wind, his party decided to continue in coalition with the Liberals.

His comfort was short-lived indeed. Prime Minister Bob Hawke, reveling in the difficulties of his conservative foes, ruled out an early election. Queensland’s 12 National Party members of the federal parliament withdrew from the coalition and Sinclair worked desperately to patch up a new coalition from the 14 Nationals who remained. The Liberals, hardly any more united than the Nationals following the sacking from the frontbench of John Howard’s chief rival as leader Andrew Peacock, accepted the new terms, on the proviso there would be no more defectors.

On the morning of 2 April, the Courier-Mail’s court reporter telephoned me with the information that Geraldo Bellino was prosecuting a civil action in the District Court. I hotfooted it
down to the court to find Geraldo Bellino attempting to recover $6000 from John Sissons, his one-time partner in a coffin-making business. My presence in the courtroom was not appreciated. Counsel for Sissons, who denied owing the money, had to hand my January article. In cross-examination he asked Bellino whether he owned gambling clubs or massage parlours. Bellino said that he didn’t and hadn’t. He asked Bellino whether he had told Sissons that he did. This was also denied. He asked Bellino whether in Sissons’ presence he had picked up large amounts of cash from Bubbles Bath-House. No, he hadn’t, said Bellino. Did he own Bubbles? No, he didn’t, said Bellino, later adding, “The building is mine, I owned it.” Did he own the World by Night or a company owning the World by Night? No, he didn’t, said Bellino. Judge Kimmins, failing to see how this line of questioning bore on the debt in question, several times interrupted and finally ruled it out of order. Sissons lost the case and was ordered to pay Bellino the $6000. I had spent some quiet spots in the evidence sketching Bellino in my notebook, in case we were not able to get good photographs of him. I wrote a short article on Bellino’s denials, telling the sub-editors that although this was no earth-shaker of a story it was important to get the denials on the record.

The two major articles were then well advanced and in the process of being argued through the lawyers. My article on Bellino’s “Syndicate” had been passed as written. With the Hapeta story, however, there was some agonising going on over the possibility of writs from the police. I spent a long night with Nigel Powell, going through every detail relating to former inspector Noel Dwyer and Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker. I rang the police media officer Ian Hatcher and asked for extra details of Parker’s service record. “I think you are doing more than just checking some dates,” he said. I made no reply to his fishing.

I rang Dwyer. He denied ever meeting Hapeta, who, he volunteered, “had a girlfriend who was something to do with massage parlours”. “I would have liked to have met him,” Dwyer told me. Powell’s response to this was to tell me, “He (Dwyer) was the inspector in charge of the Licensing Branch — he could have met
Hapeta any time he wanted to.’ Dwyer did agree with me that he knew Ron Feeney, the man who, Powell alleged, had arranged Hapeta’s 1981 return to Queensland. I inserted Dwyer’s denial into the Hapeta article and told the Courier-Mail’s solicitor Doug Spence that that was about as far as we could go. Together we drew up questions to put to police on the eve of publication.

The one yet-to-be-solved problem was how to obtain photographs of the characters involved, principally Hector Hapeta and Geraldo Bellino. Powell thought the best chance of photographing them would be at a major boxing match at Brisbane’s Festival Hall on 6 April. I rang the promoter and told him I wanted to write some sort of colour piece on boxing. I added that the normal sports writers would be attending to cover the match itself.

When I arrived with Powell, I introduced him as a cadet getting some training. The promoter was visibly suspicious but handed over the passes, marked as normal seating and not, as I had expected, for the media area. At the door, Powell recognised two plain-clothes police, one attached to the Bureau of Criminal Intelligence, the other at one time attached to the Drug Squad. He greeted them, but their reaction could hardly be described as friendly.

They sat behind us too soon after we had taken our seats. Hector Hapeta shortly afterwards lumbered up to speak to them. After the first bout, Powell and I cajoled our way into the media area, just a few rows behind where Hapeta was sitting with his entourage. The photographer arrived and I directed him to photograph Hapeta and his associates.

Geraldo Bellino was a late arrival, coming in just before the main match with men we later identified from the photographs as one of his casino managers, Lou Argyrou (also known as Harris), and former jockey Eddie Choyce. Hapeta had meantime spent some time in conversation with a man identified to me as a person who enjoyed a reputation as an ‘enforcer’ inside the prison during his recent incarceration there. This man gathered some companions and was edging back towards us during the main match. Powell advised that we leave. We did.

We drove to Bellino’s Adelaide Street casino and observed him
entering the premises soon afterwards. Vic Conte's red Mercedes Benz was already parked in the street and so was another vehicle we had seen at Geoff Crocker's home. This was gloss to an article already written and now we had our pictures as well. We drove back to the office feeling pleased with ourselves.

The first story, on the Bellino group, was scheduled for publication on Monday, 13 April. On the Thursday of the week before *Courier-Mail* chief of staff Bob Gordon asked me to skip down to the Valley and get some photographs of streetkids for an article written by another journalist — my ability to find such subjects for photographs had been well-remarked since the Leisha Harvey episode of late 1985.

A section of the rafters in the old building that was now the undercover carpark attached to Geraldo Bellino's Brunswick Street casino was boarded over. There, I knew, some streetkids had been living for some time. The coast seemed clear enough so we gathered the streetkids who lived there from the Christian coffee shop across the road and clambered up into the roof. Cadet photographer George Fetting snapped off a few shots while I routinely copied down the registration numbers of all the vehicles in the carpark for my records. Geraldo Bellino walked in underneath with his daughter.

"What's going on up there!" he demanded loudly. I came into view and he said to me, "Do you live there?" The process of recognition took only a couple of seconds longer and then he launched into a tirade over the court report from his District Court case against John Sissons a few days earlier. He thought it unfair and damaging to his family. I told him it was a story, I was obliged to report it. He accused me of being part of a vendetta against him. I said I only printed the truth, and that if he thought the allegations in my articles were wrong there were things he could do about that. I didn't specify any, apart from writing to the editor of the paper. He demanded I come down off the rafters, something I had no intention of doing.

"Is he taking photographs?" he demanded of me, indicating the photographer. I assured Bellino that no photographs were being taken, hoping all the while that Fetting, over on a different rafter, was taking some. The argument raged on for about 15
minutes, with Bellino saying he leased the carpark and could move the streetkids on by removing the planking they slept on. The young Miss Bellino had been an interested spectator during this argument and her father, recognising that an impasse had been reached, eventually drove off with her. I remember being grateful for her presence.

Fetting, a very junior cadet photographer, had indeed had the presence of mind to disconnect his flash unit and motor drive and take photographs. They were as good as those taken at the boxing but it was decided not to use them — we had, after all, been trespassing on Bellino’s property.

The next day, Friday, I rang Ian Hatcher at the police media section, asking him what action the police had taken to close down the casinos since Minister Gunn’s order last August. Hatcher later rang back with the answer that five casinos had been closed and nominated which premises and in which month. They included 142 Wickham Street which I knew to have moved around the corner and the Woolloongabba casino I knew to have been operating past the date it was claimed to have closed by. The long-established independent Italian casino in Ann Street, the Valley, was also claimed to be closed, but I knew it too was still operating. Hatcher also included in the list an ethnic card game on the southside and another Valley casino I had never heard of. He also said charges were pending against the operators of the game adjacent to The Roxy.

On Saturday, 11 April Sir Terence and Lady Lewis moved from the flat in police headquarters — officially the Police minister’s suite — to their new mansion in Garfield Drive, Paddington. Sir Terence's use of the suite had been the subject of controversy when he had moved there nearly a year before and it was revealed that his effective rent was $3.50 a week.

The axe was about to fall. The first of the two major articles would appear on Monday, and the next soon after. I would also write a number of other articles before the screening of the “Four Corners” programme a month later. The police force would take a unprecedented hammering for one bruising month, at the end of which time the government would say “Enough” and commission an inquiry.
“Vice Report” was the stark message on the *Courier-Mail*’s hoardings on Monday, 13 April. The story spread across the top of the front page and spilled over on to page two. A caption underneath a photograph of Geraldo Bellino noted that it had been taken at “a recent sporting event” and that Bellino had gone from there to the newly opened illegal casino at 443 Adelaide Street.

The opening paragraphs put the ball squarely in the court of the police and politicians. The article (reprinted overleaf) revealed the locations of the four casinos and the headquarters house for seven escort agencies, named six brothels and linked the group to a casino in Cairns and an abortive attempt to set one up in Rockhampton. It stated that the premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, had opened a marble mine operated by Vincenzo Bellino in 1983.

That particular mine had gone broke but the operator of the current Bellino family interests in marble mining, Vincenzo’s son Vincent, responded to the article with a writ for defamation. He wasn’t the only one. Obliging landlord Robin White also responded to his mention in the article with a writ, although his solicitor first took the curious step of telephoning Chris Masters in Sydney. Another two writs were to arrive from Antonio Bellino and Robert Chan, owners of The Roxy nightclub, but only after a further mention in another article a week and a half later.

Mr Gunn responded by again ordering the police to crack down on the illegal casinos but in almost the same breath emphasised their difficulties in gathering evidence. Licensing Branch chief
Clockwise from top left, Police Commissioner Frank Bischof and his favoured three, Detective Sergeant Tony Murphy, Detective Senior Constable Glen Hallahan, Detective Senior Constable Terry Lewis. (Unless otherwise acknowledged, all photographs are courtesy of the Courier-Mail.)
Tony Murphy on his way to the National Hotel Royal Commission. Counsel for Commissioner Bischof, Mr W.B. Campbell (later Sir Walter Campbell, Governor of Queensland), is in the background.
Shirley Brifman, January 1964 — appeared before the National Hotel Royal Commission and had every detail of her dress, hat, shoes and handbag described in the Courier-Mail.

Shirley Brifman, July 1971 — blowing the whistle on police corruption in two states.
No case to answer — Detective Senior Sergeant Tony Murphy, centre, is congratulated by colleagues (l. to r.) Pat Glancy, Graham Leadbetter, Alan Barnes and Bruce White after being discharged in April 1972 from four counts of perjury before the National Hotel Royal Commission.

Charges withdrawn — Detective Sergeant Glen Hallahan takes a congratulatory call at home in August 1972 after being discharged from before the courts on counts of corruptly receiving money from a prostitute and complicity in a bank robbery.
Acquitted — Jack Reginald Herbert, accompanied by Peggy Herbert and son John, leaves the court in November 1976 after being acquitted of corruption charges in the lengthy SP Bribery Trial.
Out — Whitrod at his desk in his last days as police commissioner. "I believe as a police commissioner I am answerable not to a person, not to the Executive Council, but to the law," he said at his final press conference.

In — former junior inspector Terry Lewis at his first press conference as police commissioner in December 1976. "To the best of my knowledge I haven't been connected with (the Rat Pack). I may have been connected with it by the insane ranting of some people in the past — notably one commissioner," he said.
The young Geraldo Bellino, adagio dancer, in action.

Hector Hapeta, an early surveillance photograph given to Phil Dickie by Nigel Powell.
Heroin importer John Edward Milligan — contacts with Hallahan disclosed.

Anne-Marie Tilley, criminal record photograph taken in 1981.

And, in 1986, the newly knighted Sir Terence Lewis with Lady Hazel Lewis.
Trouble, 1985. Police Commissioner Terry Lewis, television puppet Agro and senior constable and television personality Dave Moore, later convicted of sexual offences against youths.


THE WHITE HAND GANG

Phil Dickie, caught in the office by a photographer after a long night on the streets.

Nigel Powell, former Licensing Branch officer, contacted Phil Dickie following the publication of the January 1987 article on Brisbane's organised crime.

Award-winning journalist Chris Masters, whose "Four Corners" programme "The Moonlight State" was shown on ABC television in May 1987.
Tony Bellino, above, instructs a bouncer, below, to "break his camera, break his face too" during filming by "Four Corners" outside The Roxy nightclub. The camera that took these photographs was then smashed; the photographer was not harmed. (Photos courtesy ABC)
A night at the boxing at Festival Hall: Hector Hapeta above, and Geraldo Bellino, below, far left.
Caught — Journalist Dickie captures Bellino as he appears in court to recover an old debt.

Caught — Bellino discovers Dickie in the rafters of his Brunswick Street casino carpark. Cadet photographer George Fetting (on a different rafter) took the photographs.
Inspector Ross Beer, who denied allegations made in parliament in 1983 that he frequented Valley casinos, became head of the Gaming Squad in April 1987. He said theCourier-Mailarticle on the casino move was a "fabrication".

On the night of 22 April 1987 a casino shifted premises to escape media attention — but theCourier-Mailwatched both the move and the police. Cartoonists Sean Leahy and Mac Vines said it all on the day the story was published, 24 April. (Cartoons courtesy the artists, reprinted with permission)
Reputation restored — former Inspector Basil Hicks, outside the inquiry.

Whitrod and his men vindicated: (l. to r.) Alec Jeppesen, Ray Whitrod, Don Becker, Norm Gulbransen and Peter Dautel, at the Fitzgerald Inquiry offices. (Photo courtesy Ray Whitrod)
Crime commissioner Tony Fitzgerald QC — his inquiry rocked the nation.
They wouldn't take a bribe — Christine and Jim Slade leave the inquiry after giving evidence.

Applauded in court — Sergeant Col Dillon turned down Burgess's bribe and handed an unopened bottle of Tilley's whisky to the inquiry.
Anne-Marie Tilley — a year late arriving at the inquiry.

Hector Hapeta — refused to answer 164 questions on the grounds of possible self-incrimination.
Partners in an illegal gambling empire, Vic Conte and Geraldo Bellino, outside the inquiry. Both were in contact with fugitive Jack Herbert in London for months — Conte supplied him with transcript and Bellino urged him to tell his story to author Joe Siracusa for $30,000.

Jack and Peggy Herbert, arrested on 9 February 1988, report to a London police station in accordance with bail conditions.

On 14 March the Herberths arrived back in Australia after agreeing to co-operate with the inquiry. (Cartoon courtesy Mac Vines, reprinted with permission)
How the money flowed, as alleged in evidence by Jack Herbert. Sir Terence Lewis, Allen Bulger and Barry O’Brien denied receiving any corrupt payments and others, including nearly 30 SP bookmakers, Geraldo Bellino and Vittorio Conte, denied making payments. Graeme Parker, Noel Dwyer and Harry Burgess admitted receiving considerably less than the amounts claimed and Tilley said she paid much more.

Lewis, representing himself at the inquiry, takes the bus home. After Herbert alleged Lewis received $611,650 in bribes the tax office demanded more than $665,000 in unpaid tax, interest and penalties.
Inspector Allen Bulger, appearing on the ABC's "7.30 Report" that night, also spoke of the difficulties police had in gaining evidence of illegal gambling. Looking everywhere but at the camera or interviewer, Bulger said the main problem was getting police agents into the clubs. Chris Masters effectively torpedoed this line by appearing on the same programme to say he had been in a situation where a man was invited up to an illegal casino precisely because he was thought to be a police officer.

For Opposition politicians, the story was an Easter bonus. ALP Police spokesperson Tom Burns got yet another run with his January line that if journalists could identify the criminal interests and personalities the police had no excuses for their years of inaction. As long as the brothels and illegal casinos continued to operate openly the vigilance and integrity of the police was open to question, said Liberal Party deputy leader Angus Innes. I recalled newly appointed Police minister Bill Glasson saying just that back in April 1983, at which the police union went straight over his head to the premier and Glasson soon had to eat his words.

The casinos closed their street doors and on some nights closed altogether. Whatever other effect the article was having it was playing havoc with customer and cash flows at street level. Next, it was Hapeta's turn.

With the article on him set down for publication on Easter Saturday, 18 April, solicitor Doug Spence and I decided to put two questions to the police: Had the police taken any action against Hapeta and Tilley? What response did they have to serious allegations of police inactivity in regard to the pair?

I telephoned Ian Hatcher at police media relations early on Thursday the 16th and put the questions to him. He told me he would have to go upstairs for the answers but would get back to me shortly. He didn't.

I telephoned again a couple of hours later. One of the other police journalists told me I had to deal with Hatcher. Hatcher telephoned with the news that the questions had gone to Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker, who was in a meeting. The answers would come to me by telex. This is going to be interesting, I thought. Parker, as a former inspector of Licensing, was
Brisbane's casinos flourish despite Gunn's vow to close them

More illegal casinos now operate in Brisbane than when the Police Minister, Mr Gunn, ordered their closure last year.

Six illegal casinos operate in the city and the search is on for new southside premises for one of them.

Four of the illegal casinos are linked with the larger of Queensland's two crime groups, with associated interests in brothels, escort agencies, unlicensed clubs and other, more legitimate enterprises.

The groups most notable enterprise was the famous "casino that didn't exist" above the former Bubbles Bath-House in Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley.

The closure of that casino, soon after Mr Gunn's August announcement that illegal gambling houses were to be closed, was hailed as an early success for the crackdown.

But Valley police said at the time that they had no idea why the casino and brothel premises had been vacated.

The casino merely moved around the corner to leased premises on the top floor of a building at 235 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley, where patrons have the added advantage of undercover and far-more-discreet parking.

The owners of both the former and present casinos are Geraldo Bellino, of St Lucia, and Vittorio Conte, of Bowen Hills.

This casino now bills itself as the Oriental Social Club, a name which its patronage does little to support.

Nearly across the road, in premises shared with The Roxy nightclub and reached through an adjoining street door, is another illegal casino sometimes used for other functions during the day.

The owners of The Roxy are another Bellino family member, Tony, and businessman Robert Chan.

Geraldo Bellino and Conte also owned the business World by Night, an unlicensed strip club and restaurant at which little food was ever served, operating in premises shared with a brothel in the City.

Last month fire severely damaged the World by Night premises, a Holland Park real estate agent and his wife, also own the 719 Stanley Street premises which have long been the site of Brisbane's second-most-notorious "non-existent casino".

This casino now opens spasmodically, possibly as a result of media and police attention and possibly because it is only just out of the direct line of sight from the Woolloongabba police station.

Sources within the group link a present search for suitable premises, possibly in the Stones Corner area, with the eventual complete closure of the Woolloongabba operation.

The second Bellino-linked casino to open since Mr Gunn's threatened crackdown is on the top floor of premises at 443 Adelaide Street in the City.

The floor is leased by Conte and has been operating for about the past two months behind the usual screen door and buzzer.

This operation is sophisticated enough to offer patrons beer on tap but still requires regular ice deliveries by taxi.

Bellino-linked operations are by no means limited to illegal gaming or to the Brisbane area.

In 1982-83, two Bellino associates, Geoffrey Luke Crocker, 40, of West End and Allan Keith Holloway, 36, were each
twice charged with gaming offences in Cairns.

Cairns is also the base of one of the Bellino family’s other enterprises, Global Marble Pty Ltd, of which one of the directors is Cairns nightclub owner Vince Bellino Jun., and for which Geraldo Bellino is the Brisbane agent.

A Chillagoe marble mine in which the family was involved was officially opened by the Premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, in 1983.

After Mr Gunn’s threats to close the illegal casinos last year, Conte was involved in an attempt to set up a Rockhampton casino. Police moved in on this operation after considerable local publicity.

Crocker and Holloway are now the principal figures in Bellino-linked brothels and escort agencies in south-east Queensland.

The group operates six of the 25 known Brisbane brothels and the most highly centralised escort agencies operation...

These establishments are among the least discreet brothels in Brisbane.

Another brothel at 1015 Ipswich Road, Moorooka, close to the former Golden Hands Businessmen’s Club abandoned after two early morning fires last year, is owned by Holloway, who at one stage used Bellino’s St Lucia home address on official documentation for it. ...

A non-existent company, Crocker Car Sales, apparently sharing the Club 29 address, owns a vehicle used for escort girls and at least once by the “cockatoo” (lookout) at the new Adelaide Street casino.

The group appears to operate about seven different escort agencies under a confusing proliferation of names and telephone numbers.

Central to these operations is a house at 27 Sankey Street, West End, with an estimated five telephones installed.

There are strong links between Crocker and this house, which is owned by Robin E. White, 58, of St Lucia....

Despite an often fairly public involvement with his unlicensed clubs, Geraldo Bellino has a meagre criminal history.

He was convicted and fined three times for selling liquor without a licence in 1971 and fined $350 for keeping a common gaming house in 1978.

This month ... Bellino denied he had any involvement with the World by Night strip club or owned any gambling clubs or massage parlours....

Conte, who emigrated from Sicily in 1971, has one conviction for a prostitution offence and a string of convictions and fines for selling liquor without a licence and illegal gaming offences.

Holloway, Crocker and other subordinates in some ways seem to have been the fall guys in the group’s brushes with the law.

Crocker has a string of convictions relating to prostitution, exhibiting obscene movies, receiving stolen property and gaming.

In 1984, he, Conte, Frank Thomas Butterworth and Hector Hapeta, who leads the other major organised crime group, were charged over a November 1983 rampage against two competing independent escort agencies.

They were discharged from charges of stealing with violence in company, assault occasioning bodily harm, and wilful damage to telecommunications installations.

Police entered a nolle prosequi on charges of breaking and entering with intent and unlawful assault.

A police spokesman said that since last year’s announcement by Mr Gunn, five illegal casinos had been closed....

Article by Phil Dickie, Courier-Mail, 13 April 1987.
directly involved in the "serious allegations of police inactivity with respect to Hapeta and Tilley".

The hours went by and the telex machine did not even stutter in my direction. I was by then in the city and in mid-afternoon received a message through the Courier-Mail that the police telex machine was playing up. I telephoned police media again — the junior journalist told me nothing about the telex machine playing up, only that Hatcher was not in the office. There seemed to be some problem with the second question, he said. I told him to expect me as I was on my way down.

Hatcher was in the office when I arrived. The answer to the first question, Had the police taken any action against Hapeta and Tilley? was no, Hatcher said. With regard to the question about police response to the allegations of police inactivity with respect to them, Parker wanted to know who was making the allegations. I told Hatcher that I couldn't reveal that. I did tell him my sources were several, that I had reasonable fears for the safety of the persons concerned, and that some of my material was documentary. Hatcher told me the answer to the second question would be "no comment" but that he would check with Parker. Hatcher returned to say that Parker had gone home sick but his assistant had confirmed that he was not prepared to answer unsourced allegations.

Hatcher told me, off the record and in the manner of a senior journalist counselling a junior, that I could be making a big mistake with this story. The information from the Licensing Branch was that Hapeta was a resident of Sydney not involved in prostitution in Queensland apart from the ownership of some property. I was stunned. I had several times seen Hapeta, most recently in conversation with two officers of the Queensland Police not two weeks before at the boxing match. I told Hatcher I found the beliefs of the Licensing Branch incredible, contrary to my own knowledge and to information I knew to be in the possession of the police. Hatcher's response was of the humble messenger variety — he could only tell me what he himself was told. Could I use that statement? I asked him. He said he would have to check — could he get back to me on Tuesday? I gave him a deadline of 4 p.m. the following afternoon, Good Friday.
In the taxi on the way back to the office I furiously scribbled down every detail I could recall of the encounter. A major criminal figure was being protected at very high levels in the police force. What I had been told this afternoon was virtually identical to what Nigel Powell had been told as a constable four years previously by Parker when he sought to gather evidence against Hapeta and Tilley. I had some notion before of the scale of what I was up against, but this episode brought it all home to me. I was concerned, afraid and more determined to get to the bottom of it all. Back in the office I hit the terminal in a fury, bashing out a memo for the editor to get the incident down on the record.

I was not at all surprised when Hatcher did not ring back the next afternoon. There had been a bungled attempt to put me off the story — I did not consider it likely those responsible would compound the mistake by revealing the attempt. For my part I remained determined to put the attempt on the public record, but at this stage, I didn’t know how.

“Organised crime group revolutionises the sex-for-sale industry” was the headline spread across the top of Saturday’s Courier-Mail. The article (reprinted overleaf) contained direct and indirect allegations against police and gave the clear impression that Hapeta and Tilley were in some way protected.

The most telling allegations concerned former inspector Noel Dwyer and Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker, now the third-highest-ranked police officer in Queensland. I had decided not to mention Harry Burgess by name in the story, despite the mass of evidence I had on him. By naming a relatively junior police officer I knew I might also be nominating a convenient scapegoat. Chris Masters, in his subsequent “Four Corners” programme, thought likewise.

Dwyer panicked. He rang several of his sergeants to check with them about any visit from Hapeta. Burgess reminded him that Hapeta had come in on Dwyer’s instructions to be interviewed by him. He also told Dwyer he was on his way over, as Dwyer recalled later, “in a great hurry”. In the course of this conversation, Dwyer allegedly told Burgess, “Terry will fix it up.”
Organised crime group revolutionises the sex-for-sale industry

Queensland's second largest organised crime syndicate has grown from nothing in the past eight years.

In the process it has changed the face of prostitution in Queensland, tipping the balance of returns away from prostitutes to brothel and escort agency operators.

The two central figures in the organisation came to Brisbane from Sydney in 1979.

Hector Hapeta, a 44 year old New Zealander who has also used the surnames Briggs, Hall, Brancon and Brandon, was identified in the Sturgess report two years ago as (67) and described as possibly "the largest operator" among a number of men who were "prominently involved in the organisation of prostitution in south-east Queensland".

Hapeta has a criminal record stretching back to 1957. He has been convicted in his eight years in Queensland of possessing a concealed firearm, selling liquor without a licence and using obscene language.

Other charges unsuccessfully brought against him or not proceeded with by police include living off the earnings of prostitution, possession of stolen property and seven charges including assault occasioning bodily harm resulting from a November, 1983 rampage against smaller operators by four well-known Brisbane crime figures from both of the large organised crime groups.

His close associate and former de facto wife is Anne Marie Tilley, also known as Mary or Anne Marie Hall.

A 31-year-old prostitute, formerly of Sydney, she was identified in the Sturgess report as (71) and described in these terms: "Before her 17th birthday she had been before courts in New South Wales on three occasions, twice being charged with being exposed to moral danger and once with loitering for prostitution. "Since then she has been charged on 51 occasions with prostitution offences and has either been convicted or forfeited bail with respect to all charges. "However, despite the fact that her involvement is continuing, she was last charged in July, 1982."

Together, and in the Brisbane city area alone, the two control nine brothels, four of the five Brisbane sex shops, at least one "photographic studio", a strippers' service, at least 10 escort agencies and a bogus courier service used to run escort girls around.

Hapeta and Tilley's first acquisitions in Queensland are believed to have been the Top of the Valley brothel on the corner of Brunswick Street and Barry Parade and a number of escort agency operations....

In 1981, police estimated that Hapeta and Tilley's escort businesses had a turn over of $250,000 a year and the decision was taken to pay them some attention.

This proved more difficult than expected — a planned raid on Tilley's escort agency operations intended as a test case for operations against the agencies generally was called off after Tilley telephoned one of the sergeants leading the raid to tell him all the girls would be attending a party.

However, Tilley was shortly after convicted of keeping premises for the purpose of prostitution and sentenced to eight weeks in jail.

Hapeta fled south of the border and on his return, using the name Hall, acquired the brothel at 608 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley from the former Sydney criminal then associated with it.

That person told others, including undercover police, that he had arranged for it to be safe for Hapeta's return.

The Courier-Mail has been told that on his return and much to the surprise of police working there, Hapeta paid a visit to the inspector in charge of licensing, at that time Detective Inspector Noel Dwyer.

When contacted recently by the Courier-Mail, Inspector Dwyer, now retired, denied ever having met Hapeta although he said he knew of him because Hapeta had a girlfriend who "was something to do with massage parlours."

"I would have loved to have met him," the former Inspector said.

He said he did know the southern criminal but could not recall ever having discussed Hector Hapeta with him.
Before Hapeta and Tiliey arrived, Brisbane massage parlours were still maintaining the fiction that they were dispensing only massage.

A $10 massage fee was paid by the client on entry, and the payment for any other services he received was split between the management and the prostitute on a sliding scale which saw hardworking girls keeping an increasing proportion of their earnings.

As their grip on Brisbane's sex industry strengthened, Hapeta and Tiliey dispensed with the massage fee in favor of a 50-50 split between parlour and girl. The other major crime group was quick to follow suit.

In at least some parlours the split is now down to 60-40, and with few independent operators and relatively little street prostitution outside the homosexual scene in Brisbane, the girls have little choice but to accept the scales....

At the very time Hapeta and Tiliey were building up their empire, licensing branch police, then under Detective Inspector Graeme Parker, were being instructed that they were small-time operators not in need of special attention.

This extended to their being told Hapeta was not involved in prostitution.

Hapeta for a time dabbled in an unlicensed club and strip clubs but seems to have now vacated this field, dominated by the other large organised crime group linked with the Bellino family.

Pharaoh's, his city club, closed unexpectedly while still apparently very profitable....

Cedlin, a company in which Tilley is the other director, owns the Fantasia establishment at 24 Logan Road Woolloongabba.

Fantasia was to become known as the first of the new-breed brothels, well decorated with separate rooms and none of the old almost obligatory but fairly impractical massage tables....

The group's other brothels are Cosmo International at 584 Stanley Street, near the Mater hospital, the Darra Golden Angels at 75 Bellwood Road, and the recently opened and so far unnamed brothel at 38 Hudson Road, Albion.

Cosmo has been in the news lately, as the workplace of heroin addict Lillian Lorenz, whose body was found in the Brisbane River last September, six days after she disappeared from the yacht on which she lived.

Earlier, a brothel had been opened only doors away by well-known prostitute noted also for her prominent role in the Commonwealth Games marchpast, but it had been closed by continual police action on the grounds it was too close to the hospital and a school bus stop.

Cosmo, which operates in conjunction with a streetfront sex shop directly across the road from the Mater Public Hospital, has in contrast received only routine attention....

Police have for some time been in possession of information, mainly from the operators of supposedly independent escort agencies, that Hapeta was in effect licensing other operators to work certain areas for a fee reported at one stage to be $1200-$1500 a month and using Telecom informants to track down those trying to set up....

The Director of Prosecutions, Mr Des Sturgess, noted in his two-year-old report on sexual offences that although there was sufficient legal power to put the proprietors of prostitution out of business “the main offenders have, for years, enjoyed immunity from prosecution”

Last week, The Courier-Mail put two questions concerning this material to the Queensland police, through the police media section.

The police were asked if in the past two years they had taken any action against Hapeta or Tilley. Assistant Commissioner (Crime) Graeme Parker replied that the answer to this question was “no”

The police were also asked to respond to allegations of police inactivity with respect to Hapeta and Tilley.

Assistant Commissioner Parker, through the police media section, asked for information on who was making the allegations.

When told this information could not be given, he responded through the police media section with “no comment”
Once again Police minister Bill Gunn said the police would increase their efforts on massage parlours and illegal casinos. But he also turned his attack on to the *Courier-Mail* and its taking of advertisements for massage parlours and escort agencies. "The *Courier-Mail* digs up this old story now and then when it is short of news," said Gunn. A few days later he said local authorities should take action against brothels. The only local authority believing it had any power to act was the Gold Coast City Council. The Brisbane City Council and the Local Government Association reacted angrily to Mr Gunn's attempt to bring them into the deepening controversy.

It seems that Mr Gunn received this advice from his police commissioner, Sir Terence Lewis, who noted in his diary that he had advised Gunn to "see Council re Gaming Places and Massage Parlours". If local authorities had trouble seeing how their by-laws extended to cover massage parlours it would have been almost impossible for them to envisage their health by-laws having any effect on illegal casinos. Gunn, wisely in the event, chose only to mention the massage parlours.

I was keen to keep it all brewing and wanted to interview both Gunn and the inspector in charge of the Licensing Branch, Allen Bulger. Editor Greg Chamberlin agreed, but felt the approach should be made by the paper, not by me. The paper's request was refused by both parties on Tuesday, 21 April and Wednesday, 22 April. On Thursday, 23 April, police media relations officer Ian Hatcher told me that Bulger, now on his way to a new posting at the Internal Investigations section, was not prepared to be interviewed by me but Graeme Parker would consider written questions. The questions were in Hatcher's hands an hour later.

Gunn continued to decline an interview. The *Courier-Mail* stopped persisting when Gunn's press secretary told the paper's assistant chief of staff Bruce MacMahon that "Mr Gunn is not prepared to be interrogated by Mr Dickie".

I was still spending much time out on the streets, where the illegal casinos and brothels were now in a quandary about whether to stay open for business or not. Some were open but turned off the outside advertising lights, and some appeared closed. I noticed something quite curious about the casino
attached to The Roxy. Like legal enterprise, most illegal enter­prise takes the day off on Good Friday, but on Good Friday night at the casino attached to The Roxy it was business as usual. The next night it was business as usual for the other casinos, but the one attached to the Roxy was definitely closed, most unusual for a Saturday night. I floated a few inquiries.

On the night of Wednesday 22 April my inquiries bore fmit. I received a telephone call in which I learned of an underworld summit meeting that had taken place over the Courier-Mail articles. Tony Bellino was concerned that the publicity given to the casino might jeopardise the liquor licence of his nightclub, The Roxy. Also, apparently, the articles had had a drastic effect on the casino’s patronage. It was decided to shift premises. My caller told me when the move was going to take place and where the casino was going. He also told me, with considerable mirth, that the organisation was concerned about how I knew so much about them. “Aren’t they worried about the police?” I asked. “No,” he said, “only you journalists.”

But the police did know the details of the casino move. As the new Licensing Branch chief, Inspector Jim Waugh, later told the Fitzgerald Inquiry, he had been notified of the casino’s move by an informant in Telecom. By coincidence, that very day the police had formed a Gaming Squad within the Licensing Branch. Newly promoted Inspector Ross Beer was shifted from Mobile Patrols to head the squad. Although this also was clearly a response to the newspaper articles there was no announcement of the intention to form a squad or of its formation, although the events of the next two days provoked one.

My informant had not given me a great deal of time to get down to the Valley — the casino was to start moving in about an hour. I abandoned the article I was working on, leapt on my bicycle and took off without much explanation.

My vantage point for watching the area behind The Roxy was a fire escape stairway on a nearby building. The stairway afforded a good view but had the disadvantage of being clearly visible to anyone behind the nightclub. Once at the top, however, I could press myself into a door recess and this provided some cover. There I settled down to wait.
The workers arrived at the appointed time but, in the way of workers everywhere, they did not do a great deal until one of the bosses arrived on the scene. That boss was Antonio Bellino, dressed in a red short-sleeved sports shirt and white slacks. I could see him standing inside the rear upstairs room of the nightclub. He waved his arms around and got into a few conversations with people who came and went. Meanwhile, the mobilised workers began taking tabletops, table bases and chairs down to a small white utility. I stayed where I was until the utility moved off and then, inch by inch — there was a great deal of activity at the rear of The Roxy — I crept down from my perch.

The casino’s destination was the old Valley Billiard Club around the corner in Wickham Street, since taken over by Asian interests and renamed the Asian Youth Social Club. Some months earlier I was told that a casino was under construction among the billiard tables. I wandered down and saw carpenters at work walling off a large room with one-way glass windows. The casino started operating soon after, with the usual giveaway of the Chinatown Security Service guards lounging around; they provided security and lookout services and were a division of the Malcolm Sue Kung Fu School. My checks had not led to the Bellinos so I listed the casino as one run by unknown independent interests.

Even illegal casinos, it now seemed to me on the night of the move, were ripe for takeover bids. I witnessed the takeover in progress by lying down in the grass by the railway line to watch the workers unload the tables through the rear entrance. Then back they went for another load.

I checked both vicinities as well as I could for any police or police vehicles. There were none engaged in any sort of surveillance of the observed activities, although I later heard that when junior officers in a patrol car noticed, they called in about the move but were told not to worry about it. Out in Brunswick and Wickham Streets, the police presence was as conspicuous as usual, with patrol vehicles, unmarked police vehicles and officers on foot patrol. Past them all the utility drove regularly, loaded to the hilt with “instruments for gaming”. What was going on was obvious enough to the taxi drivers yarning at a cab rank
near The Roxy — it was their main source of amusement for the evening.

At one stage the utility came barrelling out of the side street with no lights on and two of the workers in the rear tray. It reversed up Brunswick Street to The Roxy to take a settee and a cigarette machine out the front door. From across the road, two police watched from a patrol vehicle, evidently bored. They were just as uninterested a few minutes later when a member of the Conte family made two successive illegal U-turns in the street before parking a white Mercedes in front of The Roxy. At the time, in poor light, I misidentified this person as Antonio Bellino again. It was Michael Conte, who later corrected me, adding without any rancour, “I’ve got a long memory.”

As the hours passed I spent more of my time in the street, only occasionally repairing to the shadows to write in my notebook. In the street I had long ago formed the habit of writing down registration numbers on my arm, a far less obvious practice than pulling out a notebook. A late model Holden Commodore pulled up on the corner down from The Roxy and three large burly men got out and walked into the nightclub. They looked distinctly like police, so I ventured to ask two patrol officers if they knew them. “What do you want to know that for?” was the answer. I didn’t persist.

The three men left Antonio Bellino’s Roxy nightclub and walked over the road to the Manhattan East nightclub, owned by Geraldo Bellino and Vittorio Conte. Five minutes later they re-emerged, with four men following them back across the road. One I recognised from his size and manner as Geraldo Bellino. His brother Antonio and others came out of The Roxy and soon there was quite a conference going on, half on the footpath and half on the street. It didn’t last long. As the Commodore drove off I re-checked its registration number.

The workers kept going for about another half an hour. I rode off, dead tired, after I saw them tucking into plates of spaghetti in an Italian restaurant. It didn’t take me long to notice a police vehicle behind me. Someone asked me later, “How did you know you were being followed by police?” “Well,” I said, “I was pedalling up the hill at bicycle pace and behind me was a police car, also proceeding up the hill at bicycle pace.”
On the downhill slope, the police turned right but I found them waiting for me at an intersection at the next uphill slope. I turned right, they went straight ahead. I turned off my light, rode through a lane, and entered my driveway in time to see the police vehicle emerging from the next intersection, some distance down.

Sitting up in bed, I roughed out a story along the lines of Keystone Cops in the Valley seeing nothing while an illegal casino shifted house in front of their eyes. The next day I dropped the story in the editor’s tray, and was probably more asleep than awake when he sent for me. Chamberlin told me that this was a serious issue and he did not want the story written in such a jocular manner. He was quite right although the inherent comedy had not escaped him either. The revised article appeared in the Courier-Mail the next morning, Friday, accompanied by a Sean Leahy cartoon sending up the police for their part in the event. Under the front page heading “Police patrols fail to swoop as casino moves premises”, the story began: “One of Brisbane’s illegal casinos shifted address on Wednesday night, apparently unnoticed by any of the numerous police on patrol in Fortitude Valley. Gaming instruments passed regularly in public view in the back of an open white utility.”

Telegraph cartoonist Mac Vines added fuel to the fire that afternoon with a cartoon that months later I saw pinned up on the noticeboard of the Fortitude Valley police station. It showed police oblivious to the events occurring right under their noses.

That day, Friday 24 April, was to be one of those days when everything happened at once. While pedalling my way through the Valley on my way to the office I had noticed two workers furiously applying white paint to the signs identifying the Asian Youth Social Club in Wickham Street.

I spent some of the morning checking registration numbers from my list. The Holden Commodore I had seen on Wednesday night with the three large burly men inside was listed by the Main Roads Department as a Morris 1100. Very curious.

Next, the Courier-Mail’s court reporter rang in to say that writs for defamation had been served by Antonio Bellino, Robert
Chan and Assistant Commissioner of Police Graeme Parker. Parker had received my written questions just the day before.

I had expected his writ on the Easter Tuesday but since it turned up three days later I thought it may have been provoked by the series of questions. I thought the writ may have been related to the questions. However, in giving evidence to the Fitzgerald Inquiry, Parker said there was no relation between the two and that he was advised, even encouraged, to issue the writ by Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis. Sir Terence's diary later showed that he and Parker had visited solicitors Morris, Fletcher and Cross the day before.

The article on the casino move caught the popular imagination and the talk-back radio shows that morning were having a field day. The police hierarchy, severely embarrassed, took hours to respond. When they did it was to invite the media to a press conference with the head of the new Gaming Squad, Inspector Ross Beer. The Courier-Mail, alone of all the media organisations in Brisbane, has no record of ever receiving the invitation, although the police were later adamant that the Courier-Mail had been invited. Whatever the truth of that, I soon knew about the press conference when other journalists began ringing me to ask what the Gaming Squad was and to find out about Inspector Ross Beer.

While the squad was completely new to me, Ross Beer was not. Back in 1983, Labor MLA Kev Hooper identified Beer as one of two Consorting Squad police who frequented the casinos. Hooper also alleged then that Beer attended on Geraldo Bellino when he was in hospital. Beer denied the allegations at the time but he still seemed to me a most unwise choice as head of a brand new Gaming Squad presumably formed at least in part to allay fears of corruption.

Invited or not, the Courier-Mail sent me and one of my colleagues along to the press conference. Beer came in clutching the Courier-Mail article. I had never met him. "Yes, Mr Dickie," he said to me when questions started.

Beer opened the press conference by calling the article "a fabrication", on the basis that his officers had the Brunswick Street premises under surveillance on the Wednesday evening and none
of the events described had been observed to take place. Beer himself had been to the premises in the early hours of Thursday morning and found "the only furnishings that were in there were chairs that were strewn willy-nilly around the walls". No, the squad had not yet visited the Wickham Street premises.

Beer rejected any suggestion that his own observations could be construed as some confirmation of the article. Other journalists tried to commit him by asking if he would be making a complaint to any press tribunal. Stolidly sticking to his line that the premises were under surveillance and the incidents had not occurred, Beer then said, enigmatically: "I am not making any complaints about the veracity of the article." But he did spell out the reasons for the formation of his squad: "We are just doing the best we can at the present time and trying to appease the situation and the curiosity of certain people in the media."

He went on to say he had so far found no evidence of any illegal casinos. It seemed to me the Gaming Squad was acting in a very peculiar manner. Instead of visiting the premises I had identified as casinos in the Bellino "Syndicate" article, it had apparently conducted a tour of ethnic clubs on the southside. Certainly, illegal card games went on there but on such a small scale that I never considered labelling them as casinos. To the jargon of police propaganda it seemed the following working definitions applied: illegal casino — an establishment police claimed to have closed or acted against; ethnic club or ethnic village coffee shop — an establishment nominated in the press as an illegal casino.

To clear up any confusion — as it seemed the police could put a single establishment first under one definition and then under another to suit their convenience — I had the Sunday Mail publish my working definition of an illegal casino as "a premises which takes all clients, which serves liquor, where the stakes often run into the hundreds of dollars and where staff are employed as bartenders, dealers, managers and for security".

The next night I was to discover just how peculiar the operations of the Gaming Squad were, but in the meantime I contented myself with faithfully recording Inspector Beer's comments and adding that the Courier-Mail was still standing by its story and had a list of vehicle registration numbers. Evening
news reports gave the impression that Inspector Beer was not being widely believed. In his diary Sir Terence Lewis recorded a meeting between him, his assistant, Superintendent Greg Early, Assistant Commissioner Parker and Inspector Beer “re press conference”.

Rumour had it that a raid on the casinos would be staged as a public relations exercise by the police in the wake of the articles. I did not think this likely, but I assured editor Greg Chamberlin that I would be keeping a close eye on the Valley. On the night of Saturday, 25 April, I noted that Geraldo Bellino’s Brunswick Street casino (with the covered carpark) was still operating, but behind closed doors. Clients seemed to be gaining access by going first to a nearby snack bar named Mike’s Submarines, then to the door of the casino which would be opened for them and then firmly shut behind them. I had someone identify manager Mike to me but my informant was unwilling or unable to provide a surname. Mike apparently was “from Canada”. He helped me out no end by taking someone over to admire a car, which I immediately recognised as a blue Mercedes belonging to Vittorio Conte. Later I was able to confirm that Mike was Mike Conte, Vittorio’s brother.

Soon afterwards the mystery Holden Commodore pulled up and parked in the bus stop directly outside Mike’s Submarines. Three burly men again got out — one of them was Inspector Ross Beer.

Beer and his associates went in to Mike’s Submarines and stayed for about three-quarters of an hour, drinking coffee, talking to Mike Conte and other plain-clothes police who came and went. If this was the Gaming Squad in action, they did not seem overly interested in the gaming going on in Gerry Bellino’s casino just three doors down the street or in Mike Conte’s role of apparently facilitating access to clients. Instead, when they emerged they went to The Roxy for half an hour. The casino at The Roxy, as all of Brisbane then knew, had closed the previous Wednesday night. Half an hour later Beer and his associates drove off.

I mentioned the possibility of another story to editor Greg Chamberlin. In the uncertainty surrounding the Gaming Squad,
he thought further provocation might work against us. Also, the *Telegraph* had picked up MLA Kev Hooper’s mention in 1983 of Ross Beer being a frequenter of the Valley casinos in years past. Beer lashed back at his farewell party from the Beenleigh area, saying that the allegations against him in 1983 had never been proved. His only previous attendance at an illegal casino had been to seek the return of a ring on behalf of someone else, he said. He also told a journalist from the *Courier-Mail* that I was “peculiar”. Later I was to hear that at this party and subsequently at the police club, I was described as “gay” as well. It was news to me.

It had been a long week. I took Sunday off, taking the young son of a very close friend for a ride on a motorcycle. The next morning I received a telephone call from his distraught mother to say that following my visit her unlisted telephone had rung. Her son answered and heard the song “You’d better run, run, run away”. He said “a very deep nasty voice” said something, but he did not pick up what it was. Numerous similar calls followed, mostly with music along a similarly morbid theme. They stopped when another occupant of the house came home and plugged in an answering machine.

Early the next day my friend looked out the front window of the house to see a police car drive into the dead end street, do a U-turn in front of her home and stop. Three officers were in the vehicle but none made any attempt to get out. “They must have seen me,” she said. When she made a move for the front door to find out what was going on the police car sped off.

The telephone rang again a few hours later. This time it was a friend. During the long conversation my friend heard a noise of smashing glass but she put the blame on a cat knocking over milk bottles and continued her conversation. Some time later the other two occupants arrived home and, all agog, wanted to know why there was a bullet hole in the window of the front room. It was then my friend rang me, telling me all that had happened and describing “the neat round hole about as big as a 10 cent piece” near the centre of a large pane of glass. I told her to report it to the police, write down everything she could remember and give a copy to me.
The police — a detective, two uniformed officers and a cadet — took two hours to arrive and came in two cars. One of the uniformed officers had been outside the house in the police car earlier in the day. After they had checked the house and asked a few questions, this officer produced a rock from his pocket, saying he had found it under the pierced window. My friend questioned the three uniformed police on their presence outside the house that morning and, according to her, got “three differing aspects of their visit”. The detective kept apart from the others and was unwilling to commit himself on what might have caused the hole in the window. My friend told him of her relationship with me and the work I was doing. As the police left, the detective said: “I don’t advise you to be in the house alone at any time. ... Do not stay in the house tonight.”

I arranged for another friend of mine with a broad knowledge of firearms to inspect the damage. He thought the hole was most probably caused by a small rock projected at high velocity from very close range or a largish calibre bullet from some distance. A third possible explanation, that the glass was struck with a small hammer or the like, was unlikely, given the distance of the window from the ground.

The ABC was then beginning to crank up the publicity machine for the forthcoming “Four Corners” programme now awaited with some trepidation by many police. Reports said the TV crew had been hounded and followed by police in Queensland and that some of their informants had been threatened during the two month investigation. The ABC’s “7.30 Report” presenter in Brisbane at the time, Andrew Carroll, somehow heard of the window hole episodes and asked me if the programme could do something on them. Earlier, the “7.30 Report”’s political reporter, Quentin Dempster, had told me that any time I believed I was being followed I should call him and he would get a camera crew straight to me. I declined the offers for reasons that I wanted all the attention to be on the issues, not myself, and that I was not prepared to involve my friends or informants.

On Tuesday, 28 April the Queensland premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, achieved one of his greatest political victories with the
apparent destruction of the federal conservative coalition first forged in 1949. The patched-up federal coalition "Mark 3" fell apart when it became apparent that federal National leader Ian Sinclair could not guarantee the loyalty of all of his 14 remaining members. Sir Joh immediately said that he, and not Ian Sinclair, would be presenting the National Party's policy at the forthcoming federal election.

That week I shifted my researches to the Gold Coast, building up a profile of the vice industry there. Events were to overtake the publishing of any articles on this work but two incidents of note occurred. At 1.30 a.m. on 4 May I picked up a Falcon sedan parked outside the Southport brothel Gentlemen's International. It was a police vehicle, attached as I later found out to the Goodna CIB on the western outskirts of Brisbane. My checks with friendly police revealed no earthly reason why two on-duty Brisbane detectives would spend at least three-quarters of an hour at a Gold Coast brothel.

Not long after my visit to the Gold Coast I was sent a copy of a recent police daily occurrence sheet with two entries highlighted. Both concerned namesakes of a contact of mine I had seen who was not an easy person to locate.

"Holes in windows.
1. (Namesake, Gold Coast address) ... At about 1815 hours heard loud bang and front window exploded. . . .
2. (Namesake, Gold Coast address, time and date) ... front window exploded. A red fastback four cylinder, possibly Mitsubishi sedan, seen to drive away at slow speed. No projectiles found."

On 5 May, after repeated complaints by the *Courier-Mail* to the office of Police minister Bill Gunn, the Police Department answered the questions sent to Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker on 23 April. The response was incredible. It was apparent that the police were still intent on brazening out all the allegations made in the *Courier-Mail* so far and presumably those yet to come in the "Four Corners" programme. Parker's writ for defamation issued on 24 April gave useful service in providing him with a way out of answering many of the questions, on the grounds that some topics were the subject of litigation. Parker,
however, denied to the Fitzgerald Inquiry that this was the purpose of his writ.

The document I received in answer to my questions was wordy, false and uninformative. Some extracts follow.

Question 2 (on "two organised crime syndicates" controlling gambling and prostitution): ... Firstly, the term "organised crime syndicate" is something of a modern catch phrase. ... As at 30 April 1987, police information was that there are 12 massage parlours operating in Brisbane. ... There is some recurrence of two groups of names involved in the different parlours but the names are not limited to these groups.

Question 3 (on non-prosecution of principals): ... Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker has instituted legal proceedings against the The Courier-Mail by reason of allegations made against him in its report on these matters on 18 April 1987. In view of that litigation it is not proposed to comment further on the various purported statements of fact made in this and related articles which are disputed by the police.

Question 4 (on failure of the 20-strong Licensing Branch to identify principals when Courier-Mail could): This is not really a question at all but a somewhat mischievous comment ...

Question 5 (on whether 700 prostitutes a year were booked by arrangement): The Department takes exception to the deliberate imputation of misconduct in this question. Prostitution breaches are detected in the normal investigative way and when all elements of an offence are established action is taken and offenders are subsequently dealt with by the courts.

Question 6 (on prosecution of minor offenders only): Allegations made by The Courier-Mail regarding the question of the prosecution of the persons Hapeta and Tilley are the subject of litigation instituted against The Courier-Mail by Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker. ...

Question 7 (on the non-prosecution of owners of premises): See answers to questions 2, 3 and 6.

Question 8 (on my being informed that Hapeta was a resident of Sydney not much involved in prostitution in Queensland): This is not the belief of the Licensing Branch.

Question 13 (on non-action against newly established Bellino-linked casinos): The reference to new Bellino casinos involves an assumption which is disputed.

Question 17 (on the difference between the 26 brothels identified in the Brisbane metropolitan area and the 14 referred to in the police annual report): See answers to Questions 2, 3 and 6.
The Courier-Mail published an article along the lines that police did not believe vice and gambling were controlled by two organised crime groups. I was happy. The attempt to tell me on the Thursday before Easter that Hapeta was a resident of Sydney not much involved in Brisbane prostitution was now on the record by virtue of the answer to the question about it being published in the article. Also, far from being put off by the writ from Parker, we were now freely mentioning it in print and letting readers draw their own conclusions. Past practice had usually been to cease comment on an issue once legal action started. A day after the article appeared Sir Terence Lewis called his press officers and Minister Gunn’s to a “9 a.m. conference re media comments by our department and minister’s office”.

Alarm on the other side was growing rapidly. Jack Reginald Herbert had contacted Parker as usual and arranged to meet him at the Alderley Arms Hotel to hand over his monthly payment. According to Parker, there they discussed the “Four Corners” programme. Herbert said, however, that Parker took fright very soon after they met, thinking that a yellow car might have been in some way connected with the television crew. It wasn’t, but Parker concocted a covering note for his diary:

3 May 1987: At about 7.20 p.m. received telephone call from informant (J.H.) to meet him re confidential information. Met him at car park Alderley Arms Hotel and he advised that earlier in evening he and his wife had been at Brothers Club House when he heard a person named “Powell” ex member of Police Force and ex Licensing Branch was responsible for giving all information to Courier-Mail re recent articles on Gaming — Prostitution. He read I had taken out a writ against Courier-Mail and thought information was important. Further Powell in his leisure time is allegedly following members of Licensing Branch to get some unlawful activity against them.

A few days later, Herbert rang Parker with the news that he had received a telegram from “Four Corners” advising him that he would be mentioned on the programme. He read out a part of it, referring to his purchase of a house from Geraldo Bellino and Vittorio Conte. The telegram also sought from him details of his friendship with Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis.
"The Moonlight State" was screened to a huge national audience by ABC "Four Corners" on the night of 11 May. Coming on top of the Courier-Mail articles, its effect was devastating. The programme opened with a stripper mingling with a crowd. Said Chris Masters:

There is another side to the Sunshine State. Despite some wholesome attempts to pretend otherwise, the Queensland Government has not managed to stop the devil at the border. . . . Competition in Queensland's vice industry is actively discouraged. There is a co-operative of ownership, of management of the unlicensed nightclubs, the massage parlours, the escort agencies and the illegal casinos. There's a strong case to show that instead of prosecuting these people, the police prefer to protect them.

Hector Hapeta, alias Hall, was introduced. Said Masters:

Our research shows that Hapeta and some associates, notably an Anne Marie Tilley, have the largest share of the massage parlour and escort business in southern Queensland. There is little that's subdued or discreet about Brisbane prostitution. While police and politicians can't find them, the public can't miss them.

Geraldo and Tony Bellino were the next to be introduced, along with Vittorio Conte. Said Masters: "For years liquor has been sold in unlicensed nightclubs only five minutes drive from police headquarters. The two Bellinos and Vic Conte are now almost as conspicuous in Brisbane's Fortitude Valley as the advertising for their various businesses." Tony Bellino appeared, to prove the point, ordering one of his bouncers to "Break his camera and break his mouth too." The film pointed abruptly skyward and then whirred to a white flash of nothingness.

The Sturgess Report was quoted on the subject of "men said to be prominently involved in the organisation of prostitution in south-east Queensland: 'They are regularly in breach of the criminal laws because of their activities but it will be seen they have not suffered much prosecution in recent years.'"

None of this was new, except for the graphic portrayal of the vice industry in action. These images more than any words were laying bare the utter hypocrisy of Queensland's rulers and their frequent claim to have kept southern vice south of the border. Strippers and flashing lights, Lady Flo Bjelke-Petersen at a
church organ, Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis at a police graduation ceremony — the visual contrasts between sordid reality and official pretence added a new dimension to the four month campaign waged in print by the *Courier-Mail*.

Former escort agency driver and later operator John Stopford added an explosive element to the furore — payments to the police.

So I got the house and the phones connected, put the ads in the *Courier-Mail* and rang up Licensing . . . He said, “I think I’d better come and have a few words with ya”. So we arranged to meet that night. He told me on the phone that he liked Scotch, so I thought it was in my interests to have a bottle of Scotch there.

We had a few drinks and he endeavoured to lay the ground rules down. That I could only have two phones, that I could only put three ads in the *Courier-Mail*, one 10 pointer and two one-liners um . . . that I was only allowed to have three girls and that I must be willing to have one of those girls charged without any complications, usually on the basis of once a month, once every six weeks, unless I could come up with something . . . added bonus. He told me that night that there was only two forms of paying and that was either by information or by money, and when I asked him if it was where the money was paid to, if it was him or how did I go about it, he said, “Don’t say anything, don’t worry about that, you’ll find out”.  

Eventually it was one of the syndicate’s employees that came and told me that ah . . . in one week’s time on a Tuesday night, I had to have $500 ready, and that he would come back and pick that money up.

“He” of course was Detective Sergeant Harry Burgess, whom Masters had decided not to name for the same reasons that I had not named him before — he would be a gift of a scapegoat. Stopford went on to say that police were paid no less than $100,000 a month.

An anonymous former keeper of one of Hapeta’s male brothels said:

We were told it would be extremely, you know, extremely difficult to operate you know, with . . . without police protection you know without um . . . protection of the police, that’s what we were told. This money would . . . would go to Hector and Hector would take his percentage and the rest would be given . . . spread among the boys at the Queensland police force.
The prostitutes, vice operators and casino workers appearing on the programme were all adamant that they were given clear warning of raids by the police. Nigel Powell appeared to recount part of his experience.

It would often seem as if it was arranged that we went around there and there were a number of bodies ready to be written up who would confess to illegal gaming. . . . In retrospect, the more I think . . . the more I thought about my time in the licensing branch, the more convinced I am that certain people within the squad were involved with one or other of the (criminal) groups.

Masters then moved from vice to drugs. Said Stopford: "Prostitution doesn't exist without drugs. . . . They're hand in hand. Some of the actual owners have a double barrel — the girl does the job, he gets a percentage of that and then on top of that, the owner sells them the drugs that they need to support their habit, so they get double whammy." A prostitute had the same story: "Well there's no drugs allowed on the premises and that's it. I mean a girl will usually get fired. Well that is why it is so hypocritical because, you know, I mean, it is the guys in the syndicate that are distributing the drugs and you, you know, if you get found with them on you, you get fired."

The Slade Report on the northern drug trade was flashed on to the screen and "The Marble Man" identified as Vincenzo Bellino. Former North Queensland detective Ross Dickson told of drug investigations being stopped in the north, in particular one planned operation on a Chillagoe marble mine run by Vincenzo Bellino. Later footage showed the premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, officially opening the mine.

Another police officer anonymously testified that the attempt to bribe Jim Slade was well known within the force. "The end result was that the officer . . . the senior officer who had in fact supplied the money never . . . never was charged and in fact the only discipline that was meted out . . . he was transferred to a western town and since then, he's been promoted to commissioned rank. That's one incidence," he said.

Former Detective Ross Dickson said:

We are all aware that it's gone on in the past but people in the present administration have made it an art form — they have perfected it you
know and they didn’t do it quickly. Over a period of years they moved all their bag-men into key positions in the police force. And everybody knows who they are, policemen know who they are, and you see these men being hand picked into the most delicate areas of investigations... you see these bag-men going in — they’re the boss and they are in those squads for years and years, they gradually rise up and they take them over and that’s why you can’t do anything about it.

Masters went back to the Bischof years, Whitrod’s appointment in 1970, Brifman’s death in 1972 and Whitrod’s resignation in 1976. His recounting of history brought him to a new and highly significant name.

Prior to Whitrod’s departure Queensland experienced what was then its longest trial. A policeman and a former policeman were charged with attempting to bribe a superior in order to protect SP bookmakers.

They were acquitted. One was this man, Jack Reginald Herbert. Herbert was a friend of the current commissioner, Terry Lewis. Before the trial he was boarded out of the force for ill health, became a police pensioner and now has an impressive property portfolio including this Brisbane home.

It was formerly the address of Vittorio Conte. Herbert purchased it in December 1985 for $100,000 from Geraldo Bellino and Vittorio Conte. Conte and Bellino had purchased it 10 months earlier for the same amount.

Only weeks after Herbert’s acquittal in 1976, his friend Terry Lewis became police commissioner.

The programme was careful in its treatment of Lewis but he still threatened with a writ.

During his term as Commissioner, Lewis has made clear his support for the government. The police force has been used as the enforcement wing to block street marches and break strikes.

Every rank above senior sergeant in the force is subject to Cabinet approval and Lewis’ loyalty has been repaid. The police force has prospered, its budget more than tripled. He (Lewis) has received an OBE and most recently, a knighthood. He has come a long way.

Four Corners is not drawing any conclusion that Mr Lewis is involved in this corruption, but he cannot evade responsibility for what goes on in his force.

The programme closed to scenes of the Premier’s church in Kingaroy with “Onward Christian Soldiers” welling up from the...
church organ being played by Lady Flo Bjelke-Petersen. Said Masters: "There is no suggestion that the Queensland premier is involved in Queensland police corruption. Indeed, it must be a puzzle for the many good Christians of Queensland, including the Premier himself, that such ungodliness can occur in such a godly place."

Queensland waited for the response.
An Inquiry Is Ordered

The day after "The Moonlight State" was screened throughout Australia Police minister and acting premier Bill Gunn announced an inquiry. Meanwhile Sir Joh, away campaigning for the prime ministership, had just said on a national television programme that there was no need for an inquiry. Gunn, who was after all the man on the spot in both senses of the term, said: "A series of Police ministers have had these types of allegations hanging over their heads. They are not going to hang over mine."

However, Gunn's tone, his neglect of the months of parallel allegations in the Courier-Mail, and his put-down of the use of screen actors and actresses to stand in for prostitutes and police quite reasonably coy about appearing on camera, suggested he did not believe there was much to investigate. To the flood of inquiries by journalists looking for any detail of what kind of inquiry he had in mind a selected few were given the name of Judge Eric Pratt of the District Court.

To me, this was only marginally better news than rumours before the press conference that the allegations would be referred to the much criticised and poorly perceived Police Complaints Tribunal chaired by Judge Pratt. In the previous week the government had quietly removed any right of appeal to the State Ombudsman over the Police Complaints Tribunal, which conducted all its hearings in camera.

Judge Pratt, as the Fitzgerald Inquiry was later told, was a former Victorian and Papua New Guinea police officer who was a close friend of Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis. Judge Pratt's son, a Redcliffe solicitor, employed Sir Terence's son Michael, or at least did so until part way through the inquiry.
when Michael Lewis was brought to court on charges of larceny as a servant.

The greatest fear of those who brought on the inquiry, Masters, Powell and myself — the White Hand Gang — was an inquiry designed as a whitewash of the police. Our hope was an inquiry which would continue down the trail of revelation. Chris Masters had foreseen the possibilities and canvassed the options in “The Moonlight State” the night before.

Who could properly investigate allegations raised in tonight’s programme? The Queensland police force could hardly investigate itself. The impartiality of the Queensland Police Complaints Tribunal is also drawn into question. A “Four Corners” report last year showed that of 600 complaints, 94 per cent of them were effectively dismissed. The Australian Federal Police has no brief to properly investigate state police corruption and from my experience a marked reluctance to do so. The National Crime Authority, while less squeamish about such matters, should have difficulty investigating Queensland without the co-operation of Queensland police and the approval of the Queensland Government. And in the last Parliamentary sitting, this decision making power was shifted from the Justice Ministry to the Police Ministry. We might wonder why.

We could also wonder how seriously the government would welcome an investigation into official corruption and protection of an empire spanning gambling, prostitution and drug trafficking. When police and politicians can’t find an illegal casino in a Brisbane main street it is unlikely that in such a morally upright climate they could discover anything much more sinister.

There were a number of telephone conversations the next day between Chris Masters, Nigel Powell and me. Masters and I were both disinclined to rush forward and commit ourselves to baring all to an inquiry such as the one Gunn seemed to have in mind. Indeed, Masters’ counsel to me was that I, being in Queensland, should consider “losing” some of my files.

While Gunn said Sir Terence had agreed with the proposal of an inquiry, other reports suggested this agreement may only have followed a good deal of argument. But a close reading of his diaries supports a view that Lewis may have supported or even proposed a limited inquiry. On the day of the “Four Corners” programme, Sir Terence Lewis had, among his usual notes on his conversation with Minister Gunn, noted: “Seeing Judge Pratt on
12th inst", or the day after the programme when the inquiry was announced. A later entry, made after Pratt had been dropped from heading the inquiry, notes: "Should not have pushed inquiry". Sir Terence called the "Four Corners" programme "disgraceful" and gave an ominous hint of one line of response by saying: "Knowing the calibre of some of the people interviewed, I find it very difficult to give them much credibility."

There were signs that any foreboding we may have felt could well be justified. A telephone call from Terry O'Gorman, solicitor to Nigel Powell and John Stopford, brought the alarming news that the police helicopter had gone to Stradbroke Island. First reports were sketchy but our fears were that this was some attempt to get the vulnerable Stopford to retract on what he had said to "Four Corners". Later a police officer reported privately that he had been asked for "whatever dirt" he had heard on Nigel Powell. If this bore any resemblance to anything it was the digging operation that had been done on Young and Komlosy for the National Hotel Royal Commission 24 years earlier.

The full story of the police helicopter foray in search of John Stopford came out slowly before the Fitzgerald Inquiry months later. Former Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker told the inquiry that Stopford, an informant of Drug Squad detective Terry Edwards, had allegedly told Edwards he had been intimidated into making a statement to "Four Corners". Police had tried to contact Stopford before the programme, but found he was then in Sydney for a filming session. Edwards himself was apparently reluctant to make any statement of his own without seeing his legal representative and, in Parker's understanding, Edwards had also approached the police commissioner on the matter. On the morning after the "Four Corners" programme a number of senior police were in the office of Police minister Gunn and the minister was told that Stopford had said he would give a statement to police on the falseness of some of what he had said on air. Gunn authorised the use of the helicopter for the purpose of visiting Stopford.

Stopford, no doubt very sensibly, was not at home to receive the visit. Police spokesmen were initially very silent on whether there was any move to contact Stopford but solicitor Terry
O'Gorman went to the press revealing attempts by police to interview his client before the programme went to air. At that time O'Gorman had boxed in the police by telephoning senior officers to insist that he be present at any interviews, an offer that was never taken up.

That weekend in an “exclusive” interview with the Sunday Mail’s Ric Allen, Sir Terence Lewis presented a catalogue of all the officers under him, including the Internal Investigations Section, and the existence of the Police Complaints Tribunal as sufficient controls to prevent any corruption. “It’s amazing, to say the least, if a corrupt police officer can evade this net,” he said. These words would very soon return to haunt him but at the time, feeling more than a little worried about my own prospects, I asked callers, “How would that be any help if there is corruption at the top?” Lewis reminded readers that “it is of note that since the inception of the Police Complaints Tribunal in 1982, not one complaint of police corruption about an officer has been lodged”. Again, hardly a comment which did much for the credibility of the troubled tribunal.

Veteran journalist Ken Blanch didn’t help allay any fears either — he predicted the inquiry would be a contest between “self-confessed tainted vice witnesses and prima facie squeaky clean policemen”, which would give “the accusers about the same chance as the Christians had against the lions”. I went to Sydney where I was given ample help in checking some southern criminal connections by Sydney Morning Herald journalist and Can of Worms author Evan Whitton. He predicted — rather too cheerily I thought — not an inquiry but a trial of myself, Masters, and people such as Powell who had been foolhardy enough to accept speaking roles in “The Moonlight State”.

On some accounts Pratt’s name had been put forward to head the inquiry by Transport minister Don Lane, and it had found favour with Gunn. One interpretation possible from Sir Terence Lewis’s diaries is that it was he who nominated Judge Pratt. New-boy attorney-general Paul Clauson, who, having spent less than one term as a backbencher, had been portrayed in cartoons at the time of his appointment as the minister in nappies, checked the reaction in legal circles and came back with the
advice that Pratt would be unacceptable. Clauson, who despite his inexperience had actually kept his portfolio out of controversy rather than in it, unlike the previous minister, now began to take a major part in decisions about the inquiry.

Judge Pratt had meanwhile contacted two members of the Brisbane bar offering them positions as counsel assisting. One, noting that his “appointment” was never withdrawn, went on to make his mounting bill of costs an in-house joke. The chief justice, Sir Dormer Andrews, indicated to the government that he would be unwilling to see a judge as head of the inquiry. Cabinet sources now indicated that a QC was being sought to head it.

Attention first turned to Ian Callinan QC, counsel for the state in difficult matters like Australian Broadcasting Tribunal hearings, renowned prosecutor of High Court judge Lionel Murphy and recent president of the Queensland and Australian bar associations.

Gunn made the approach. Callinan, who had also been the TAB chairman since the removal in disgrace of Sir Edward Lyons, is said to have raised his perceived closeness to the government as a potential problem and suggested the name of Gerald Edward Fitzgerald QC. Clauson endorsed the choice.

Cabinet met in Roma on 17 May, with Sir Joh presiding. At that stage all that had been announced was that the inquiry would now be headed by a senior QC. Gunn later told state parliament that Sir Joh indicated to him and Clauson that he would like to discuss the inquiry and “invited us to have a late dinner with him at the Overlander Motel”. There, with some of his staff also present, he told the two ministers: “I’m greatly concerned about this inquiry. I don’t think it is a good idea at all.” Gunn pointed out that the allegations had been around a long time, hanging over the heads of several police ministers. According to Gunn, Sir Joh then said: “Well you’ve got a tiger by the tail and it will end up biting you.” Gunn said his view was that “it would bite us if we didn’t do anything about it”. The conversation became more strained and some of the staff members left the table. Sir Joh allegedly said if he had had his way the inquiry would not have begun, and Gunn said if Sir Joh wanted to interfere he could find another minister for Police. Clauson agreed
An Inquiry Is Ordered

with this account of the conversation. Sir Joh denied that he had at any time attempted to terminate the inquiry.

Gunn and Clauson jointly announced the decision at a press conference on 26 May. Mr Fitzgerald QC was to inquire into what associations there were, if any, between prostitution, illegal gambling, drugs, political party donations and police and Hector Hapeta, Geraldo, Antonio and Vincenzo Bellino and Vittorio Conte over the last five years. Mr Gunn said he thought the inquiry would last about six weeks. I attended this press conference and questioned Gunn on the matter of the inquiry being assisted by officers of the Queensland Police Force. I left, not particularly happy with the terms of reference and with Fitzgerald still very much an unknown quantity.

Around town, only the bare details of Fitzgerald’s career were known — no-one appeared to know what sort of man he was. The corridor discussions were numerous and at the end of them the idea prevailed that Fitzgerald should be approved of. In answer to the inevitable summons from the editor’s office I told him I wasn’t particularly happy about the terms of reference but any lack of co-operation on our part could easily be portrayed as hypocrisy. Chris Masters and “Four Corners” producer Peter Manning had similar views, I said, and there was always a chance the terms of reference would be extended, which was then pure wishful thinking on my part.

Gerald Edward Fitzgerald is said to have gained the replacement first name, Tony, at age five from a Sister of Mercy at the Sacred Heart Convent in Sandgate, a northern bayside suburb of Brisbane. “Gerald Fitzgerald! I can’t call you that. I’ll call you Tony,” she allegedly said. Whatever the truth of this, it is a good story and, however gained, the name stuck. The young Tony Fitzgerald went to St Patrick’s College in nearby Shorncliffe, and then on to the University of Queensland. He was admitted to the bar in 1964.

He first made the files of the Courier-Mail with a November 1971 letter to the editor criticising the premier for some parliamentary comments about fellow barrister Mr Frank Connolly. Mr Connolly’s sin, in the eyes of the premier, lay in a courtroom observation he made during his defence of three Inala lads on
charges of unlawful carnal knowledge: he said that the amount of sexual intercourse that went on in state schools was prodigious. The premier thought this to be a statement made "without any regard for the truth". The premier's sin, in the eyes of Mr Fitzgerald, was to engage in a personal attack on Connolly and by so doing fail to respect a lawyer's role as advocate for his client.

At the young age of 33, in August 1975, Fitzgerald became a Queen's Counsel. At 39 he became the youngest Federal Court judge ever appointed. The title of judge is considered the greatest honour the legal profession can bestow. According to Fitzgerald himself at the time, it was "an outstanding honour". But less than three years later he gave his title back in order to return to the private bar and see more of his family.

Too few in public life ever admit error but this retiring judge said: "It is essential in the interests of the community that those who perform judicial tasks are contented. Having concluded that I made a mistake in accepting judicial appointment too early, I decided that the proper course was to resign rather than persevere in office for more than 30 years."

Accepting the appointment to head Queensland's first inquiry in many years, Fitzgerald also broke with precedent by making himself relatively available to the press. He had agreed to head the inquiry, he said, only after satisfying himself that the government would allow it to be handled properly. Getting at the truth came up twice in one of the early interviews. I was reassured. My fears of a whitewash were being allayed.

Fitzgerald certainly moved quickly. While the government had been deciding who would head the inquiry and what its terms of reference would be, Antonio Bellino had been led to confess his imminent departure on extended holidays with his extended family. Two days after Fitzgerald was given his commission and despite Antonio's assurances that he had nothing to hide and was not running away, he found himself looking at a subpoena. Planes and helicopters were used to serve Vincenzo Bellino's subpoena to Chillagoe, site of his former marble mine. At day's end, of the five persons named in the terms of reference, only Hector
Hapeta had gone to ground. Geraldo Bellino went public, welcoming the inquiry as a chance to clear his name.

It is the unhappy situation in this country that the media is permitted to make baseless and unfounded allegations without the benefit of facts and it is the further unhappy situation that anyone who is of Italian background (and particularly of Sicilian background) is believed to have associations of a criminal nature and be part of a vast world network dominated and organised in Sicily. . . . Much has been made of the fact that I have not been prosecuted and the inferences that this is because of my being responsible for the bribery and corruption of police officers. It may occur to any thinking person that I might also not have committed any offences. I say that the latter is the truth.

Geraldo Bellino followed the earlier example of his brother Vincenzo, and that day issued a writ for defamation against the ABC, their second. The *Courier-Mail* then held six writs for defamation from my articles, the list being headed by Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker. Sir Terence Lewis had also announced a threat to sue the ABC pending the outcome of the inquiry. For the media organisations and the lawyers representing them the stakes were already quite high.

It was a good week for anyone in the news business. The day after the acting premier Bill Gunn had announced the inquiry details, Prime Minister Bob Hawke called a federal election for 11 July while the prime ministerial pretender, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, was in the middle of a week long business visit to the United States. That day he had been in Disneyland, of all places. The cartoonists had a field day. Sir Joh, caught badly wrong-footed, could do little other than draw attention to Hawke’s broken promise on the election date. His campaign, he said, would still go ahead. Hawke got in a much better jibe, telling federal parliament that Sir Joh was “one of the opposition leaders, the one who is in America”.

Sir Joh returned to a National Party engaged in continual crisis meetings, but it was apparent the wheels had all but come off the campaign bus. Just over a week later he withdrew from the race. The *Courier-Mail* reported that this followed a plea, first from state Transport minister Don Lane and then from every
other Cabinet minister, that he stay in Queensland. In the days between Hawke’s announcement of the election and Sir Joh’s announcement of his non-participation in it, three ministers — Bill Gunn, Russ Hinze and Mike Ahern — all announced they would be seeking to fill his shoes as Queensland premier.

Sir Joh said he would campaign for National Party members and independents running under the Joh banner and would “control the Senate — I’ll guarantee it” after the election. The inquiry, by necessity, now took second place to the federal election on the front pages. It seemed that Fitzgerald QC was intent on beginning the full hearings of the inquiry no earlier than 13 July, two days after the federal election.

With both the federal election and a state by-election for the seat of Southport in mind, the state government was newly intent on being seen to be doing something about highly visible vice on the streets. An enterprising commercial television programme had rounded up two National Party backbenchers from Brisbane’s south-western “bible belt” suburbs and taken them on a tour of sleazy Brisbane. They professed shock at being able to wave at police stationed at Woolloongabba from the local illegal casino and at the minibus full of country men rolling up to the nearby brothel. The backbenchers did not reveal themselves as particularly diligent readers of newspapers but they did add to the government’s embarrassment. Police minister Bill Gunn let it be known that he was instructing police to lay a test case against the owners of premises used as brothels. He also let it slip that he had been told by police that they had no legal power to close brothel premises.

This I knew was rubbish, so I wrote an article on the successful use of just those tactics to close a number of brothels in 1979–80. For good measure I included the cessation of the successful sledgehammer and blowtorch raids against illegal casinos in 1977 and recalled new Police Commissioner Terry Lewis’s statement of the time that “we will just keep up the raids”. My informants then told me that police had then instructed the brothels to close. Most certainly curtailed their activities, some did close at the designated time and others shifted address. It didn’t detract from the embarrassment of both government and
An Inquiry Is Ordered

police force when some commentators pointed out the obvious irony of brothels closing on order after years of public comments that they had no powers to close them.

One escort agency house had already closed its doors. Landlord Robin E. White had taken fright at his mentions in the Courier-Mail and had sold off the Highgate Hill house to the long-suffering next door neighbours. Two Courier-Mail journalists went out to have a look and later told me of a backyard fireplace and some incompletely burned documents. I sent them straight back to recover all documents, however burnt, and found a treasure trove relating to another escort agency house once operated by a company using the name Special Caring Services. Three exercise books showed that this ordinary looking house turned over $80,000 in credit card purchases alone in a period of 17 months. Some of the books contained details on clients.

It wasn’t the only digging I did in the run-up to the inquiry. I turned up the bungled application made by a Bellino family company for a casino licence for North Queensland and the bungled refund of the $100,000 deposit to another company by the state government. Down at the Magistrates Courts I compared prostitution charges with the ownership of premises, discovering that girls working for the largest vice operator, Hapeta, had a much easier time of it than the girls working for independent operators. And I got my hands on a police memo urging officers to consider their “personal and family financial situations . . . (so as) to be able to answer any questions at a later date” in relation to the forthcoming inquiry.

The initial formal hearing of the inquiry was held on 12 June, with its basic purpose being to seek undertakings from the five persons named in the terms of reference and consider applications for appearances. Courtroom 29, a small room at the best of times, was packed to capacity with lawyers — mainly downstairs and the press — mainly upstairs. It was to be the setting for history-making revelations for more than 18 months and was described thus by the Sydney Morning Herald’s Evan Whitton:
The carpet is burnt orange; the high walls are in a striated dark brown wood. Mr Fitzgerald sits at a high-backed orange chair at a bench above those named in the terms of reference and the hordes of lawyers who must be looking forward to gainful employ.

By contrast with the 1983 Wran royal commission, which rightly took the view that at least 500 members of the public might be interested, the authorities here appear to assume that no more than a dozen would care to advance at first hand their knowledge as to how Queensland works. Others may stand or sit in the aisles. Along with 25 places for reporters, they are accommodated, if that’s the right word, in a loft above the well of the court.

As Whitton suggested, a fair proportion of Queensland’s legal practitioners would indeed find gainful employ in the following months. Among the notables were Ian Callinan QC, senior counsel for the state government, Cedric Hampson QC, for Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis and all current and former deputy and assistant commissioners who might get a guernsey in the hearings, and Robert Mulholland QC, for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Fitzgerald also accepted appearances from solicitors for the three Bellino brothers and Vittorio Conte, and barristers for Hector Hapeta, the two police unions, the Queensland Branch of the Australian Labor Party and the Queensland Law Society. This was to be only a beginning.

Outside in the courtyard, the photographers were led a merry dance by Hector Hapeta who had arrived at the courtroom door a long time before the hearing was due to begin and installed himself in the cafeteria for a long time afterwards rather than be photographed.

It was becoming increasingly clear how redoubtable Fitzgerald was. Sir Terence Lewis’s diary for 18 June contains the following rare outburst of emotion.

18 June 1987: “To Executive Building and saw Premier re remaining in Queensland; thanks for legal representation; not all Ministers loyal; enjoy your position, family and friends; I have thankless and worrying job, threats to family, press bias, left wing politicians; disloyal police and ex-police; — blanked out —, new home, no money, cannot retire until 1988; family despondent, timing of 4 Corners; should not have pushed inquiry; allegations in NSW and Vic but no inquiry; tapes, reports, newspaper articles; (Masters, Stewart, Hawke, Young and Tate) all crims and disgraced; police on 4 Corners,
An Inquiry Is Ordered 185

Crooke QC going back to 1971; stick to terms of reference, do not have to solicit complaints from decent people."

On 20 June Queensland faced its preamble to the federal election in a by-election for the state seat of Southport. With the eyes of the national media focused on the small election to see how the Joh Nationals might fare, Police minister Gunn announced that the government was serving notices on the owners of brothels. It was an indication that he, at least, recognised that there were some political repercussions in the corruption issue. The seat was safe for the National Party and the government was expected to retain it. They did, but with a reduced margin and some adverse comment on the fact that Sir Joh's portrait had not appeared on the National Party how-to-vote cards.

Police minister Gunn, who had not long before been critical of those wanting to inquire into the Queensland Police was rapidly turning into one of the inquiry's strongest proponents. When Fitzgerald QC approached him seeking an extension of the terms of reference, Gunn steered them through Cabinet. The terms of reference now were to go back 10 years rather than 5 and Fitzgerald QC was given scope to chase leads other than those connected with the five named persons. Wider terms of reference notwithstanding, Fitzgerald was to show that, unlike many heads of past inquiries, he was not a man to be unduly limited by terms of reference.

Things were looking good at long last. I had by then overcome the office's reluctance to co-operate with the inquiry. Editor Greg Chamberlin, himself a former investigative journalist, in particular had a healthy distrust of inquiries and was rather more protective of me than I would have preferred. I wrote him a fairly blunt letter to the effect that while we were urging police to reuse they might have higher loyalties than those to Sir Terence Lewis and the Queensland Police Force, I was increasingly feeling that my obligations extended beyond loyalty to Queensland Newspapers Pty Ltd. It failed to have the desired effect. I also argued that the inquiry would get hold of me willing or not and that my preference was to go quietly. The editor was unconvinced.

On the basis that the junior counsel assisting the inquiry, former Crown prosecutor and amateur musical society star Ralph
Devlin had married a girl I went to school with. I rang Devlin’s number to speak to her. She and Devlin were no longer together but contact had been made. Devlin wanted to know why I had not approached the inquiry. A letter requesting my attendance for questioning promptly arrived at the *Courier-Mail*. A subpoena to cover all possible contingencies came later.

While Devlin questioned me, in detail that produced a 97 page statement, senior counsel assisting, Gary Crooke QC, was questioning Nigel Powell. The inquiry had early in the piece taken delivery of a large volume of documentation from “Four Corners” and to this was now added an equivalent volume of documents from my files at the *Courier-Mail*. It is a fair observation that Fitzgerald’s inquiry started with more material than most. The White Hand Gang had done a lot of leg work. Mr Justice Gibbs, 24 years beforehand, had started his royal commission with little more than a throwaway remark in state parliament.

As the inquiry moved into high gear, there was some trepidation on the other side. Where once there had been four flourishing casinos there were now only a few floating card games. Few were surprised when the Gaming Squad was disbanded and Inspector Ross Beer sent back to Mobile Patrols. Police attached to the inquiry descended several times without warning on brothels, carrying off documents and other evidence in plastic bags which were later exhibited before Fitzgerald at specially convened brief sittings of the inquiry.

The woman to be known as Katherine James had come out of the woodwork after the “Four Corners” programme. She telephoned Chris Masters in Sydney and asked to be put in touch with Nigel Powell. A meeting was arranged with Powell, and Chris Masters later spoke to her as well. She was steered towards the inquiry. Not all the meetings went smoothly, but her coming forward was a breakthrough — she was the inquiry’s first major contact with inside knowledge of the underworld. She volunteered her assistance despite being warned of the possible consequences. She later told the inquiry that former Licensing Branch sergeant Neville Ross, whom she had not seen since late 1982, telephoned and asked to meet her at a park near her Brisbane home. He asked if the inquiry or Nigel Powell had been in touch
An Inquiry Is Ordered

with her and she denied any approaches from either. According to James, he then said: "Well, look, if they do, I don't want you to tell them any lies, but I don't want you to say anything." Ross then said any assistance given to the inquiry by Katherine James could be detrimental to the man she lived with.

Anne-Marie Tilley, who was pregnant, divested some of her property portfolio to a confusing welter of companies and left for Sydney on 13 June, intending to remain beyond the reach of any subpoena to the inquiry. On her later account, she spoke to Licensing Branch senior sergeant Noel Kelly and Jack Herbert, both of whom seemed to be of the opinion that the inquiry would not amount to much. According to Harry Burgess, she also met with him and told him she intended to tell the inquiry that the reason she was never breached for prostitution was that she was never around the massage parlours. Burgess told her that was stupid in view of the fact that she had been seen on premises by numerous working girls and police. Tilley allegedly then said she had been in contact with Herbert, who wanted to vary the payment arrangements. Herbert apparently did not want to risk being seen with Hapeta and had asked for the money to be paid to someone named Vic. Tilley did not like this arrangement and wanted to pass the money through Burgess, who refused.

Burgess had also been in contact with several of his one-time Licensing Branch colleagues. He told some of them that there had been inquiries before, that a lot of criminals might come forward to give evidence and the commission would do nothing other than shake its head. One colleague raised with him the possibility that he, Burgess, might get "thrown to the sharks". Burgess laughed. He had the reputation of being a strong man.

But from other actions Burgess showed that he was worried. He sought out Sergeant Col Dillon and met him at the Breakfast Creek Hotel, saying he wanted to talk. In the end, according to Dillon, Burgess said some blokes were taking the inquiry very coolly, but he was not one of them. "Quite frankly I am beside myself and it has got me tearing my hair out," he confessed.

According to evidence given later to the Fitzgerald Inquiry there were a number of critical conversations between Assistant
Commissioner Graeme Parker and Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis, although the sequence and timing of the conversations is somewhat confused by conflicting testimony given by Parker. From Parker’s account Sir Terence told him after the announcement of the inquiry that “if we all stick together we will be all right”. On perhaps another occasion, Sir Terence told Parker that “Big Don” had suggested that Herbert leave the country. Parker took Big Don to be Transport minister Don Lane, although he conceded in evidence that he had not heard Lewis refer to him that way before. Lane denied any impropriety to the inquiry.

Parker said he passed on the message to either Detective Senior Sergeant Noel Kelly of the Licensing Branch or Detective Inspector Allen Bulger in the form that “the boss” suggests that Herbert leave the country. Whichever of the two he spoke to agreed it would be a good idea. Harry Burgess was later to tell the Fitzgerald Inquiry that Herbert, “offended at being treated like a criminal”, told him he had been ordered out of town by Parker, via Kelly.

Parker said that Kelly rang him to say that Herbert wanted to see him. A meeting was arranged at the New Farm ferry, not far from Herbert’s home. Herbert told Parker he would be staying away for the duration of the inquiry, first in Sydney, and that Parker might or might not be contacted by Kelly. Parker said he was in fact contacted by Kelly and continued to receive payments from him until August. Burgess said Herbert telephoned him STD to say he was going away “to see mummy”, which Burgess took to mean England. Jack and Peggy Herbert flew out of the country on 20 June.

Noel Kelly later told the inquiry that before he left, Herbert entrusted him with the payment of his Licensing Branch colleagues and also with making some payments to Assistant Commissioner Parker. These were now somewhat reduced — the illegal casinos had closed in the wake of Courier-Mail exposure, the massage parlours were ordered to close soon after the announcement of the inquiry and some SP bookmakers started to drop out of the system. Kelly was allegedly told by Herbert that Lewis and Parker would not be taking any cut in their
payments but that the Licensing Branch officers would have to accept less. Kelly said graft payments continued for about two months after the inquiry began its formal hearings in August.

The premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, had been uncharacteristically silent on the whole issue, leaving most of the running to his deputy and nominated successor, Bill Gunn. Sir Joh’s preoccupation was firmly with Canberra, and despite some notable hiccups and the disappearance and non-appearance of the promised horde of candidates, the Joh Nationals campaign was still lurching along. The other Nationals and the Liberals were not doing much better. The ALP was comfortably cruising. Queensland’s attention was only partly on the federal election. The Director of Prosecutions, Des Sturgess QC, said on 7 July 1987: “This inquiry will be far more important to the future of the Australian community than next Saturday’s elections. It will decide whether organised crime has a future in Queensland.”

Federal election night, 11 July, was a disaster for the Joh Nationals. Hawke won the hat trick for Labor, winning an unprecedented third term for the party, with an increased majority. Nowhere did the ALP perform better than in Queensland. ALP state secretary Peter Beattie emerged from behind the celebratory champagne to say, “We couldn’t have done it without Joh.” Federal National leader Ian Sinclair said the same thing in a much less complimentary way, accusing Sir Joh of “sole responsibility” for the coalition defeat. Sir Joh in turn blamed the defeat on his early non-acceptance by the coalition leaders. Nor did he say he would not do it all again. “This is just the first round of the event. There is more than one round in a contest. I am not disappointed that I tried,” he said.

Commentator Quentin Dempster summed up the implications for Queensland: “Sir Joh was unrepentant in defeat, proclaiming yet again that his policies were right and the Australian people were wrong. He is determined to stay on as premier and the gauntlet has clearly been thrown down to any pretender to his throne to challenge him.” And in more prophetic mode Dempster added: “He will not go voluntarily. He will have to be pushed.”

Sir Joh’s return to running the state resulted in renewed bucketing for the main pretender, Health minister Mike Ahern.
The issue was essentially about sexual morality or the threat to it from condom vending machines, but the moral facade of the Queensland government, already in tatters, was about to be blown apart by Fitzgerald QC. Ahern had been given the Health portfolio after the 1986 election and set about mending the badly damaged bridges with unions and community health organisations, including those involved in the AIDS campaign. To this end he had early on taken a proposal to Cabinet to allow the sale of condoms through vending machines. Cabinet rebuffed him.

Meanwhile the federal government relaxed all the previous restrictions on the sale and advertising of condoms. The *Courier-Mail* was swamped with letters from outraged moralists. State Aboriginal Affairs minister Bob Katter Junior banned them from Aboriginal community stores. "Condoms are despicable things that won't prevent the spread of AIDS but will encourage the community to have sex with gay abandon," he said.

In late July, several Queensland student unions defied the ban and installed condom vending machines on a number of campuses in Queensland. Ahern went back to Cabinet, seeking a change in the law. Cabinet decided that Sir Joh would consult the churches and report back. Sir Joh told Ahern to "toe the line or get out".

The inquiry quietly pressed on with its preliminary work. The commission was a rapidly growing organisation. Nigel Powell and I were first interviewed in barristers' chambers. Within weeks, however, we were being interviewed at the inquiry's headquarters. The number of barristers and legal officers working for the inquiry increased to six, and the office staff by a commensurate number. Police working for the inquiry and a team of accountants moved in, the number of computer terminals multiplied, and security increased. The government mapper arrived at the inquiry offices one morning and Powell and I positioned coloured dots on maps to locate brothels, illegal casinos and unlicensed nightclubs, green for Hapeta's premises and orange for Bellinos. We were notified that one or other of us would be the first witness in the public hearings now set down to begin on 27 July. Both of us engaged in more surveillance, for some of this time sitting up the road from where Hapeta sat against a window
in Kangaroo Point and taking notes on his visitors. Some of the leads which I had not been able to follow up, I now found I could. Inquiries have powers that investigative journalists can only dream about.

Neither Nigel Powell nor I was particularly thrilled by the prospect of being first to face a horde of yet-to-be-blooded and mainly hostile lawyers. To our relief, there was a late re-ordering of witnesses on a new game plan, orchestrated, one suspects, by Fitzgerald.

It was with considerable satisfaction that I was able to break the story in the *Courier-Mail* that witness number one would be the Queensland police commissioner, Sir Terence Lewis.

The week before the inquiry was not without its dramas. Alleged brothel operator Warren Earl Armstrong was arrested and charged with threatening a witness. Another minor witness sought to grab some prominence by saying he would withdraw from co-operating with the inquiry because it couldn’t guarantee him protection. “Fear and corruption are two of the weapons available to the modern criminal,” noted Fitzgerald in response. He also pointed to “a very real possibility that those with something to hide will seek to create a controversy about the safety of witnesses in the hope that ordinary decent people will be frightened into silence”. His words were prophetic. Also in the last week Fitzgerald revealed an attempt to tamper with the commission’s telephone system and on the eve of hearings, the Police minister, Mr Gunn, said he believed an attempt had been made to bug his ministerial telephone.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* dispatched Evan Whitton to cover the inquiry. Saying it would be the most important story he had worked on, he started with a large background article on inquiries past and present. Said Whitton, one of Australia’s most highly honoured journalists and an experienced follower of inquiries and royal commissions: “Some here in Brisbane see the Fitzgerald Inquiry as perhaps the last hope for an assault on perennial corruption in Queensland. Others see it as likely to have, in the upshot, little more effect than other such inquiries: Gibbs 1963-64, Scotland Yard 1975, Lucas 1977, Sturgess 1984-85.”

The stage was set, the players waiting in the wings.
Brisbane’s modern Law Courts building sits on the river side of George Street, facing the unprepossessing rear of the City Hall. As a setting for the dramas to unfold the location was appropriate, with Parliament House six blocks down George Street in one direction and police headquarters roughly an equal distance away in the other.

Monday 27 July was a pleasant warm winter’s day in Brisbane, much appreciated by the southern journalists sent to cover the opening of the Commission of Inquiry into Alleged Illegal Activities and Associated Police Misconduct. Journalists usually abbreviated this to “Fitzgerald Inquiry” or took what were later shown to be justifiable liberties in calling it “the Fitzgerald Inquiry into organised crime and police corruption”. The Law Courts’ courtyard this morning was more than usually cluttered with television crews, reporters and onlookers. Senior counsel, the Bellinos and others were ambushed on their way into the building, with many a “Who’s that?” from reporters and camera crew. Hapeta again arrived impossibly early. The police commissioner, Sir Terence Lewis, came up the rear stairs, out of uniform and flanked by journalists from the police media relations office and assistants.

The “shoebox”, as Evan Whitton labelled Courtroom 29, had been extensively refubrished. Gone were the jury box and most of the public seating in favour of serried rows of bar tables for serried rows of lawyers. The press and as much of the public as could squeeze in were in the public gallery. It was standing room only.

There was a rumble as everyone stood and Tony Fitzgerald QC entered the court, another rumble as everyone sat down, and a
rustle as notebooks and briefs were opened and shuffled. The inquiry was under way. Gary Crooke QC, senior counsel assisting the commission, took to the lectern and opened with a considerable understatement: “Mr Commissioner,” he said, “we are embarking on a task of considerable magnitude.”

He proceeded to outline something of a game plan.

What we would seek to do, at least in the early stages, is to present evidence in discrete segments or compartments. The first segment which we hope can be conveniently described as the organisation, operation and procedures of the Queensland Police Force, has been given this priority to provide a background against which later evidence can be assessed. . . . I ask that Sir Terence Lewis be called as the first witness.

Fitzgerald QC issued a gentle warning to the press — it was to be the first of many.

Because it may be that these proceedings will be reported at some length, it should be noted at the very outset that there will be a large body of evidence and it must come out in piecemeal fashion. In order to be fair, those who are reporting these proceedings should note the possibility that the initial appearance of evidence may be changed by later evidence and should take that into account in presentation of their reports.

Sir Terence largely read from his statement. Said Evan Whitton in the Sydney Morning Herald:

Sir Terence’s submission sounded at times like a geography lesson (the hopeless task of policing 7200 kilometres of coastline); a warning against the perils of tourism (alienation of the home public); and a demand of the government for more men.

Mr Fitzgerald chewed absently on his spectacles through this tedious dissertation and did not trouble to ask Sir Terence how he reconciled his demand for more troops with his assertion that the Queensland force appeared already to be the most efficient in the Western world — that the clear-up rate (an alleged offender arrested) was a little better than 50 percent against, say, NSW’s 23.95 percent, and Scotland Yard’s 17 percent.

But the first bombshell came early enough for the late edition of the Telegraph and was still good enough to lead both Brisbane morning papers the next day. Sir Terence said he had verbal instructions from five successive police ministers and the
premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, to give low priority to brothels conducted in "a tolerable manner". He said that "uniformly the policy as to prostitution has been put on the basis that prostitution was to be contained and controlled". Containment and control were words that would be endlessly raked over in succeeding weeks. If Sir Terence's remarks had the intention of tying together the fates of government and police force before the inquiry, they had the effect of opening a serious rift.

Those ministers still alive and contactable either denied Sir Terence's statement or refused to comment. *Sunday Sun* political commentator John Stubbs quipped that the police commissioner had "verballed" the government. Evan Whitton elaborated in the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

The verbal amounted to this: a government that had run for years on a platform of purity, moral values and law and order ... had instructed police not to trouble themselves unduly about enforcing the law on brothels. No doubt the good citizens of Queensland, and particularly those in the National Party's constituency in the Bible Belt, are still reeling from Sir Terence's assertion about his political masters.

In the courtroom Ian Callinan QC, the representative of the political masters, underlined how unexpected the flanking attack was by requesting time to get further instructions.

The White Hand Gang, those who had brought the inquiry on, had a representative in court in the person of Mr Robert Mulholland QC, senior counsel for the ABC. A tall and youngish QC with a neatly clipped moustache, Mulholland attacked Sir Terence the next day, most tellingly with a series of newspaper articles bearing headings such as "Clampdown on massage parlours" (Police minister Tom Newberry in September 1977), "All-out war on vice" (Police minister Bill Glasson in April 1983), and "No evidence of prostitutes" (Police minister Bill Gunn in January 1987). Mulholland put it to Sir Terence that, given these statements and an actual policy of "containment and control", there was an appearance of "the rankest form of hypocrisy". Counsel for Sir Terence and the ministers objected strenuously but Fitzgerald was content with a slight reformulation of the question. Sir Terence said, "I have certainly never publicly or
any other way engaged in any hypocrisy” but agreed with Fitzgerald that “it would be hypocritical for the administration to have one policy according to its public statements and another policy, in fact, known only to those at senior police and administerial level”.

Later, Sir Terence, who had previously admitted to working a 70-hour week for 10 years, said he had not read the 1985 Sturgess Report, which was easily as critical of the Licensing Branch as the 1977 Lucas Report. Mulholland asked if Sir Terence remembered the Lucas recommendation that “Control of (the Licensing Branch) should be regarded as one of the most prestigious positions in the entire force and should be reserved for officers of outstanding integrity.” “Well, vaguely,” said the man responsible for implementing it.

Mulholland also asked whether the policy of containment and control extended to male brothels. “Certainly not,” said Lewis, going on to say he thought the 1985 Courier-Mail reports that exposed the male brothels and led to the Sturgess Inquiry were “grossly exaggerated”.

Mr Fitzgerald QC said, “My preferred role is to listen and learn rather than to interfere” and then went on to show that spectacle chewers were also acute listeners, alert to inherent weaknesses in a case. He asked Sir Terence to return and elaborate on the distinction between major and minor crime, the possibility that the former might involve itself with brothels not being tightly controlled and also the possibility that the policy of containment and control might owe something to police input to the ministers. It was very gently done. It also opened up a pit of quicksand.

Fitzgerald also scored nicely off Deputy Police Commissioner Ron Redmond, who had trotted out the familiar line of ethnic clubs where coffee was drunk and cards were played. Fitzgerald asked why, if the activities were as harmless as Redmond said, these clubs had found it necessary to close their doors after the press labelled them illegal casinos and the government announced an inquiry. Redmond drew the inference that the gambling might just have been illegal.

The deputy commissioner stuck faithfully to the party line — “a tradition ... had been followed that prostitution had to be
contained and controlled” — and added that Police minister Gunn had averred that brothels served a useful purpose. Mulholland secured an admission that there was no real way under the law or the police oath to implement such a policy. But it was Ian Callinan QC, counsel for a government unexpectedly embarrassed by its formerly loyal servants, who stole the show questioning Redmond.

Callinan’s style of cross-examination is best described as beguiling; a witness can find himself in very deep water very quickly. Callinan started on Redmond at 11.30 a.m. At 11.44 a.m. Redmond agreed that toleration of prostitution was police policy. A few minutes later Callinan had created an impression that Mr Gunn’s remark may have concerned the usefulness of brothels as a source of criminal information, which impression may have just been given to him by the police commissioner. Callinan sat down. He stood up again not long afterwards to query Cedric Hampson’s right to re-examine his client Redmond for a second time. “This is an inquiry into the truth,” said Fitzgerald. Callinan sat down again.

Assistant Commissioner (Personnel) Donald John Braithwaite told the inquiry: “My impression (of SP betting) is that there is very, very little of it and that it is not a real problem” and stretched the official line more than his colleagues in saying that brothels served “a practical, useful service within the community”. He wasn’t given an easy passage by Fitzgerald who raised the extraordinarily long service in the Licensing Branch of Detective Sergeant Harry Burgess. Braithwaite explained by reference to Burgess’s promotions, to which Fitzgerald raised two cases concerning other officers in contradiction. Fitzgerald then asked about certain other speedy promotions — Braithwaite himself, Graeme Parker, Ron Redmond and Kevin Dorries. The speed with which Fitzgerald could grasp crucial issues and respond was impressive indeed.

The weekend commentators had a field day with the first week of the inquiry. Said the Courier-Mail’s Elizabeth Allen: “When Sir Terence took the witness stand on Monday he elected to serve rather than receive . . . what he obviously hopes will be aces into the government court.” Said Quentin Dempster: “The Premier
and his police stuck like glue . . . until last Monday.” Said Evan Whitton: “It is not particularly significant whose ‘policy’ it was to tolerate, contain and control brothels in Queensland. The fact is that it has now emerged that police and politicians agreed not to enforce the law.” Ludicrously, the government television programme “Queensland Unlimited” — shown at taxpayers’ expense on all three commercial channels that weekend — featured Sir Terence Lewis and Police minister Gunn in a self commending look at how much better the Queensland Police performed than the forces in other states.

Courier-Mail commentator Elizabeth Allen noted: “The glamour of the opening week has faded. It is now evident just how hard, and sometimes tedious, a slog lies ahead.” The inquiry slogged on, high points now relatively few, as it tried to make some sense of the police procedures against vice, which by this time was generally if not universally conceded to provide a focus for organised crime. One much awaited witness, Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker, continued to be unavailable on sick leave, although the inquiry later heard that he picked up his last corrupt payment of $2500 in late August.

After police such as Braithwaite had claimed that the toleration of brothels decreased the incidence of rape and other sexual offence, Fitzgerald checked the assertion with Assistant Commissioner Allan John Hilker. The assistant commissioner was formerly a regional superintendent based in Toowoomba, a city reputedly devoid of premises used for prostitution. In his reply, however, Hilker said that Toowoomba, Queensland’s fifth largest city, was also relatively devoid of sexual offence.

One breath of fresh air in the proceedings was the sprightly figure of Norman Gulbransen, still a noted marathon competitor at age 70. Gulbransen, the most redoubtable corruption fighter ever to serve in the Queensland Police, was an early idol of former police officer William George Hayden, later federal Opposition leader and Foreign Affairs minister. Ironically, Gulbransen’s retirement in 1976 had paved the way for the rapid advancement of junior inspector Terry Lewis into the police commissioner’s office. Gulbransen, who had in early days during a spell in the Consorting Squad taken prostitutes for mandatory
weekly health checks, categorically denied that there had been any toleration of prostitution. He was most emphatic that this was the case during the Whitrod years.

Gulbransen had formed the original Crime Intelligence Unit in September 1971, partly in response to the spectacular Sydney television debut of prostitute Shirley Brifman. The CIU had interested itself greatly in the Licensing Branch, which lifted its prosecutions of SP bookmakers from 16 in 1973 to 82 in 1975.

Gulbransen made much more sense than some of the witnesses who followed him. As the inquiry turned its attention to lower level officers responsible for the more recent policing of vice the official line became rather more tattered and the assertions increasingly ludicrous. Inspector Fred Maynard told the inquiry that in eight years of Drug Squad service nothing had come to his attention regarding drug links or offences in massage parlours. Former Licensing Branch inspector Noel Dwyer told the inquiry “there were no hoodlums, gangsters or standover men” involved in prostitution and claimed, “That was my endeavour, to keep men right out of the massage business.” Dwyer, who was later to admit the falseness of his evidence and admit having received a considerable sum from male entrepreneurs of prostitution, also said he did not believe there was much money to be made from massage parlours.

The current Licensing Branch chief, Inspector Jim Waugh, contradicted him with the revelation under cross-examination that a de facto couple gleaned an average of $53 from each service rendered by some 67 prostitutes, about a quarter of the number that police estimated followed the world’s oldest profession in Brisbane. Whitton’s calculator produced the figure of $3 million a year in gross income for the pair but Waugh did not think this amounted to organised crime. Mr Don Horton, counsel for Hector Hapeta, sought to retrieve the position by painting a picture of the crushing overheads the pair must have faced. Said Fitzgerald QC: “Sounds like a case for a Government grant.” Riposted Horton: “At least a subsidy.” Commented Whitton, already being called Whitton QC by his colleagues: “Indeed, in the context of official semi-encouragement for prostitution, some basis could well be seen for this.”
Some of the police witnesses, including Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis, had created the impression that to obtain a breach for prostitution a police officer could find himself stripping naked in the course of gathering evidence. Former inspector Allen Bulger effectively scotched this notion, revealing that during his lengthy service in the Licensing Branch gathering evidence was more a matter of having a prostitute, clothed, sign the notebook of a police officer, also clothed. He thought it likely that there was someone "pulling the strings" behind the scenes in prostitution but accepted as "a matter of policy" that the Licensing Branch did not march out in pursuit of such persons.

The official line of the police hierarchy changed after this welter of contradictory evidence. In May, Sir Terence had set up the first line of defence in a Sunday Mail interview in which he denied that corruption was possible in his force. Now, in August, in another article published in the Sunday Mail, Assistant Commissioner Braithwaite marked the retreat to the second prepared line, "the few rotten apples" theory. He had kept a diary covering the opening days of the inquiry and a shoot-out in which a police officer and a wanted criminal were killed. "Eight long days" made moving reading but, whether intended or not, the article was a major salvo in the police propaganda war.

I see my force (without reference to rank) in these terms: At the top is a goodly number of outstanding people . . . better than you deserve having regard for what you pay them . . . . Next we have a very large body of good and decent police officers whom you deserve. Finally, we have a small number of no-hopers you don't deserve. We should be doing more to weed them out.

We are society's dustmen. . . . Thanks to the media, our police heroes have not become public heroes and the force feels cheated and shortchanged. . . . That is what police morale is all about: feeling good about one's self, feeling good about the people we work with, feeling good about the organisation for which we work, feeling good about the public we serve. Judged on this criteria, police morale is wobbling dangerously, and the danger is not only to the police.

Braithwaite supported the inquiry, urging police witnesses to "take refuge in the truth and draw strength in the knowledge that the money in your wallet is from your pay cheque". But his predictions of what the inquiry might find were to prove badly
off course except, one hopes, in his avowal that "the force will emerge from the inquiry stronger and healthier than ever".

The inquiry entered its third week and Gary Crooke QC set out his proposals for the next brackets of evidence. Geraldo and Antonio Bellino, Vittorio Conte and Hector Hapeta would be called to the box, followed by myself and Powell. Antonio Bellino, representing himself, thought this unfair and asked to hear first from his accusers. It wasn’t a trial, said Fitzgerald, who went on to tell Bellino that while he was not making "a plea on behalf of the lawyers' trade union" Bellino should reconsider obtaining legal representation. Said Bellino: "For me to go and get a QC or a barrister to defend me I have to open up three massage parlours and a gambling place. It is ridiculous — I got quoted $20,000 a week from the solicitor." Fitzgerald: "You say you have to sell them or open them?" Bellino: "Open them."

Hapeta was first in the box and this time the photographers did manage to intercept him. He received this attention in remarkably good grace, waving vaguely in the direction of the cameras. As Hapeta carefully squeezed himself into the witness box, his counsel Don Horton had a few queries about the sufficiency of the "allegations" to which Hapeta was being asked to "plead" — a list of 26 addresses and an allegation that Hapeta was or had been associated with prostitution therein. He was joined in his alarm by counsel for Geraldo Bellino and Vittorio Conte, and also by Cedric Hampson QC, counsel for Sir Terence Lewis and his past and present deputy and assistant commissioners. Fitzgerald QC did not entertain any long legal discussion, merely noting what had been said and ordering his senior counsel to proceed.

The habitually monosyllabic Hapeta hadn’t made it to his fourth question when Horton asked Fitzgerald for a reminder that Hapeta wasn’t obliged to incriminate himself. Fitzgerald obliged. Whitton noted the tenor of proceedings from henceforth:

By my count, Mr Hapeta droned the formula: "I can’t answer that question in case it might incriminate me", some 164 times in the course of his day in the box.
A few times he varied it to "I won't" and once, perhaps sufficiently bored with it all to lose concentration, he momentarily forgot the formula altogether.

I had absented myself from the court, mindful of a warning from Cedric Hampson QC some days before to the effect that my presence wouldn't necessarily go to my credit in cross-examination. I was there in another sense, as supplier to the inquiry of most of the addresses now being served up to the witnesses. For its part the inquiry had served me with two pieces of paper: one a summons requiring my attendance when requested, with attached undertakings not to leave my house for any extended period or the state of Queensland without permission; the other a letter from Mr Hampson's instructing solicitors asking that arrangements be made to produce all my "notes, correspondence, memoranda, books, writing, tapes or records held by or in the power of (this) witness, employer or colleagues relating to inquiries, research, sources, evidence, drafts, editorial input, etc". I pondered what could possibly come under the etcetera.

Hapeta was not much help on the whereabouts of his partner Anne-Marie Tilley or on many other issues. Crooke QC wanted to know if one of Hapeta's companies had made any profit. Hapeta wanted to know what the question meant. Crooke again rephrased the question. "No, I just take money when I need it," said Hapeta. Hapeta didn't think he had any names other than Hector Hall and Harry Briggs, or that Tilley had any other than Dianne Lewis, or Lisa or Anne-Marie Hall. "I got two names," he said. "But I suppose everybody does, don't they?" Fitzgerald didn't get entirely satisfactory answers to his questions about the differences between massage parlours, health studios, escort agencies and photographic studios either. He tried a different tack, asking if any of these premises were places that involved pre-arranged prostitution. "No," said Hapeta. "Well, the general idea is they do, but the police have to catch you and catch you in the act. . . . If the police don't catch you, you get away with it, don't you."

More mirth was provoked by revelations about the source of Hapeta's income, claimed to be $56,000 the previous year,
derived mainly from leasing a small mail van purchased five years previously for $5000 to Sydney mail contractor Lee Ash. Fitzgerald QC: "You don't know if Mr Ash is interested in leasing any other trucks?" Mulholland provoked outrage from Cedric Hampson by asking Hapeta if he had any business dealings with Sydney business man Abraham Gilbert Saffron, a resident of Sydney. It was suggested by some of the barristers that the topic of sex shops and who might supply them might lie just beyond the terms of reference. Fitzgerald didn't necessarily agree with this proposition but he and Mulholland let the matter rest for the time being.

Saffron wasn't content to let it rest. He rang the Courier-Mail to deny ever knowing or dealing with Hapeta. Later, I rang him back to check his associations with sex shops, Anne-Marie Tilley, or Ron and Jenny Feeney, sponsors of Hapeta to the Licensing Branch in 1981. Saffron, quite courteous throughout, denied all such associations.

The next morning, Hapeta handed over his teledext, containing the Sydney number for Lisa, alias Anne-Marie Tilley. He also told the inquiry he had rung Tilley the night before, that she was moving and wouldn't be giving him any means of contacting her. Counsel assisting the inquiry, Brendan Butler, raised with Hapeta the fact that the teledext contained just 11 numbers. Hapeta said he had compiled it a couple of weeks ago and had lost his previous one "moving" after the "Four Corners" programme. Butler persisted as long as he could: "Is your accountant's number in here? — No. How do you remember that? — I don't think he wants to remember me."

Geraldo Bellino, unlike Hapeta, answered questions. When, early in his evidence, he freely admitted to income from illegal card games above Pinocchio's nightclub in 1974, Fitzgerald queried his counsel, Paul Favell. "He knows his rights," said Favell. Bellino went on to put the inquiry firmly back on the front pages by admitting that he owned four illegal casinos in Brisbane in the period covered by Fitzgerald's terms of reference, and that they were visited regularly by about 5000 patrons and earned him about $1 million a year.
The police case on illegal gambling began to look quite feeble. Bellino himself remembered seeing only two police officers in his clubs, one of whom he thought was a Nigel Bruce, no, Nigel Power. It was Nigel Powell. The casinos had closed in the run up to the inquiry, but only because their exposure by the Courier-Mail and "Four Corners" was deterring custom. The casino down at the Gold Coast kept shifting around. Because of the police? Bellino was asked. No, neighbours complained of the noise.

Bellino denied anything to do with massage parlours, although he had helped a Mr Allan Holloway with the purchase of some premises, did know and had at one stage borrowed money from a Mr Geoff Crocker and assisted him with the purchase of premises, and employed a Mr Kim Ryrie as manager of his marble cutting plant in Chillagoe, North Queensland.

It was a smooth performance, disrupted only when Cedric Hampson QC raised the matter of how Bellino told the District Court on 2 April that he had not owned gambling clubs or massage parlours. When junior counsel assisting, Ralph Devlin, produced a transcript of the District Court case between Bellino and his former associate John Sissons, Bellino became quite testy. He later apologised and explained he had been asked a double-barrelled question in the court case and was saying no to owning massage parlours.

Conte, who like his partner Bellino denied any connection with prostitution, did admit to knowing elusive operator Allan Keith Holloway quite well. As the inquiry had been trying for some time to serve a subpoena on Holloway, Conte was asked if he was still in the state. "He should be," said Conte. Encouraged, Devlin asked when Conte had last seen him. "Yesterday," said Conte, laughing. "Perhaps you could get Mr Conte to get him to give you a ring, Mr Devlin," said Fitzgerald. Conte apologised for his mirth and explained that Holloway was in terror of the tax man.

Just as with Hapeta, the inquiry had difficulty understanding Conte's salary arrangements. As Conte explained in relation to Holloway, his one-time World by Night strip club employee, the arrangements were "Take what you need, don't make a pig of yourself." Conte's notion of an income seemed to be what he had left when the bills were paid. The Taxation Department had later
tried, without much success, to impress on him the notion of a taxable income.

Conte’s evidence raised an interesting connection — the sale of his residence at 29 Jordan Terrace, Bowen Hills, to Jack Reginald Herbert, former police officer with 16 years’ tenure in the Licensing Branch. Bellino and Conte bought the home for $100,000 in February 1985 and sold it to Herbert, ostensibly for the same amount, in September 1985.

Antonio Bellino staunchly defended his own reputation, which hardly did that of the Licensing Branch any good. He knew “all the Licensing, all the consorting (police)” — they came into his club “not often enough”. Tony Bellino was asked if he provided these police with free drinks and went on to say he had gone so far as to deliver cartons of beer to a barbecue behind Woolloongabba police station. “I got a great admiration for the police,” said Bellino. “I reckon we have one of the best police forces in Australia and I wish I could have them in premises every day, every night of the week because they would stop me from hiring bouncers.” It was unsought and, very possibly, unwanted praise.

Antonio Bellino denied any proprietorial interest in illegal activities. He gave some description of the Vietnamese club which just may have been carrying out illegal gaming in the room at The Roxy across from his office. Yes, he had known for some years the unlikely “Vietnamese” Mr Santo Rizzo who was associated with these activities. Bellino denied having anything to do with moving furniture from this room on 22 April, saying his first knowledge of it came from the newspapers and that it was later reinforced when Inspector Ross Beer, whom he had known for years, arrived to take photographs. He denied any involvement in the move but did admit to owning a red, short-sleeved sports shirt which he said he might have worn “every day of the week”.

Behind the scenes, events that were to split the Queensland police force had come to a head. Detective Senior Sergeant Harry Burgess was thoroughly implicated and knew it. He had known it since April, when he had rushed to Dwyer’s house after I named Dwyer and Parker in the *Courier-Mail* and only referred
Fitzgerald Baits the Trap

205

to Burgess in the article on Hapeta. The message was reinforced when former escort agency operator John Stopford described a meeting with Burgess, again unnamed, on "Four Corners".

Burgess, in company with other police, had made bland statements to Fitzgerald Inquiry investigators and had had to field additional questions as well. When allegations originating from the statement of Katherine James were brought to him, it must have been apparent there was now new evidence against him coming to light.

According to later evidence from Parker, Bulger warned him that Burgess might be about to fold. Parker alleged that he told Lewis this and was told in return, "Someone should talk to him." Parker said he asked Bulger to find out what he could. Bulger has denied any involvement in corruption before the inquiry.

As the first of the accusers, I followed Antonio Bellino into the witness box on Thursday, 27 August, but did little other than briefly explain 10 newspaper articles and begin detailing Hapeta's enterprises before Fitzgerald QC, pleading the press of urgent business, adjourned at lunchtime. The urgent business, Burgess, resigned from the police force — and from his prospects of an estimated $300,000 in lump sum superannuation — the next day.

On Sunday, 30 August, Parker was told by someone, possibly Bulger, that Burgess would be giving evidence next. He rang Sir Terence's personal assistant, Superintendent Greg Early, with the news.

Devlin asked me if I would mind standing aside for another witness. Not in the least, I said, knowing that the trap was about to be sprung.

That weekend Police minister and deputy premier Bill Gunn was on his way to Badu Island in the Torres Strait. He later told parliament that an unnamed prominent member of the National Party had telephoned him in Cairns to say he should return to Brisbane. Gunn was told that Sir Joh had summoned a senior Queen's Counsel "to enquire of ways in which the Fitzgerald Inquiry may be shortened or expedited in some way". Gunn checked the information with a senior public servant and later contacted another minister to "ensure that Sir Joh did not
attempt to influence Cabinet to make any decision in my absence”.

Gunn said that on his return to Brisbane he had met with the senior QC, thought to be the government’s counsel before the inquiry, Ian Callinan. He had been told that there was a request for an Executive Council minute but the QC had advised against it or any other action to shorten or otherwise interfere with the inquiry.

There was little hint of the impending drama in the weekend newspapers.
On Monday, 31 August, the feeling that something highly significant was afoot was heightened when security guards subjected everyone entering Courtroom 29 to an electronic frisking and inspection of their bags. Cedric Hampson QC rose before Fitzgerald to protest against counsel receiving this treatment. Fitzgerald assured Hampson that he did not feel threatened by him.

Mr Crooke QC explained that he would be calling a witness who had resigned from the police force on Friday. Further explanation came from Fitzgerald, brandishing a carrot. “The possibility exists of an indemnity from prosecution for criminal offences against Queensland law for present or former police officers who assist the Commission ... it is presently unlikely that the possibility of an indemnity will remain open beyond Monday next, 7 September.” Crooke introduced Harry Reginald Burgess, the first person to be granted an indemnity, to a hushed courtroom.

Burgess did not appear to be a man confessing all and was thus viewed with some anxiety by Powell, myself and others. Whitton dubbed him “a reticent witness”. Reticent or not, Burgess earned himself a place in history by confessing to corruptly receiving about $27,000 in bribes paid by Licensing Branch inspectors Dwyer and Parker and former Licensing Branch stalwart Jack Herbert. At times when he attended Herbert’s residence, either by himself or with other officers such as brothers Trevor or Neville Ross or Allen Bulger, he had found Vittorio Conte and/or Geraldo Bellino there as well. Police, he said, had enjoyed considerable favours at massage parlours and other
establishments they were charged with policing. He admitted to free sex, though not with Anne-Marie Tilley, and named five other officers who had also availed themselves of "freebies".

Burgess produced pandemonium. Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker was quoted as saying: "There is no truth in (Burgess's evidence) at all. . . . I'm flabbergasted with what's happened. The next move will be up to the solicitors." Said former Licensing Branch inspector Noel Dwyer: "If it wasn't so serious it would be laughable. I strenuously deny it."

Dwyer had been notified on the previous Friday that allegations would be made against him. On the Monday morning, before Burgess had been introduced to the courtroom, he rang Sir Terence Lewis's office and left a message with his assistant, Superintendent Greg Early. He told Early to assure the commissioner of his support, to say he had never been disloyal and, in a reference to Herbert, to say he had not seen a man who had gone overseas since 1976. A week later, Lewis called Dwyer to thank him and assure him that everything would work out all right.

Parker later said he saw Sir Terence Lewis several times in the week after Burgess gave evidence; if this was so, the meetings were not recorded in Sir Terence's diaries. Parker said that at these morning meetings the police commissioner turned up a transistor radio for the duration of the conversation. Parker's recollection of the conversations and their sequences was confusing. One conversation concerned Sir Terence receiving a notice of allegation from the inquiry that his wife had several times met Herbert's wife. Parker allegedly told Lewis that that was well known among the top members of the Licensing Branch. Sir Terence, on Parker's account taken aback by this, made reference to Herbert's "big mouth". Parker said he asked Lewis about standing aside and about the procedure for approaching the medical board and said Sir Terence agreed that he did not look well.

After two days in the witness box, and with his cross-examination incomplete, Burgess was stood aside to make way for a new witness, the woman appearing under the assumed name of Katherine James. She was disguised by an enormous blonde wig and sunglasses and was hidden from the public gallery by a wooden screen, so that some journalists were reduced
to writing reams about her legs. James, inevitably tagged a “mystery witness” by the tabloids, spent nearly seven days in the witness box, telling and retelling a complex 15 year story of a life in vice and crime beginning with her early involvement in massage parlours and Valley gambling casinos. She gave details of her jailing on drug charges in 1977, her employment with Hapeta, the attempt to open her own massage parlour in 1982 and her later employment by the alleged Bellino syndicate.

One of the most puzzling aspects of her evidence was that involving the alleged photographs taken in 1974 showing her and CIU senior sergeant Basil Hicks in a compromising position. James was exhaustively cross-examined on this incident and the interest later displayed by various police in the existence or non-existence of the photographs. She stuck to her story, which was denied by Hicks, representing himself, with his wife by his side. It was to be months before later evidence by Hicks and others went some way towards resolving what had really happened. James’s evidence also conflicted with that of Harry Burgess on some key points. She described Burgess as Harry the Bagman, repeating Hapeta’s description of him. Burgess later disputed this, saying that that portion of Hapeta’s money that came to him had come via Herbert, known to Tilley, and through her, to James as “The Man”.

Cedric Hampson QC, for Lewis and other senior police, cross-examined James for more than two days. She was tripped up on numerous matters of date and detail but her inside description of brothels, gambling dens and the methods of policing them survived this ordeal substantially intact. In the course of her 15 years, James claimed sexual relations with, among others, Geraldo Bellino, Basil Hicks, Licensing Branch sergeants Harry Burgess and Neville Ross and Drug Squad detective Brad Maidment. All, except Neville Ross who at the time of writing was still to give evidence, denied any such intimacy.

The Queensland government chose the worst possible moment to take action against the defiant university students and their campus condom vending machines. After Health minister Mike Ahern was humiliated over the issue, Sir Joh wrote to church leaders looking for moral support. They gave him mixed comfort
at best, with the Anglican archbishop, Sir John Grindrod, suggesting the government could be charged with moral neglect for dragging its feet in the battle against AIDS. As Burgess, then James, gave evidence of police cavorting with prostitutes while on duty, police mounted pre-dawn raids on campuses to remove the offending condom vending machines.

On Monday, 7 September, Fitzgerald went some way to making his first finding, a notable one in the context of more than 20 years of official denials that corruption existed or was even possible in the Queensland Police Force. Said the commissioner: "Since Mr Burgess's admissions, at least, the issue is no more whether there was any corruption as how much and by whom." Fitzgerald went further, making a direct appeal for the hearts and minds of honest police and highlighting some activities by other police to hinder the commission.

This inquiry is going to succeed with or without the information provided by honest policemen. Without that information it may be harder and it may take longer but the result will be the same. . . . We are quite aware of the desperate campaign which is being waged within the force to seek to maintain the closed ranks which provide a shelter for any culprits and the mis-information which is being disseminated. We are also aware of its effects and the names of at least some of those involved in the campaign and some of those who have been influenced by it.

Fitzgerald's staff, by now no strangers to the art of media liaison, had copies of "the homily" available to the press soon afterwards. They were possibly most carefully digested by Sergeant Colin Maxwell Dillon, who after his term in the Licensing Branch under Graeme Parker and alongside Harry Burgess and Nigel Powell, had gone back into uniform.

The week for corrupt police to take advantage of the indemnity dangled before them had now officially passed, although the commission was to issue more indemnities in succeeding months. During the week, there had been rumours aplenty of police coming forward but little else. Behind the scenes, however, Gary Crooke QC was in the process of landing a very big fish indeed. Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker, Queensland's third-highest-ranking police officer, had decided to approach the
inquiry. His family were the first to hear of his decision to confess, at the family holiday home on Bribie Island on Fathers’ Day, 6 September. His wife Dawn recalled what happened in an interview published in the *Bulletin*:

I arranged for the whole family to join us on Bribie Island. After lunch, we assembled the children in one room along with their wives and husbands. Gray was in the kitchen. He was shaking. His face was ashen. He looked up at me. “I can’t do it,” he said. Tears were running down his face. . . . I took him by the hand and led him into the room. Gray sat on the floor.

Then, slowly, he said, “I have something to tell you.” There was another long pause before he looked up at them. “I have two choices, to take an indemnity or go to jail.” The silence was awesome. The children sat there in disbelief. I felt as bad as he did and just as guilty. . . . Our youngest boy was in tears.

Parker contacted Gary Crooke to seek an indemnity and a meeting was arranged on the Gold Coast. After four hours of interview, Parker went on to Byron Bay, tailed by two detectives. Mrs Parker returned to Brisbane, telling her children that he was “trying to kill himself, willing himself to die”. Of Parker’s bribes, some $70,000 had been spent on the Bribie Island holiday home and the family decided to try to find some alternative explanation for this money. An arrangement was made with a Townsville tourist operator who was willing to say he had lent Parker the amount. “It was like an eleventh hour reprieve,” Mrs Parker recalled. “The first step was to get Gray from Byron. . . . He was surprised to see us. I explained our plan but he was too sick to comprehend. He just kept nodding his head.”

Parker collapsed during the 1600 kilometre drive to Townsville and the family flew back to Brisbane where a doctor admitted him straight to hospital. The inquiry was frantic — their witness had disappeared. On the family’s return to Brisbane Mrs Parker assured them they still had a witness but only revealed his whereabouts on Wednesday, 16 September. Parker was transferred to a private and secure hospital room.

I had gone back into the witness box at the end of Katherine James’s ordeal on 14 September, first to detail the holdings of the Bellino syndicate and then to relate my experiences with police. It seemed to me that Katherine James had broken the
back of the cross-examination. Antonio Bellino disputed my various sightings of him, particularly those connected with his supervisory role on the night The Roxy casino moved. Lindsay Bowden, junior counsel for Sir Terence Lewis and other senior police, tried for the Achilles heel of any journalist in a witness box, the delicate matter of confidential sources. Fitzgerald told him, “You’re fishing. People always fish for a good purpose ... to catch fish.” Thus discouraged, Bowden stopped trying to get me to divulge a source or risk being in contempt by refusing. Callinan QC got up briefly and then it was all over.

Whitton commented in the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

Philip Dickie of The Courier-Mail, looking uncharacteristically and inappropriately natty in a dove grey suit, concluded his master class on the techniques of disclosure journalism.

It appeared that his 10 reports on police inactivity on organised crime in the first half of 1987, and his evidence, had been pretty well armour-plated to the waterline: Ian Callinan, QC, for the ministers, was brief in cross-examination; Cedric Hampson, QC, for senior police, sent in his junior Lindsay Bowden; and Leon Taeffe, for the police unions, offered no questions.

Mr Antonio Bellino seemed disposed to search for a chink ... (his) technique appears to be largely based on questions as to width, height, distance and time.

One assumed he was thus shooting for a verdict that the witness was, if not clinically insane, at least disoriented in space and time. But whether he persuaded Mr Fitzgerald must be judged doubtful.

Sergeant Col Dillon was ushered into the box an hour before the court adjourned on Tuesday, 15 September. He stole the show, revealing the $400 a month bribe offer from Burgess and his decision, after finding no-one in the force he felt he could trust, to refuse it apologetically. Commented Whitton: “Mr Devlin resisted the obvious remark that it must be a damned odd police force where a sergeant of 22 years’ standing felt obliged to apologise for being honest.” Dillon also related the lack of interest shown by his superiors in pursuing his leads on the possible drug involvement of Tilley and Hapeta, his increasing isolation within the Licensing Branch and the agonising that led him to approach the inquiry. The bottle of Chivas Regal Royal Salute scotch whisky he had received by way of an unwanted Christmas bonus
from Anne-Marie Tilley via Burgess back in 1982 became Exhibit Number 194.

The cross-examination of Dillon, now at risk of becoming everybody's favourite police officer, concluded before lunch on Thursday, 17 September. Police union counsel Leon Taeffe bowled up a Dorothy Dix question by way of a closer, in effect asking Dillon if there was anything he wanted to say. Said a tearful and emotional Dillon:

I would like (other police) to now, at this point of time in our policing history, to stand up, boldly step forward and speak out what they know of any crime or corruption within this state that is presently, and that has for a great number of years, eroded our great police force like a cancerous growth. Step up and be counted. Do your part in helping to remove this cancer so that we can get on the road to restoring the good image that we once had, and that we can restore the faith in the public we serve, and I ask, I implore, all members of the public, the decent members of the public, please do not write us off. We are there. The greater percentage of us are honest. We strive, we fight courageously to serve you, to care for you, to keep the streets clean, that you and your family can walk the streets — not frightened, not to be harassed, and if you support us, if you give us the support we need, you will be rewarded by a great body of men and women who you will find will not hold back but will be out there straining to the limits to give you the best police service that I feel you so richly deserve.

The applause started in the public gallery and spread quickly to the body of the court. Fitzgerald looked up, surprised, then smiled. "I certainly would not stop the applause," he said. "I think everybody is very impressed with your evidence, sergeant." Dillon and I saw each other in the corridor outside. "Thank you," I said. "Thank you," he said in reply, taking my hand. It was a moment that remains with me.

Fitzgerald adjourned early for lunch that day, Thursday 17 September, saying an important witness could not attend for "a genuine reason" and that security considerations precluded a public hearing at another place. "I regret if that sounds melodramatic," he said. "I propose to go to that witness to enable short important evidence to be given. . . . I direct that no attempt be made to follow me or to discover the witness's whereabouts."
The hearing at Parker's bedside over the lunch hour took only a few minutes and just as few when recounted by Crooke to the reconvened public hearing. "Three minutes that changed Queensland," said Whitton.

Could we have your full name? — Graeme Robert Joseph Parker. Your former rank in the police force? — Assistant Commissioner (Crime and Services). Yesterday evening did you resign from the police force? — Yes, I did. Is it the case that you have admitted to the Commission that you were involved in corruption as a police officer? — Yes. Have you also, Mr Parker, provided information to the Commission including information involving other police officers in corruption? — Yes.

As the courtroom fairly buzzed, Fitzgerald granted Crooke's request for a two week adjournment. In just eight weeks of public sittings the pair of QCs and their support staff had notched up some notable achievements — the bond between the police force and government was broken, the force itself was split, corruption beyond any doubt had been established and a confession from the third-highest-ranked police officer obtained. Only the cynical noted that the proposed break coincided with the school holidays.

The Daily Sun's front page the next morning was almost worth framing. "I am corrupt — says Parker" was the oversize headline over an equally oversize photograph of the former assistant commissioner. "We're not all bad — sergeant" was the small headline over a photograph of Col Dillon.

With the inquiry not sitting, the ball was back with the government but it fumbled the catch. As the calls for the resignation of the police commissioner, Sir Terence Lewis, reached a clamour, the premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, came out again in his defence. While Dillon had been giving evidence, Sir Joh had said: "I've always paid tribute to Sir Terence and I always will." On the Sunday following Parker's confession he said: "Let's just wait and see if it is proven that things are not as they ought to be as far as (Sir Terence) is concerned."

On Monday, 21 September, Sir Terence Lewis was reported as entering the Executive Building "cheerily enough" for his routine meeting with Police Minister Bill Gunn at 8.55 a.m. He was reported as leaving "grim faced, scowling and tight-lipped" at
9.35 a.m. Gunn, who had spent a good part of the intervening time travelling in the lift between his own office and Sir Joh’s, very soon issued a statement. Lewis was to be stood aside for the duration of the inquiry. His deputy, Ron Redmond, was to become acting commissioner.

Sir Terence’s diary noted the visit to the minister’s office and that one of the topics he intended raising was a “replacement Assistant Commissioner”. The diary note continued:

Minister raised my “standing down’ whilst Fitzgerald Inquiry continues as Mr Callinan QC has advised him that serious allegations have been made by Mr G. Parker. I declined and he said we will see Premier. To 15th floor, where minister saw Premier for 15 minutes or more and then (I) saw Premier who said Hon Gunn had informed him of Mr Callinan’s advice. Asked Premier re written direction to “stand down” as I would not volunteer to do so. Further asked re salary, payout on contract or medical retirement as last resort. Hon Gunn said these matters would be considered. To 12th Floor where Hon Gunn said letter would be sent to me today. He said he would not raise matter in Cabinet as there were too many leaks there.

The day after his enforced vacation started, Sir Terence Lewis applied to delete his name from the title of the newly constructed Paddington mansion previously registered in the names of himself and his wife. Lady Lewis said media questions on this rearrangement of assets were an invasion of family privacy.

Whitton used the break in hearings to indulge in a little prophecy in defiance of the belief that “whatever the Premier might say, the only way he really intends to leave his post is via a State funeral”. Whitton’s Sydney Morning Herald article continued:

Any government in its right mind will want to have a new face at the helm when the full enormity of what police have done in the last decade — including the drug trade — emerges at the Fitzgerald inquiry in coming weeks. It will then be inevitably suggested that Bjelke-Petersen must accept responsibility for the catastrophe. Whatever his motives, in 1976 he got rid of the two men who were trying to clean up the force. He dismissed Police Minister Max Hodges in August, and his appointment of Inspector Terry Lewis as Assistant Commissioner forced the resignation of Police Minister Ray Whitrod in November. . . . The only question seems to be when, rather than if, someone in the party with a sense of history recalls Oliver Cromwell’s celebrated remarks to the Long Parliament, and
Leo Amery's use of them to unload Neville Chamberlain in 1940:
"You have sat here too long for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and have done with you. In the name of God, go!"

Sir Joh, not being a resident of Sydney, may not have read this. If he did, he must have dismissed it as just the ravings of a self-confessed reptile of the press, for shortly thereafter he embroiled himself in a damaging media row with former police commissioner Ray Whitrod. Sir Joh chose national television to say that Whitrod had recommended Lewis for promotion. Whitrod broke his years of silence to say that he certainly had not recommended Lewis's promotion to assistant commissioner. It was possible that he had approved his almost automatic promotion from senior sergeant to inspector, Whitrod said.

Police minister Bill Gunn and attorney-general Paul Clauson acceded willingly enough to a request from Fitzgerald for more powers to pursue the truth. Fitzgerald delayed sittings for another week to allow parliament to pass the amendments unimpeded by further controversies arising from the inquiry. When hearings recommenced, witnesses no longer had the option favoured by Hapeta of refusing to answer questions; as well witnesses could now be sought more effectively over state borders and the inquiry's investigative powers had been enhanced.

The much-sought Jack Reginald Herbert had gone to ground, whereabouts unknown. A host of trackers was in pursuit, by far the noisiest contingent being the media. In the Courier-Mail, reporter Glenn Stanaway added up the considerable property holdings of the Herbert family. A television crew traced his brother in England and learnt from him that Mr and Mrs Herbert were on their way home, via a stopover in Singapore. In Singapore, the local Interpol spokesperson had nothing useful to say to media queries and a report of Herbert having been seen at Brisbane International Airport turned out to be a classic case of mistaken identity. Cabinet minister Russ Hinze put Herbert in Sydney on the same day that Opposition Justice spokesman Wayne Goss put him in Lismore. Mr Gunn showed no gift for prophecy at all in saying police would have Herbert in a couple of days. Herbert was in fact in London, miserable and hungry for news. His "office" in a one bedroom flat was a cardboard box
topped by a telephone and a wire coat-hanger to keep his papers in place. He had some contact with home, most particularly with former Licensing Branch inspector, Allen Bulger and Vittorio Conte, who provided him with transcript of the inquiry hearings. As time went on Herbert said he began to toy with the idea of returning home to face the music, an almost certain prison term. His only hope was to take the indemnified Burgess and Parker to jail with him by exposing their incomplete evidence.

The deputy commissioner for taxation levied a bill for $828,999 in unpaid tax on Herbert, and later froze his assets including considerable property and $296,156 lying in two bank accounts. Tax authorities apparently estimated Herbert’s undeclared protection income as averaging $120,000 a year for five years. The taxation commissioner had been active on other fronts as well. Hector Hapeta received a tax bill for $1,482,509.56 and Anne-Marie Tilley received one for $1,483,315.78. The basis of the taxation commissioner’s calculation was not made clear except that the tax covered amended assessments over a two-year period. Hapeta later filed for bankruptcy.

There was comment, only slightly facetious, that the inquiry could be self-funding, even without proposed laws enabling the seizure of criminal assets. Mere mention of SP bookmakers had apparently put a brake on their activities: TAB turnover had increased by 25 per cent and government revenue from legal gambling by a presumably commensurate amount. The tax commissioner was looking at millions. Savings in superannuation payouts to police who accepted an indemnity could reach a similar amount, it was thought.

The inquiry reconvened on 13 October with Nigel Powell beginning a two and a half day stint in the witness box. He quietly and carefully outlined his service in the Licensing Branch and the suspicions he was left with when it ended. He also drew on his experience as a well-regarded police prosecutor to set out a case that the branch and its various apologists had greatly exaggerated any legal difficulties they faced in closing illegal establishments and prosecuting their owners rather than just their employees. Commented Whitton: “Mr Powell . . . is the largely unsung hero of the enterprise that resulted in the inquiry. . . . He
is clearly a highly intelligent man and a most impressive witness. Perhaps when this mess is cleared up he might be persuaded to return to the force at about superintendent level.”

In completing his evidence, Powell laid the groundwork for some spectacular fireworks. Ian Callinan QC wanted to know why he had not raised his suspicions with the Police Complaints Tribunal. Powell expressed reservations about the tribunal’s composition and its performance. He was reluctant to elaborate but, when pressed, said he believed Judge Eric Pratt to be a former police officer and a friend of Sir Terence Lewis. Cedric Hampson further questioned Powell on any knowledge he had of the association between the two men and Fitzgerald reminded the media to be responsible — Powell’s beliefs were not evidence of an association. The lawyers were being very sensitive and there it might have rested but for events later in the day.

Ralph Devlin, junior counsel assisting the commission, called in Detective Constable Jim Slade to recount how Detective Senior Sergeant Alan Barnes had attempted to bribe him in early 1985. Slade, uninterrupted by Devlin, told how Barnes had said that Harry Burgess, Graeme Parker, Judge Eric Pratt and the Bellinos met at Jack Herbert’s house to discuss police transfers and Sir Terence Lewis knew all about the meetings. The court was in uproar. Fitzgerald told Devlin, “I am a little surprised at that evidence: that the names were were not reduced to writing rather than brought forward in that way. The names were “reduced to writing” and in press reports the next day became “two police officers, a prominent citizen and a senior police officer”. Counsel for Judge Pratt appeared at the inquiry to deny the allegation, but a report of the denial by the media was forbidden.

“Hold the front page, my lips are sealed,” said the Australian’s Peter Ward. Fitzgerald, conscious that the open image of his inquiry seemed about to drown in dozens of pieces of paper with names written on them, relaxed previous rulings about hearsay evidence.

Gary Crooke QC also called 12 police, most of whom had been named in evidence by Harry Burgess and Katherine James. Inspector Allen Bulger led a procession of officers into the
witness box and all denied they had received any money, benefit or favour in the course of their police duties. Not every officer named fronted up to deny all sin. Constable Robert Malcolm Shambrook, in the Licensing Branch from August 1984 to April 1987, appeared in the witness box and told of a meeting where some of the other officers urged that everyone should stick together. "In the context of everyone telling the same lies?" asked Bob Mulholland QC. Shambrook agreed.

Harry Burgess, his memory somewhat improved, re-entered the witness box on Monday, 25 October. It seemed Herbert had told Burgess that he had consulted "a man named Terry" about Dwyer's appointment to head the Licensing Branch and that Dwyer, corrupting Burgess, had told him that Sir Terence Lewis was involved. Burgess also implicated a third inspector of the Licensing Branch in corruption — Allen Bulger, now at Internal Investigations, who had allegedly celebrated a previous send-off from the Licensing Branch by attending a party at one of Hapeta's brothels, where he had allegedly disappeared into a room with a prostitute. Bulger had earlier denied any wrongdoing — later he admitted that the send-off party had occurred but denied receiving any sexual favours.

On 31 October rumours were rife that another top-ranking police officer had taken the offer of an indemnity. On Monday, 2 November, Gary Crooke QC introduced Noel Francis Peter Dwyer to the witness box for the second time. The evidence of his first appearance was now largely discounted, along with any reputation still attached to the Licensing Branch. "Dwyer names police chief — Lewis 'a bribes shark'" screamed the Telegraph headlines after Dwyer recounted his various conversations with Herbert about Lewis. Dwyer was the first to raise the words the Rat Pack, which he said he had first heard as a Mackay detective in the mid-1960s. He thought it a derogatory term referring to Terry Lewis, Tony Murphy and Glen Patrick Hallahan. To the total surprise of the inquiry, Dwyer also recounted how he had accompanied the then Police minister, Russ Hinze, on a drive around the Valley in October 1981, pointing out the localities where the press had alleged the existence of illegal casinos. Dwyer admitted misleading Hinze in
describing the establishments as ethnic clubs, but it made news as a hitherto unknown side to Hinze’s celebrated October 1981 assertion that the illegal casinos were non-existent and anyone who said otherwise was a liar.

Down at the Gold Coast, Russ Hinze reacted angrily to being named by Dwyer before the commission, calling him “an unmilitigated liar”. The media, actively pursuing the political angle, also accosted the premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, as he stepped off the government jet at Townsville. Asked for his reaction to a minister being named at the inquiry, Bjelke-Petersen dropped the name of another minister, Don Lane. “All these things, Lane, and also, as you say Russ Hinze — take it with a grain of salt,” he told reporters.

Fitzgerald started grimly the next morning with what was only partly an attack on the media. He noted that it was a contempt of the inquiry to wilfully insult a witness and also to procure, aid or abet such offence. “I do not consider that it requires extreme sensitivity to be insulted by being called ‘an unmilitigated liar,’ ” he said. “Unless by noon on Friday the Commission has received satisfactory indications from those involved with respect to their future intentions, I propose to draw the Attorney-General’s attention to what has occurred to this point.” Whitton had earlier remarked that many inquiries became squeamish when they got within shouting distance of politicians. Fitzgerald was underlining the point that this inquiry would not flinch from “giving the skeletons at least a bit of a rattle”. Hinze backed down, but only after including Sir Terence Lewis as a member of the Valley touring party.

The long-awaited Graeme Parker followed Dwyer into the witness box on the afternoon of 3 November. Slow and halting in his speech, obviously ill, and needing hourly breaks, he began his ordeal in the witness box with the words: “Can I first say I held positions of trust . . . and I betrayed that trust, and I’d like to apologise to all Queenslander and to the members of the Queensland Police Force.” He went on, slowly and painfully, to reveal that he had received a total of about $130,000 in corrupt payments between 1980 and August 1987. Fitzgerald adjourned early.
The next day Don Lane, former police officer and Liberal then National Party minister, was named several times by Parker as a man mentioned to him by Sir Terence Lewis and Jack Herbert. Counsel for Lane appeared before the inquiry to deny all allegations. Parker alleged that Herbert had told him of a business association he had with Lane concerning a deal for payment from brothels in his electorate. He also alleged that Lane had asked Herbert to enrol his sons in the Merthyr electorate for the 1986 state election which Lane ultimately won by just 31 votes. Crooke called the principal state electoral officer, Keith Hawgood. He revealed that John Herbert had enrolled in Lane's Merthyr electorate on 24 September 1986, less than two months before the election, using the address of the Bowen Hills house that Jack Herbert had earlier bought from Vittorio Conte. John Herbert's electoral application had been witnessed by his father, Jack, who had himself enrolled in the Merthyr electorate at the same address just five days earlier.

Parker spent nearly six days in the witness box. Fitzgerald subjected him to a long interrogation, taking particular interest in the earlier days. Parker did not mention the Rat Pack by that name, but he did say that "Mr Lewis, Mr Hallahan, Mr Murphy and on most occasions, Mr Redmond ... used to always be a group together". With all three police witnesses admitting gross corruption — Burgess, Dwyer and Parker — Fitzgerald was concerned to establish how their corruption began and whether the witnesses may have omitted to mention any other person. Burgess agreed that he had some fears, but did not name any person he was afraid of. Fitzgerald did not seem entirely satisfied with the answers he was getting, returning several times to the query as to why Burgess, Dwyer and Parker had succumbed to bribes after long careers where they said they had not been corrupt in any way.

The inquiry now changed direction, calling a succession of pseudonymous prostitutes and police officers outraged at being named by them. Much of this evidence concerned the regional centres of Maroochydore and Rockhampton. When the exercise was complete the moral veneer of the police force was shattered. Police had apparently co-operated with the vice industry in the
most blatant way imaginable and the corruption was not limited just to the Licensing Branch, or even to Brisbane.

Perhaps it was a deliberate move for the inquiry to change course at this point. With the first hints of political links, the centre of drama shifted away from Courtroom 29.
11 The Fall of Joh

By early October murmurs of revolt within Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen’s National Party had festered into open brawling. Opinion polls, always viewed with contempt by the premier, showed that he and his party were on a downhill slide. A majority of voters and even National Party rank and file members seemed to prefer Michael Ahern, the Health minister recently humiliated for his support of condom vending machines.

Sir Joh declared he had no intention of stepping down until three months before the 1989 state election. It was generally assumed that at the very least he wanted to preside over Expo 88, notch up 20 years in office and ensure that his job went to his favoured successor, deputy premier and Police minister Bill Gunn. But there had been talk of him leaving many times before and more than a few thought that the only way he would leave the top job was via a state funeral. In the interim, however, Sir Joh continued to ride roughshod over Cabinet and party. “Bill (Gunn) would be lucky now if he could get five votes,” one Cabinet source was quoted as saying in October. Sir Joh threatened to sack any minister or senior public servant who leaked confidential information to the press. Notwithstanding, Cabinet continued to leak like a sieve and Sir Joh began to hint at an imminent ministerial reshuffle.

National Party state president Sir Robert Sparkes precipitated the first major crisis by calling on Sir Joh to pull out in 1988. Sir Joh told Sir Robert to “mind his own business”. Sir Robert thought it was his business and his view found some support from powerful minister Russ Hinze. Sir Joh threatened Hinze with the sack and Sir Robert with an alternative party organisation set up
by himself. As the backbench revolted, Sir Joh threatened a snap election as an answer to any move to dump him. This was a serious tactical error. Sir Joh forestalled a party room move against him only by announcing, on a nationwide television hook-up on 7 October, that he would retire as premier on 8 August 1988, the 20th anniversary of his premiership.

The Nationals cooled it, believing that Sir Joh would now behave himself. He didn't, bringing before Cabinet proposals to excise part of a proposed national park and lease it to Japanese developer Yohachiro Iwasaki.

Another showdown was inevitable, and the stage for it was the National Party annual conference beginning in Townsville on 4 November. As Sir Joh flew up in the government jet, Russ Hinze became the first minister to receive unfavourable mention before the Fitzgerald Inquiry. Sir Joh was accosted by reporters at Townsville airport about the mention of Hinze, which was more sensational than serious. He compounded his own party problems, however, by dropping the name of Transport minister Don Lane, as yet unmentioned in the inquiry.

Sir Joh left the conference early after coming down with the flu, but not before the party had come down rather heavily on him. It enshrined the national park over Iwasaki's claims, called for a register of foreign land holdings and, most tellingly of all, called for the legalisation of condom vending machines. Sir Robert Sparkes said he would no longer deal with Sir Joh. The man he was going to deal with, Sir Joh's hitherto loyal deputy Bill Gunn, counselled the premier to take a fishing holiday.

The ALP went on the offensive as state parliament resumed, which probably had the opposite effect to the one intended — the Nationals closed ranks. Cabinet decided to fund Don Lane's legal representation before the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

On Monday, 16 November, Mr Gary Crooke QC introduced Charles Harriott into Fitzgerald's witness box. Since March 1981, Harriott had been general manager of the TAB, where for the greater period of time he had answered to a board headed by Sir Edward Lyons, a close confidant of the premier. Sir Edward, also known as "Top Level Ted", had many friends, including apparently the police commissioner, Sir Terence Lewis. Harriott
said he had seen the two together frequently when he attended Sir Edward’s office on Friday afternoons. In November 1983, Mr Harriott had, on the insistence of Sir Edward, falsely recommended to the TAB board that the TAB agency at Dunwich be given to recently retired assistant police commissioner Tony Murphy. Within days, the Melbourne Age newspaper reported that Sir Edward’s Gold Coast penthouse was adjacent to one owned by Jack Reginald Herbert. Said Sir Edward: “At all times I have acted in the most honorable manner — I have also acted in what I considered to be the best interests of the people of Queensland.” Parliament rose, two weeks early, at the end of the week. The inquiry took a week-long break.

On the evening of Monday, 23 November, Sir Edward Lyons met with Sir Joh. The next morning, Sir Joh called in his deputy, Bill Gunn, and four other ministers, including Mike Ahern, and demanded their resignations. All refused and Ahern called a press conference, saying that he believed “the actions taken this morning are machinations in respect of the eventual outcome of the Fitzgerald inquiry”. He announced he would be challenging Sir Joh for the position as party leader. Sir Joh recalled Gunn and advised him he would not be sacked but would have to relinquish the Police portfolio. Gunn refused. Sir Joh twice trooped off to see the governor, Sir Walter Campbell, and at day’s end he had succeeded in dismissing Ahern and two others. Gunn, still the deputy if not the loyal deputy, also announced a challenge for the leadership.

The party meeting was held on Friday, 27 November, despite an attempt by Sir Joh to dissuade ministers from attending. Ahern was elected leader and Gunn deputy. Sir Joh, in the suite on the 13th floor of the Executive Building now being referred to as his bunker, refused to budge, and the governor Sir Walter Campbell was at this stage disinclined to dislodge him. Said Sir Joh: “Ahern can call himself what he likes, but he can’t call himself Premier.” Later he said he had “an ace up my sleeve” and that parliament would be recalled on 3 December.

Sir Joh would not speak to Ahern and the effective negotiations between the party and its former leader were conducted by Transport minister Don Lane. As Sir Joh apparently toyed
with the idea of a temporary parliamentary alliance with the ALP, Lane un成功fully attempted to appeal to Sir Joh's sense of loyalty to the party. Finally he went to Sir Joh with an ultimatum — to resign or pick up his own legal costs in numerous outstanding defamation actions. Sir Joh consulted his solicitors who advised that the costs of the actions were considerable and would rise substantially before any were finalised. Sir Joh capitulated and at 5 p.m. Queensland time on Tuesday, 1 December, he resigned after 19 years and four months as premier of Queensland. “It was my intention to take this matter to the floor of State Parliament,” he said. “However, I now have no interest in leading the National Party any further. I've decided to resign as Premier and retire from Parliament, effective immediately.”

Mike Ahern became premier, and, having the numbers previously behind Sir Joh, easily survived the fairly stormy session of state parliament. He and Gunn formed a Cabinet of two while the make-up of the new ministry was under consideration. There was a degree of speculation about whether the two ministers named before the Fitzgerald Inquiry, Lane and Hinze, would be included in the new roll-up. Ahern was ambiguous over Hinze but supported Lane, stressing his expertise and successful record.

The enrolment of Herbert's son in Lane's electorate of Merthyr just prior to the 1986 state election was so far the only element of Parker's testimony against Lane to have been corroborated. I examined the Merthyr electoral roll and found another name of interest. In an article in the Courier-Mail on 5 December I revealed that a former National Hotel Royal Commission witness and well-known Sunshine Coast identity, Michael Desmond Scanlan, his wife and his parents-in-law had all enrolled in Merthyr on the same day as John Herbert. A quarter of a century before, Scanlan had been one of those contacted by then Detective Sergeant Tony Murphy in his investigation of the background of royal commission witness David Young. Scanlan gave evidence to the royal commission which reflected badly on the credit of Young. So, in very similar terms, did Shirley Brifman, who at that time had not admitted she was a prostitute. She did so seven years later and described her royal
commission evidence as lies. As a result Murphy was brought to trial on perjury charges. Brifman died in mysterious circumstances three weeks before either Murphy's trial or her own trial in Sydney on charges of procuring her daughter for prostitution. Murphy was discharged, the magistrate having found that no jury properly instructed would convict on the evidence presented. Scanlan, who told me he had known Brifman "only vaguely", said he had been "a good friend" of Don Lane for many years but there was "nothing sinister" about his enrolling in Merthyr.

At home on the Sunshine Coast the next day, the new premier Mike Ahern consulted with Tony Fitzgerald QC and found him, predictably, unable to guarantee that Lane and Hinze would not be the subject of any more adverse mentions before the inquiry. He was also apprised of the views of Ian Callinan QC, counsel for the state government before the inquiry. Lane and Hinze were not included in the new Cabinet, Ahern announcing that they had been stood aside pending the outcome of the inquiry. This put both ministers in the same awkward position as Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis, now thought unlikely to make any comeback. Lane went quietly. Hinze made a commotion, even going so far as to issue a writ for defamation against deputy premier Bill Gunn.

Tony Fitzgerald QC formally buried the rotten apple theory in the closing stages of the hearings for 1987, during one of his admonitions to the press. The immediate cause was an interview with the acting police commissioner Ron Redmond published in the Sunday Mail, in which Redmond admitted, "Sure there are a few bad apples in the force" while making much of the morale problems. This earned both for him and for the Sunday Mail some vintage Fitzgerald: "The catch phrase of 'police morale' and the detriment to the Police Force which is caused by an inquiry such as this is never far from the lips of those whose integrity and competence may come under investigation. But I am persuaded that the most disastrous course so far as concerns police morale or for that matter the community's entitlement to proper efficient policing of the criminals in our midst would be to follow the easy path and give up with the job half done,
leaving the possibility that some part of the problem remained untouched and indeed protected for the future by an additional layer of cover provided by the circumstance that some major participants had not been discovered on this occasion."

Much of my recent time had been spent in Chinatown. Back in April it had been suggested to me that while the Italian and other criminal networks had been getting a hard time of it there might be certain Chinese who were laughing all the way to the bank. My observations suggested there might be some truth in this view. Some Chinese had received a mention in my articles and the inquiry. Robert Chan, a Singapore-born Chinese and close associate of the Vietnamese community, had teamed up in partnership with Antonio Bellino in The Roxy nightclub in 1985. When the Courier-Mail published my story back in April 1987 about how the illegal casino attached to The Roxy moved its premises under police eyes to the Asian Valley Youth Social Club, Chan and Bellino both issued writs for defamation. I knew that the so-called social club had earlier been a front for another illegal casino, and the security on the premises had then been provided by Chinatown Security Services, a division of the Malcolm Sue Kung Fu School.

Malcolm Sue, then a superb physical specimen in his fifties, had found it necessary to leave the country in late 1985 and the business had proceeded in a much reduced way under the patronage of his son Gawain Sue. In 1987 Gawain Sue put some effort into building up the business and news of how he did this reached me. At the same time, he endeavoured to put out of business some rival martial arts schools, some run by former students of Malcolm Sue. This did not endear him to the operators who started to spill the beans, some to the Fitzgerald Inquiry, some to me and some to both. It seemed the Kung Fu School provided recruits to a security service which operated at times like a private army. I followed the security service employees around and spoke to "clients", few of whom had willingly given up perfectly adequate and far more reputable security services charging only one-tenth as much or less.

By mid-December I had enough affidavits and observations to make a story — "Brisbane's Chinatown is being plagued and has
been for years by thuggery, arson, gambling dens, protection and illegal immigrant rackets and drug deals.” Solicitor Doug Spence passed the article for publication and it was sent down to the inquiry. Being a good front page story it was pasted up on the front page. It was unpasted after senior counsel assisting the inquiry, Gary Crooke QC, had a long telephone call with the editor of the Courier-Mail. It was finally published the following week, after references to drug dealings and a very large payment to a senior police officer were deleted, these being deemed the most likely details to upset inquiry personnel. Down in Chinatown many cheered, and others ducked for cover. Gawain Sue issued a writ for defamation.

It was on this note that the Fitzgerald Inquiry reopened its hearings on 1 February 1988. Former police inspector William John Boulton became the fourth police officer to give evidence under an indemnity, admitting to the receipt of $8800 from “close friend” Graeme Parker over a nine month period in the Licensing Branch. Boulton had other close friends — Malcolm Sue and Chinese business man and restaurateur Jack Hing. Boulton was offered the job as Licensing Branch inspector when Allen Bulger moved on, but preferred early retirement. To the inquiry he recounted the following conversation, later denied by counsel for Hing.

Hing: “Take it.”
Boulton: “No, I don’t want it.”
Hing: “Look, I’ll give you $5000, I’ll give you $10,000 a month . . .”
Boulton: “No, look, Jack . . .”
Hing: “Look, how much do you want? Look, I’ll give you $20,000 a month . . .”
Boulton: “Come off it, Jack . . .”

Boulton told Assistant Commissioner Graeme Parker of the offer and Parker said no more than, “You be careful of what Jack Hing says, he records every conversation.” Boulton chose retirement.

Next into the witness box to reel out sensation after sensation was a 22 year old martial arts instructor given the pseudonym of Mr Brown. He started learning Kung Fu with Malcolm Sue at age nine and graduated to the level of a trusted deputy of the organisation before leaving in the early 1980s. Brown claimed
that while in Sue's employ he had assaulted numerous people and stabbed one; that he was involved in the abduction of a Vietnamese who may have been murdered off the end of Cleveland pier; that he stood over restaurateurs, gamblers and others; that he provided security in gambling dens and brothels; that he visited a Papua New Guinea marijuana plantation; that he was involved in the import of goods which may have contained drugs; and that he used a false passport to travel overseas.

Brown also claimed that he witnessed Malcolm Sue passing an envelope to Police Commissioner Terry Lewis in which he could see "the colour of money"; Cabinet minister Russell Hinze in an illegal casino; Cabinet ministers Hinze (twice) and Don Lane (once) in one of Sue's brothels; the firebombing of a Lebanese restaurant by two Sue employees; and telephone calls between Sue and "Big Daddy", identified by Brown as Police Commissioner Terry Lewis.

Brown later agreed he may have been mistaken about Lane's identity, but remained adamant about his identification of Hinze, now a former minister of the Crown. Hinze had once before been chastised by Fitzgerald for insulting witness Noel Dwyer but apparently had learnt nothing from the experience for he now went loudly public in his denunciation of witness Brown. Hinze was again chastised but continued his campaign for an immediate hearing to clear his name. He was openly courting contempt proceedings but Fitzgerald, sensibly, declined to take the bait. Hinze appealed to the National Party who in return gave him little assistance and he later refused to turn up at the next sittings of parliament. Wayne Goss, the new Opposition leader, asked tartly when the Nationals would invoke emergency services legislation to force a striking member of parliament back to work.

Witness Brown had also brought in one of Queensland's best known commercial names, that of hairdresser Steve Ackerie, better known as Stefan. According to Brown, Sue and Ackerie had made a number of trips overseas together and Stefan had been present when Sue had handed over the envelope to Commissioner Lewis in the Chinese restaurant. Joe Ganim, for Ackerie,
presented a letter to the inquiry to say the restaurant had not existed — the site had been occupied by the office of a crematorium. Ackerie called a press conference to deny any allegations of wrongdoing against him and professed amazement at the alleged criminal doings of his Kung Fu teacher Malcolm Sue, with whom he had regularly practised in front of an altar bearing a motto enshrining "decency and integrity". Ackerie denied introducing Sue to the police commissioner, whom he said he had once invited to one of his restaurant openings. "This state has a beautiful police force," he said.

The press conference may have been a little premature — Brown later identified the restaurant from a photograph, counsel assisting the commission Bob Needham produced documentary and other evidence of its existence, and reference to a lunch there attended by Sue, Ackerie and Terry Lewis was discovered in one of the police commissioner's diaries.

More allegations came in from other former students and employees of Sue. It was said, and denied, that a $25,000 payment had been made to the police commissioner's assistant Greg Early shortly after Malcolm Sue left town at least partly to seek refuge from his creditors. Former Valley police officers testified to the special treatment accorded Sue. It began to seem at least a possibility that the import of martial arts goods was a cover for the import of narcotics.

Then, from London, came a bombshell that made front page headlines in most Australian newspapers. Jack Reginald Herbert, alleged bagman and fugitive from the inquiry since June and from the taxman since September, was arrested with his wife in a rented flat in Manor Gate Road, Kingston-on-Thames, London. Police also seized a crate of documents, later described as Herbert's "insurance policy". The wheel had turned full circle: Herbert's first police job was with the London Metropolitan Police in 1946 and it was they who arrested him after an investigation involving phone taps, mail monitoring and surveillance. The Herberts were hauled into Bow Street Magistrates Court where the Australian Federal Police sought the couple's extradition on charges of conspiring to pervert the course of justice in Australia. The magistrate granted bail of $150,000 with
a daily reporting provision that meant the Australian media could at last get up to date pictures of Herbert. A solicitor for Herbert told the court that Herbert’s reaction to being arrested was to offer to go immediately to the airport and get on a plane for Australia. None seemed too surprised that the Federal Police sought formal extradition instead. The Bow Street magistrate remanded the Herberts for a month.

Back in the Brisbane courtroom, suspended Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis began attending to represent himself before Fitzgerald, the government having decided it would no longer fund his legal costs. I was then working on a number of articles concerning former assistant commissioner Tony Murphy, whom I saw as the next most vulnerable former senior police officer still on the public funding list.

This period was marked by renewed interest in my activities and associates. A personal friend was warned by a police officer to “stop being such a dickhead”. When he asked why, he was told, “You have been keeping very strange company.” His home was burgled days later. Another informant telephoned two weeks later to report a break-in at his office. Files and tapes were interfered with, but a cashbox, shifted to get to the files, had not been opened. Another informant within the police force was told of “a day of reckoning”.

The superintendent of Traffic, Vince Murphy, was called before the inquiry and came equipped with numerous files on traffic offences relating to restaurateur Jack Hing. A number of the tickets incurred by Hing and his wife had been pulled, and there were suggestions that the police commissioner’s office had taken particular interest in some matters. Superintendent Murphy was asked to comment: he said he would have proceeded in at least some of the cases in which previous Traffic superintendent Cal Farrah had not. Cynics noted that Farrah had gone from heading the Traffic Branch to being regional police superintendent in North Queensland and from there, at about the time the Fitzgerald Inquiry started, into Jack Hing’s employ as manager of the Prince Consort Hotel in Fortitude Valley.

Farrah later admitted that he and Superintendent Kevin Dorries received protection payments totalling thousands of
dollars from Vittorio Conte to protect a Cairns illegal casino. This was an arrangement unknown to Jack Herbert, who also received protection money for the Cairns casino from Conte. Herbert later gave evidence that, following an approach from Conte, he had discussed the possibility of having Inspector Kevin Dorries transferred to Cairns with the police commissioner, Terry Lewis. The transfer occurred shortly afterwards. Dorries, who denied allegations of corruption, sought to resign from the police force during the Fitzgerald Inquiry but this was blocked by the government following publicity about the resignation of other officers named in connection with corruption. Dorries died in early July 1988.

On Monday, 22 February, the *Courier-Mail* commenced publishing my articles on former assistant commissioner Tony Murphy. The first concerned Murphy's association with former New South Wales police officer Keith John Kelly, named in reports as an associate of former police officer and convicted drug runner Murray Riley. The article had been somewhat nervously received in the office and now the response was somewhat nervously awaited. Murphy called at the office of the opposition *Sun* newspaper. Their article had Murphy claiming credit for the *Anoa* drug bust of 1978, one of Australia's largest and the one masterminded by Riley.

My second article appeared the next day under the headline "Illegal-casino operator called Murphy 'the Boss' in 1974" and dealt with four references to Murphy being associated with or paid by the operators of illegal games. Murphy's response came a day later, once again after a visit to the offices of the *Sun*. He was quoted as saying that the term the Rat Pack had been coined by a disgruntled officer in 1971 after a dispute with Murphy and the police union executive. I had meanwhile been contacted by two officers involved in the *Anoa* case, both of whom strongly disputed Murphy's claim to have been the one who "cracked the case". I checked with another senior officer involved and repeated Murphy's claim to former drugs royal commissioner Mr Justice Woodward of New South Wales. "That's all nonsense," said Mr Justice Woodward. I rang Murphy at his Brisbane home. "What do you want?" he said. "I have got some questions on
your articles in the Sun,” I said. “I’ve got nothing to say to you, Mr Dickie,” said Murphy. “You are getting a writ and that is the end of the story.”

The next morning’s article appeared under the headline “Murphy had little to do with drug bust”. It quoted the authorities for this assertion as “officers involved, three royal commission reports and two reports of a Commonwealth-NSW police task force”. The article also quoted Murphy’s solicitor’s words on the Rat Pack from his statement of claim in the 1982 defamation actions against former police officers Fancourt and Campbell and the ABC: “Among police officers in Queensland the words ‘The Ratpack’ had since the 1960s been used to refer to and include the plaintiff (Murphy), Terence Murray Lewis and one Glen Patrick Hallahan who had served with them in the police force.” A letter arrived from Murphy’s solicitors announcing his intention to sue for defamation and seek exemplary damages. Solicitors for Keith Kelly later served a writ for defamation on the Courier-Mail in Sydney.

The inquiry was about to take a new turn.
12 Dear Diary

That most senior member of the Fitzgerald Inquiry’s press gallery, Evan Whitton “QC”, had long been espousing the view that it was high time the inquiry got around to examining the roots of corruption. “What about the Rat Pack then?” he would say in the corridor to no-one in particular.

His wish was fulfilled on Monday, 29 February. It became clear how Queensland had really been governed when Gary Crooke QC tendered the official diaries of Police Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis, covering the period from 30 November 1969 to 3 November 1987. Sir Terence, upset, contended that he had produced the diaries on the understanding that they were for the perusal of commission staff only and objected to their general release on the grounds that they contained personal and family matters, confidential discussions with Cabinet ministers and senior police, and discussions with and identification of informants. But Ian Callinan QC, for the government, took the view that the diaries should be released, even going so far as to say that if Fitzgerald did not accept the diaries into evidence the government might tender them in parliament.

There was in any case little doubt about which way Fitzgerald would jump. “The documents will be Exhibit 515,” he said. Fitzgerald’s only concession to Sir Terence Lewis’s submission was to invite him to point out to commission staff any entries that were of concern to him, but he also cautioned: “There will not be excluded from general inspection entries merely because they relate to discussions between yourself and Cabinet ministers or senior police officers or other citizens... this is an open inquiry and it will proceed on that basis for the future. Thank you.”
The diaries were released over the next ten days and journalists raced through them looking for juicy titbits which themselves filled acres of newsprint. At times the real significance of the diaries became lost in this process. They confirmed that Queensland for years had been governed by a club, only some of whose members had been elected to any office. Sir Terence Lewis joined the junior echelons of this club when he was promoted by the premier to the rank of police commissioner on the last day of November 1976. On 11 January 1977 the premier phoned and sought a favour in relation to a traffic offence notice issued to his pilot, Beryl Young. The new commissioner in turn picked up his telephone and rang the superintendent of Traffic. I was able to peruse the diaries at a more leisurely pace than that of my colleagues, who faced daily or even hourly deadlines. On 5 March I set out my impressions in the Courier-Mail under the headline “One man’s tale of power brokers” (article reprinted overleaf).

If the diaries showed a new perspective on Queensland history, so did the testimony being taken in the courtroom. The first witness introduced by Gary Crooke QC was former Scotland Yard investigator Terence O'Connell, who said he had been informed of corruption in his 1975 investigation into the police force but had not detailed any of this in his brief 1977 report of that investigation. Not surprisingly, this earned him some criticism, most particularly from Ian Callinan QC, for the Queensland government. Callinan made the point that advising one Cabinet minister in a London discussion was not the same thing as telling the government of a problem with corruption. “Do you think you gave the Queensland government value?” he asked O'Connell. The witness said yes but was hard-pressed to justify his answer.

O'Connell brought with him a thick sheaf of statements from various police he had interviewed, and handed them over to the inquiry. The name most often mentioned in connection with allegations of corruption was Tony Murphy, he said. He had also frequently heard the term the Rat Pack and put two meanings on it — the trio of Murphy, Lewis and Hallahan who had been close to Bischof, and Jack Herbert and his associates. O'Connell said that one member of the Bischof era Rat Pack was reputed to have been Bischof’s bagman and Fitzgerald asked him who it
Dear Diary

was. "I can't say who told me but it was understood to be Mr Lewis, I'm afraid," said O'Connell. Lewis denied the allegation.

Former police union president Ron Edington, by this time a retired inspector, put up a strong defence of the Rat Pack trio of Lewis, Murphy and Hallahan.

There were three men who are still carrying the cross because of their ability. They were outstanding detectives. They were men that would rather be at work than be at home. They were prepared to mix with all types in the community in order to protect the public from criminal elements. They were obsessed with their work. . . . The others would only do what they had to do. These men would come to work early to make sure they got a car . . . and they would go out and raid flats and different places to flush out the criminal element and they would bring them in and they were always prepared to jeopardise themselves in the apprehension of criminals. They were prepared to be criticised by the judiciary and other people as to the manner in which they made their arrest but they were prepared to accept that and they then became — well, I don't know, the drones started to condemn them, accuse them of impropriety. It was common knowledge that they had always associated with criminals and prostitutes but they had to because they were investigative detectives.

Edington said former commissioner Bischof had looked upon these three with special favour and this had further aggravated the rumours started about them by the "drones" and "corridor assassins". One privilege was the freedom to travel and associate freely with interstate detectives. Edington was asked to nominate some and came up with the names of former Sydney detectives Fred Krahe and Ray Kelly. Edington did not accuse the new commissioner Ray Whitrod of being either a "drone" or a "corridor assassin" but said: "He seemed to have this obsession and he wouldn't stop on this Murphy, Lewis and Hallahan".

Whitrod finally made his long-awaited appearance a few days later. Stooped and speaking slowly, he still had a certain presence about him and was treated with rare deference by the media. His testimony put the inquiry back on the front page and back in the political arena. Cabinet, he said, had appointed Terry Lewis as police commissioner in the full knowledge that it was alleged he had been a bagman to former commissioner Bischof. Everyone in the courtroom was waiting for the expected confrontation
On New Year's day 1986 Queensland Police Commissioner Terry Lewis became Sir Terence Lewis for "services to the Queensland police force".

The Lewis diaries, released before the Fitzgerald inquiry, allow a different interpretation. Lewis's services to a group of power-brokers who had a significant say in running Queensland were, in effect, put on public display.

One frequently discussed topic was "honours".

Former Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen was foremost in this group and was certainly accorded more weight in the diaries than a succession of Police ministers. Former Transport Minister and policeman Don Lane would also have seemed to have more say than those of his colleagues formally charged with the responsibility for the police.

The Premier's close confidant, Sir Edward Lyons, had many a discussion on matters of Government appointment and politicking with the commissioner for police. The list goes on.

While the diaries were being read in one room at the courts complex this week, former Police Commissioner Ray Whitrod was across the corridor expounding his views of the relations that should prevail between a Government and a police commissioner.

He said the commissioner communicated to the government through the police minister and could be held accountable for its administration. Matters of policy were matters for the government — day to day operations should be left to the police commissioner. Sir Terence has yet to expound his views but a different approach could be discerned from his diaries.

Police favors could be sought by some outside the formal framework of government. Lewis, according to his diary notes, entered into discussions on police matters with persons whose entitlement to knowledge of them is arguable at best, political matters like redistribution, appointments ranging from constables to Governors, and honours.

Perhaps, in appreciation of his meticulous record-keeping, he should be accorded another honour, for services to history.

The earliest diaries released detail the routine activities of Detective Sergeant Terry Lewis, officer-in-charge of the Juvenile Aid Bureau. On present information, the slide into becoming a fully fledged member of the regime began early in 1977, soon after his appointment as police commissioner.

A first year tally of contacts with Lewis includes the following: Joh Bjelke-Petersen re a traffic offence for his pilot; Mr R. Sparkes re his niece applying for the police; Hon Hinze re police promotions and transfers; Hon Tomkins re traffic matters for relatives; Speaker James Houghton and Hon Herbert re traffic matters for themselves.

In February 1977, Lewis brought Inspector Tony Murphy back from exile at Longreach and put him in charge of his old persecutors, the Crime Intelligence Unit. On 20 May, the two visited the Criterion, Grosvenor, Crest, Carlton and Belfast hotels, the Tattersalls Club and the Wine Cellar.

Murphy reached superintendent level a few months later, retired as an assistant commissioner in November 1982 and continued to discuss police transfers, promotions and litigation against the media with Lewis long after that.

In September 1983, Lewis phoned Murphy "re TAB agency vacancies". According to evidence before the Fitzgerald inquiry, Sir Edward Lyons orchestrated the granting of the Dunwich, Stradbroke Island, TAB agency to Tony Murphy in November 1983. Lyons has denied any impropriety.
Former police officer and alleged bagman Jack Reginald Herbert appears to have been more than just a social acquaintance. Sir Terence and Lady Lewis visited Herbert’s home to help celebrate birthdays and anniversaries according to diary entries and went to see Crocodile Dundee together on one of these occasions. Other mainly social contacts recorded in the diaries are with hotelier Barry Maxwell, developers Keith Williams and Eddie Kornhauser, hairdresser Steve Ackerie, alleged extortionist and drug importer Malcolm Sue and Chinese restaurateur Jack Hing.

According to the diaries, former police officer turned barrister Eric Pratt discussed QC appointments before he became a QC and judicial vacancies before he became a judge. Transport Minister Don Lane and Lewis discussed a forthcoming vacancy as chairman of the Police Complaints Tribunal; the job later went to Pratt on the elevation of the previous chairman to the Supreme Court.

Appointments up to Governor level were the subject of discussions with Lewis by Bjelke-Petersen, Lane, Pratt and Lyons.

Judge Pratt has denied any improper action and said any references to him in the diaries are “innocuous or incorrect”.

Royal commissioners Costigan — inquiring into the Painters and Dockers Union — and Stewart — inquiring into drugs, the Nugan Hand bank, and telephone tapping — appear to have been a source of some concern according to a number of diary entries. Lewis discussed them on numerous occasions, with the Premier, his press secretary Allen Callaghan, National Party president Sir Robert Sparkes and National Party trustee Sir Edward Lyons.

This may have been no more than concern with protecting the State of Queensland from southern-based intrusions but Costigan’s interest in Bjelke-Petersen and businessman Kerry Packer is mentioned in particular.

This concern lasted a number of years. When the successive Stewart royal commissions were transformed into the National Crime Authority, Justice Minister Neville Harper was seen as a good representative able “to know what inquiries are taking place”. Harper also figured in the diaries as allegedly telephoning regarding drug charges against a woman but has denied any improper action.

Senior counsel assisting the Fitzgerald inquiry, Mr Gary Crooke, QC, has said the Lewis diaries are “one man’s version of events and conversations and proved nothing without further investigation”.

Article by Phil Dickie, Courier-Mail, 5 March 1988.
between Sir Terence Lewis, now representing himself, and Whitrod, the man he had replaced. But there were no fireworks — the two men were exceedingly courteous towards each other. Whitrod gave Lewis a friendly wave as he left the witness box and Lewis’s face broke into a broad grin.

The government was in for further damaging allegations as the inquiry conducted a hard two-week-long slog of an investigation into the events surrounding former inspectors Jeppesen and Hicks in 1978–79. It appeared that members of the government and in particular Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen had been in possession of substantial leads into corruption in the force but had done nothing other than try to get Hicks appointed to the CIB in place of Superintendent Tony Murphy. When Hicks dropped out of the running as a result of the set-up involving prostitute Katherine James, the government did nothing further and he and Jeppesen retired, both beaten men. Years later, however, Jeppesen wrote to deputy premier and Police minister Bill Gunn about corruption in the force, but Gunn ignored his information. When this was revealed, it became a serious political problem for Gunn.

The government was reacting to inquiry allegations, albeit fairly slowly. In early March, after months of public agonising, it froze the payout of $700,000 in superannuation and $200,000 in other entitlements to Sir Terence Lewis. Later in the month the government also withdrew the legal representation for former assistant commissioners Tony Murphy and Syd Atkinson. Murphy did not appear and did not instruct anyone else to appear to cross-examine Basil Hicks on the allegations he had made.

Lewis took the extraordinary step of granting an almost hour-long interview to a television current affairs programme after the decision about his superannuation was announced. He said he had been stood down on “flimsy grounds” and wanted to be either reinstated or allowed to retire with his superannuation payout. He apologised to those who had been embarrassed by the public release of his diaries but said he could see nothing wrong with politicians ringing him up to ask him to look into police matters. He also spoke about his friendship with Jack Herbert
but said he did not know he was allegedly corrupt. "Never believe anything until it's proved," he said.

The next day, 14 March, the news broke that Herbert had thrown up his hands and would be voluntarily returning to Queensland. All charges against Jack and Peggy Herbert were dropped in a three minute hearing before the Bow Street Magistrates Court in London and the Herberts, and their guards, disappeared from public view. While the media staked out airports in Australia the Herberts were brought into Amberley Airbase by the RAAF. The inquiry announced a three week break in public hearings.

The news that Herbert was returning caused considerable upset among his former colleagues in corruption. Former Licensing Branch officers Noel Kelly and Allen Bulger had been in contact with Herbert in London, both by telephone and through Herbert's airline-steward son, John. Indeed, they had supplied Herbert with some of the documents he was found with. The day after Herbert's return was announced, John Herbert and Noel Kelly met in a car in a hotel carpark. Unknown to Kelly the meeting was video- and tape-recorded. The tapes found their way into the hands of the Federal Police and when they were given to the Fitzgerald Inquiry, they brought Kelly undone. Some extracts follow.

Kelly: You know my guts fell in a heap this morning when I read the fucking paper. And then you rang me up and said Jack's been —tape indistinct— for good, I thought fuckin' hell, he's rolled over and fuckin' put me in and fuckin' Bulger in.

Herbert: Cause I know, they, as I say I know they've got a lot of stuff that he had in his unit, but I don't know what they've got see, he hasn't been too specific on the phone with me because, oh I maintain if they weren't bugging it before they certainly bloody would be now, so I haven't ...

Kelly: He said to me when I rang him the first time, they've got in the flat, they've got my phone number, right, and they've got a lot of stuff which was detrimental to him, you know, they've got stuff he shouldn't have had, that he didn't want them to have ...

The conversation on the tapes included mentions of Police Commissioner Terry Lewis, Hazel Lewis and former assistant commissioner Tony Murphy. It also made reference to indemnified
witnesses Harry Burgess and former assistant commissioner Graeme Parker.

Kelly: You know with Burgess saying that basically, see Burgess... knows about Terry but he hasn’t said anything. ... If he (Jack Herbert) gives himself up he can bloody demolish (Burgess and Parker) and they lose their indemnities and everything else as well.

During the next week inquiry police raided the homes of Geraldo Bellino and Vittorio Conte, seizing documents, bank statements and, according to Bellino, photograph albums. Bellino’s response was to speak to the media, telling them of his “old friend” Jack Herbert whom he had telephoned “hundreds of times” in London in recent months. But Bellino denied there was anything sinister in their 15 year friendship.

With the inquiry in recess, the focus of attention returned to Queensland’s volatile political scene. Deputy premier Bill Gunn had for months been riding high on his reputation as the man who started the Fitzgerald Inquiry — but now he was to land in hot water because of it. In parliament the Opposition under new leader Wayne Goss revealed that Gunn had written to Judge Pratt, offering him another term as head of the Police Complaints Tribunal. (The government soon afterwards appointed another judge in Pratt’s place when his term expired.) The National Party was in crisis. One of former premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen’s final decisions had been to appoint federal National Party MP Tom McVeigh to the plum job of Agent-General for Queensland in London. However, when campaigning began for McVeigh’s safe National Party seat, Sir Joh loudly supported the Liberal Party candidate, who won the by-election handsomely. Initial research by the shaken Nationals disclosed that while the “Fitzgerald factor” was of less import than the “Joh factor” in the unprecedented 20 per cent swing against the party, it was still of worrying dimensions.

In parliament the next week, Premier Mike Ahern finally reacted to the continual tauntings from Sir Joh, by alleging that the old leader had called in a senior counsel to prepare papers to wind up the Fitzgerald Inquiry. Sir Joh denied the allegation, saying “Hans Christian Anderson wrote some good stories but
I have never heard that one before”. He said he would “destroy” Ahern over the allegation. Two nights later, as the counting of votes started in the by-election for Barambah, Sir Joh’s old seat, it must have seemed to some in the National Party that the promised destruction had already begun.

Barambah was held to be the safest National Party seat in Australia. Sir Joh had supported the National candidate, but even so the swing against the party was an amazing 34 per cent. The National candidate lost out to a candidate reputed to be further out on the right wing of the political spectrum, though possibly not as far out as the candidate who raffled a rifle at a campaign meeting.

The former “Minister for Everything” Russ Hinze resigned from parliament on 24 May, a day before a federal government mini-budget decision to further tax superannuation would have posed a potential threat to his payout, estimated at $560,000. His resignation, and thereby the prospect of another substantial by-election defeat was the worst possible news for Ahern’s struggling government. The by-election was held on 20 August. The swing against the Nationals was nearly 20 per cent and when the result was in after a week’s counting and recounting of votes the party only just held on to the seat. Premier Ahern claimed, improbably, that the party had “turned the corner”. Dissension among the Nationals increased.

On the eve of the inquiry’s resumption in April the Bulletin published an interview with Tony Fitzgerald which gave the clearest indication yet of his thinking. Interviewer Quentin Dempster asked Fitzgerald if he agreed with the view of Mr Justice Lusher of New South Wales that once corruption was perceived it must be treated as endemic. “Yes,” was Fitzgerald’s one-word answer. With characteristic modesty Fitzgerald showed he was now thoroughly versed in the theories of organised crime and its control.

John Citizen knows nothing about organised crime or organised criminal investigation. Tony Fitzgerald knows very little about it. I’ve had an education for about six to nine months which has been denied to most people.

I had no notion of the nature or extent of the criminal activity which appears to exist. Although it remains to be determined how
much is reliable, I am appalled by the information which is held by
the commission — which I suspect is merely the tip of an enormous
iceberg.

Corruption takes root in money and power, which are always pres­
ent. Its extent depends on the social environment. In some environ­
ments, it flourishes into a tangled wilderness; in others, its growth is
inhibited and perhaps it can even be eradicated. Minimum require­
ments include ethical leadership, an informed community, a generally
open and honest society and efficient methods of detection followed
by harsh punishment — a tall order. Organised crime cannot exist
without corruption.

The story is still unfolding but common sense suggests that it is
likely that some politicians warrant censure for the present situation.

Common sense suggests that crime recognises neither state nor
national boundaries.

In theory, it seems unlikely that widespread corruption would
involve police only as passive recipients of graft with none actively
involved in the organisation of the criminality.

Those engaged in organised crime and corruption seem to favor a
system of "cutouts" as one of their strategies. The "rotten apple"
fiction provides one obvious example in its various stages of devel­
opment. For example, there is only one bad policeman (the first to
confess) or the evil is largely confined within one group (the Licensing
Branch). Similarly, major criminals seek to hide behind lesser, more
visible participants. The denials of any connection between different
forms of illegality, including the various aspects of vice, and most
vehemently between all vice and any involvement with illegal drugs
may be correct or may be just another "cutout".

The (Lewis) diaries may be neither accurate nor comprehensive but
they are evidence which, contrary to some suggestions which have
been published, could not have been lawfully withheld from the com­
mission and were not accepted on any terms as to confidentiality.

Aspects of what the diaries reveal if they are correct appear to indi­
cate attitudes and practices with which I would be in fundamental
disagreement.

During the break, the inquiry had been strengthened by the
addition of an extra QC, Doug Drummond, and a deputy commis­
ioner, Ms Patsy Wolfe, barrister and former journalist with the
Courier-Mail. Fitzgerald, thus freed from the obligation to be
present at the daily hearings, retired to begin work on his report
and recommendations. Gary Crooke QC also disappeared from
public view to oversee the investigations of the commission,
which now employed a staff of nearly 60. His place in the
Dear Diary

245

courtroom was taken by Doug Drummond. New commission staff were not the only new faces to be seen when the sittings resumed. Former assistant commissioner Tony Murphy was also there to represent himself. He stayed only long enough to make a statement.

Certain evidence of a hearsay nature has already been given to this commission alleging or suggesting that I have in the past been involved in corruption and/or improper practices within the terms of reference of this inquiry. I wish to place on record that such allegations are not only untrue but can be demonstrably proved to be untrue. I advise the commission that I am both willing and prepared to give evidence to answer these allegations when I appear in accordance with the written undertaking already given to this commission. Madam Commissioner, you are aware that on 14 March 1988 the Queensland government saw fit to withdraw my legal assistance. It is this fact that now necessitates me seeking leave from you, Madam, to appear personally.

Former deputy commissioner Syd Atkinson also sought leave to appear and denied any involvement in corruption. "I am astounded at the extent of corruption which has been admitted by corrupt police officers," he said. "I am guilty of no wrongdoing other than trusting those subordinate officers who entirely let me down and I am astounded really by their actions."

Doug Drummond QC turned the inquiry's attention to the Gold Coast. There, it seemed, police in recent years had alternated between playing it straight and playing it corrupt in their dealings with a thriving vice and gambling industry. Jack Herbert told the inquiry that Vic Conte had twice tried to make a financial success of illegal casinos on the Gold Coast. In the early 1980s, Conte paid Herbert and local inspectors Cal Farrah and Kevin Dorries. In his second foray down the coast he paid Herbert who in turn paid Superintendent Mark Jackson and two detectives. According to Herbert, Jackson's transfer to the Gold Coast followed a discussion between him and Police Commissioner Terry Lewis about a suitable officer. Jackson was transferred but has denied receiving payments from SP bookmaker Stan Saunders. Lewis later allegedly told Herbert that his friend Detective Superintendent John Meskell was being transferred to the Gold Coast and not to have any hesitation about introducing
him to the "Joke". Herbert said he made payments to Meskell but his allegations were denied by Lewis and Meskell.

From 1982 former Sydney car dealer and failed real estate agent Frank Frederick Palmer worked his way up to become the largest prostitution entrepreneur on the Gold Coast. After being charged several times, Palmer allegedly negotiated a deal with Detective Tegwyn Roberts whereby for $500 a month he could be booked under a false name. But when one of the other parlour operators mistakenly tried to pay Detective Senior Constable Eric Deveney in the belief that he was Detective Roberts, an internal investigation was carried out. Deveney was ostracised by his colleagues but the investigation brought Roberts half undone in the sense that he was transferred, but not to uniform duties as recommended. Palmer was contacted during the course of this investigation and cautioned by Detective Senior Sergeant George Fitzpatrick with the words: "You don't pay police here. It is not like Sydney and if anyone hits you again for money you come and see me."

Palmer, it seems, took little notice of the advice. Later, when police told him they would continue charging him for prostitution offences, he erected a company facade to hide behind and authorised former Sydney police officer and failed car dealer Bob Walker to conduct further negotiations on his behalf with amenable police. Walker allegedly started the negotiations in Penrith in western Sydney, continued them with Detective Graham Leadbetter in Brisbane and concluded them with Detective Inspector John Meskell in a public toilet at the Gold Coast racetrack. Various stages of the negotiations were said to involve payments, but by September 1988 Walker had not been located, Leadbetter had not then given his side of the story and Meskell and Roberts had denied any improper conduct.

After all negotiating had ended and some threatening action from Gold Coast detectives had apparently stopped, Walker told Palmer he would have to pay $3000 a month. Palmer, not entirely trustful, asked former Queensland police officer turned Telecom investigator Steve Crockett to watch the progress of the first payment to ensure it went to the police and not into Walker's own pocket. Crockett, who told the inquiry he had resigned from
the Queensland Police after being adversely reported on because he "wouldn't take a quid", said he had seen Walker hand the money to a man known to him then as John Hepburn. Later he identified John Hepburn from a photograph as Jack Herbert.

Palmer then turned his attention to his most successful competitor, known variously as Ronald James Kingsnorth, Ron King and Ron the Pom. King's main massage parlour was just down the road from Jupiter's Casino, lit by flashing lights and bearing the enormous sign Geisha Bath-House. Palmer attempted to buy the freehold of the property out from under King. A contract was drawn up, which Palmer had in his home on the night of 14 August 1986. That night he was savagely beaten by "two Maori guys" whom police have not yet located. Palmer, who was for some time hovering between life and death in hospital, now suffers permanent disabilities as a result of what he sometimes referred to in evidence as "my accident".

A woman who gave evidence to the inquiry under the name Brooke Miller took over the running of Palmer's parlours but neglected to pay Walker and, through him, the police. The parlour nearest Palmer's home went up in smoke on 22 September 1986. Miller, who had resisted Walker's requests for payments, now asked Crockett to be the go-between to inform Walker she was willing to pay up. Crockett tape-recorded an extraordinary and lengthy conversation with Walker, and that day told a contact in the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence about the call and the threats.

Miller responded to a veiled threat by paying up the $14,000 that Walker said was owing to him and those he was paying. The ABCI contacted Assistant Commissioner Ron Redmond with their information on the understanding that it was not to be passed on to either Commissioner Sir Terence Lewis or Assistant Commissioner Parker. Redmond sent Lewis a memo about it the same day. Redmond later discussed the information from Crockett with Gold Coast regional superintendent Channells and allegedly told him, indicating the commissioner's office, "I can't take it in there". Redmond next suggested it be given to Parker. Channells said, "As far as I am concerned, Parker is crooked and you shouldn't give it to him." He told the inquiry that Redmond
was surprised by this comment, saying, "I thought Parker was honest."

Parker did get his hands on Crockett's information and gave both documents and the tape-recording to Herbert, who copied them and informed the Gold Coast police who were involved. The Queensland Bureau of Crime Intelligence under Inspector Col Thompson made an ineffectual investigation of the Crockett material, and when it concluded Thompson told Crockett that Hepburn (Herbert) did not exist, apart from being a mate of Walker's from Sydney. Thompson much later told Crockett that Hepburn might be Jack Herbert. Crockett already knew, after making investigations of his own that started with a throw-away line from Palmer about Hepburn being involved in some rip-off involving the "Ballymore" poker machine company.
It was to matters connected with Bally amusement machines that the inquiry now turned its attention. Poker machines were another southern evil from which former premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen claimed the credit for saving Queensland. This anti-poker machine policy had two probably unforeseen consequences. Queensland patronage, encouraged by daily free bus services from Brisbane, made clubs just across the border in New South Wales some of the wealthiest and most profitable in Australia. Of particular interest to this story is the Seagulls Rugby League Football Club, the second largest club in Tweed Heads. For many years its president was former Brisbane nightclub proprietor and legal and illegal bookmaker Jack Meekin and the vice-president was Gold Coast CIB chief Inspector John Meskell. Meekin and Meskell had a falling out with long-term club secretary Colin Hayes in 1986; shortly thereafter Hayes was charged with SP bookmaking and later convicted and fined.

Queensland’s mainly struggling registered clubs strongly resented this unfair competition and during the 1970s found a partial answer to the drain of entertainment money southwards in the illegal payment of cash prizes for “wins” on the operation of in-line (adult amusement) machines. Former Justice Department under-secretary Colin Pearson told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that in-line machines had been legalised in 1974, after the issue was examined by a volunteer parliamentary committee which included Don Lane. The conditions restricted the machines to clubs and forbade gambling, but not surprisingly most clubs paid cash prizes over the bar to players who had won credits for free
games. The practice was almost universal and so was the pre-
tence that it never went on. The Queensland government, how-
ever, was not above taking its own returns from hypocrisy –
in-line machine licensing fees were progressively raised to $700
a year, or far in excess of the annual levy on the amusement
machines they were supposed to resemble.

One of the first to realise the commercial potential of the in-
line industry was former Brisbane nightclub operator, National
Hotel royal commission witness and amusement machine com-
pany proprietor Arthur Anthony Robinson. Before the Fitz-
gerald Inquiry, he denied being involved with his son, Anthony
William Robinson, in Brisbane baccarat schools in the 1960s,
although he admitted knowing one of his son’s associates, the
young Geraldo Bellino. Robinson Senior told the inquiry repeat-
edly that in-line machines were intended for gambling and that
this was always known by the government. “The thing was
manufactured by Bally who make the Bally poker machines,” he
said. “It was manufactured for one reason only, as a gambling
device, you know. And as I say, you wouldn’t put two bob in it
in a fit as an amusement machine.” The business prospered. In
1978 the Robinsons, Senior and Junior, took on an interesting
employee — former police officer Jack Reginald Herbert, who
had been acquitted of corruption charges in November 1976.

Herbert was not totally new to the in-line business. At
Robinson’s instigation he had worked in 1977–78 for Queensland
Automatics, an in-line company owned by Sydney business man
Jack Rooklyn who was connected to the Australian affiliate of
the US Bally Poker Machine Company. Rooklyn had first
become known providing entertainment, including illegal poker
machines, to US servicemen in the Second World War; later he
became much better known as a yachtsman. Herbert worked
again for Rooklyn in 1981 and once visited his home in Vaucluse,
Sydney. He described it thus to the Fitzgerald Inquiry: “From
the front it looked like a long ranch-style home. . . . It was fully
air-conditioned. He took me up to one end where he had a disco
room fitted out as good as any you would see at a hotel. He took
me down on to the garden premises that went right down to the
river (sic). He told me that he didn’t actually own that bit down
The Inquiry Closes In

by the water but he had taken it over and nobody had known anything about it. . . . In the swimming pool there was a mosaic design in the bottom. . . . A place I would like to live in — it was quite nice.”

Bally was a notorious company. It had been formed in 1963 and in 1971 senior Chicago Mafia figure Gerardo Catena was revealed as a secret partner; in 1974 New South Wales judge Mr Justice Athol Moffitt noted in his royal commission report that the continued or future operation of the company or its Australian subsidiary risked the infiltration of organised crime into clubs. Mr Justice Moffitt found that Rooklyn had lied to the royal commission, had private negotiations with police investigating Bally and had some associations with Sydney nightclub proprietor Abe Saffron. New South Wales deputy police commissioner William Allen resigned from the force and from his chances of the top job after it was revealed in 1981 that Saffron had visited his office and that Rooklyn had picked up his Las Vegas hotel account.

Former under-secretary Col Pearson told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that the Justice Department was aware that the Rooklyn Trading Trust was the beneficial owner of Queensland Automatics. He also said he was aware of the Moffitt findings on Rooklyn but the department had not exercised its discretionary power to exclude him from the industry because “I think we came to the conclusion that this was a report from the (royal) commission not a decision from a court”.

Herbert, ever the able organiser, was soon effectively managing the Brisbane side of Robinson’s business. He told the Fitzgerald Inquiry of telephone calls followed by meetings between Tony Robinson Senior and Liberal MLA Don Lane. Robinson told him that Lane had been helpful in obtaining Justice Department approval for machines. Rooklyn often visited and, according to Herbert, often asked about “Don”. Robinson later told Herbert that he was paying Don Lane for the protection of in-line machines and that Rooklyn was paying both Lane and the Licensing Commission chairman, Leo McQuillan. Herbert said that Lane rang one night and Robinson, anxious to return to the Gold Coast, asked him if he would mind seeing
Jack. Lane then allegedly arranged to meet Herbert on a city corner. Robinson put some money in an envelope and handed it to Herbert, who went to the meeting place at the appointed time and was picked up in a car by Lane. Herbert handed him the envelope. On a later and very similar occasion, Lane allegedly told Herbert that Robinson was a lousy bastard and must be making a fortune. Robinson denied paying anyone but Herbert for protection and Lane denied all allegations.

During this period Herbert had resumed his social contact with the police commissioner, Terry Lewis. Herbert told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that in one of these social conversations he told Lewis that Lane and McQuillan were receiving payments for the protection of in-line machines. This annoyed Lewis, who said that it was a police matter and had nothing to do with the Justice Department or Don Lane. Herbert said he told Lewis that he could arrange a meeting with Tony Robinson Senior and that Lewis could tell Robinson about the threat to in-line machines from the police. Herbert admitted to the inquiry that the prospect of some money for himself was in the back of his mind during this conversation.

The meeting was duly arranged and held at another city corner. Tony Robinson Senior returned to the office highly annoyed and told Herbert, "I'm paying Don Lane, paying Leo McQuillan, now I've got to pay Terry Lewis." Rooklyn was brought into the arrangements and, according to Herbert, wasn't in the least upset about having to pay a police commissioner. Rooklyn provided $1500 a month, and Robinson $500 — Herbert delivered the money once a month at meetings arranged by the use of a telephone code and received $500 back from Lewis. Lewis denied the allegations. His diaries contained the following entries.

20 March 1978: "Mr A. Robinson called at office with Mr J. Rooklyn to introduce him. (Margin note:) "Mr Rooklyn inquired re starting a "'Health Studio' on Gold Coast, informed him if prostitution involved prosecution would be certain."

28 November 1978: "Jack Rooklyn called inquiring if massage parlours are being legalised; I assured him they are not."

A retired maitre'd from Brisbane's Crest Hotel, Serge Pregliasco, told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that he had gone to a
penthouse suite at the hotel and there poured wine for Police
Commissioner Terry Lewis and Jack Rooklyn. This may or may
not have been related to another entry in Sir Terence’s diary:

12 June 1979: “To Crest Hotel re luncheon re machines in Police
Club.”

Herbert said he had arranged two meetings between Lewis and
Rooklyn at the Crest Hotel and recalled a “new Australian”
waiter who was addressed as “Serge”. However, Police Commissio­
ner Lewis told the Williams Royal Commission on Drugs on
4 February 1980 that he had never had any dealings with Jack
Rooklyn.

Tony Robinson Senior told the Fitzgerald Inquiry that he
could not recall introducing the two men. “Now, (Rooklyn) is a
multi-millionaire,” he said. “He’s a top sportsman. He’s won
every race in Australia — ocean race. He operates machines all
over the world. Now, could you understand a man of 75 wanting
to open a brothel at Surfers?”

A number of witnesses alleged that in about 1979, in response
to a perceived threat to crack down on in-line machines, Herbert,
Robinson and Queensland Automatics manager Barry
MacNamara were engaged in some form of whip-round to gather
protection money from other operators. Robinson and
MacNamara both denied this. Robinson admitted paying
Herbert $9600 a year but denied any knowledge of whom
Herbert might have paid, if anyone. However, he also agreed
that while he paid up the Licensing Branch had given him a
charmed run.

This hadn’t always been the case — two detectives had seized
one of his machines in January 1975 and Robinson thought it
may have been then that Jack Herbert said he could “fix it” for
$800 a month. Herbert’s recollection was that payments to Lewis
started in late 1978. Tony Robinson allegedly told his accountant
in response to a taxation query that an annual understatement
of $14,800 a year in his income for the years 1979–85 included
an amount of $9600 a year for police.

MacNamara admitted to no more than approaching other oper­
ators to contribute to a public relations campaign on behalf of
the in-line industry and said he was "surprised" to learn that Robinson had been paying Herbert. Counsel assisting the Fitzgerald Inquiry, Robert Needham, then produced two tapes of alleged telephone conversations between Herbert and MacNamara in about December 1980. These had apparently been left behind by Jack Herbert when he fled from the Fitzgerald Inquiry in June 1987 and had been recovered by inquiry personnel in a raid on his New Farm unit in September that year. As described by Mr Needham, the conversations concerned a $25,000 payment from a "Jack" who was presumed to be Rooklyn to a "Terry" who was in some way connected to a "Don". There was some arrangement for a $10,000 kickback to Herbert, MacNamara and a "John". Some excerpts from the tapes follow.

(from Tape 1)
MacNamara: Oh I think it is a shitty trick, you know, I really do.
Herbert: Mm. Yeah. He's pulled one out for himself.
MacNamara: Yeah. Ah, I think he had a pretty fair shake. He expected ten ... at the most and got twenty.
Herbert: Twenty-five.
MacNamara: Twenty-five, I beg your pardon. ... And to think for a fuckin' shitty thousand dollars ... I think it's a very bad act.
Herbert: Yeah — well listen, I've got six here. ... I'll just pop down and have a quick beer with you ... give you the six and you can give John his three.

(from Tape 2)
MacNamara: I had a chat with John and John rang me back about ... a grand short. ... And he took it badly. ... He's going to give that bloke a grand light this month.
Herbert: Well, eh, I would prefer John to tackle him about it so that he knows what the position is. Possibly John would have thought why didn't I but I was in an awkward position, we weren't exactly in a private room you know when it happened, I met him down the Crest actually. And it was just put there and more or less said oh that should do you ... I went to great pains to make sure that John met him at home, and at here and also um, met Don, so I've really done my part I feel and then this has happened which has stuffed things up a bit.
MacNamara: But you know, whether we should deduct it from this payment or not remains to be seen. Perhaps we won't and just let it roll along and let John have a talk with him and tell him it was wrong ...
The Inquiry Closes In 255

Herbert: Yeah, I said I know Terry quite well you know he loves this stuff now he's getting it, he got quite used to it. There's not much else around I can assure you so he's naturally going to try and hang on to it. I'd say he'd be a bit upset if I did it back to him. . . . Anyway, well I haven't spoken to Don since I suppose he's been pretty busy plus the fact you telling me there's no exact hurry I thought well let him settle down. . . .

When the tape was played to the inquiry, Sir Terence Lewis denied that he was the "Terry" mentioned in the conversations or that any of the matters mentioned were relevant to him. However, accountant John Henry Garde, whose clients included Queensland Automatics, Rooklyn and MacNamara, identified himself as the John and said he understood Sir Terence was the Terry. Garde was a more indirect party to the transaction. He said he had been told the $25,000 payment from Rooklyn was for the lobbying services of Police Commissioner Lewis in writing a report to the government opposing the introduction of poker machines, one which an unimpressed Rooklyn later described to him as a "rehash" of the Moffitt Report. Garde was also aware of the kick-back arrangement but thought MacNamara's suggestion on the telephone that he would take on a commissioner of police over $1000 was "ridiculous". Herbert, who delivered the report to Rooklyn in Sydney, charitably said Lewis might have "miscounted" the $9000. Garde said that in December 1980, about the time of the $25,000 payment, he had attended Jack and Peggy Herbert's 30th wedding anniversary. Others there, according to Garde, were Terry and Hazel Lewis, Don Lane and possibly Tony Murphy. Garde confirmed that Herbert received $2000 a month, of which he understood $1800 was for Terry Lewis. The last payment was given to Peggy Herbert by Garde in June 1987, about a month after the announcement of the Fitzgerald Inquiry. Sir Terence Lewis immediately again denied any connection with the events described by Garde and, in cross-examination, re-emphasised that all Garde's knowledge of any payments to him was secondhand. When Herbert testified to making the payments, Sir Terence denied the allegation.

The in-line business returned about $30,000 a week to Queensland Automatics, and an arrangement whereby the receipts from
a number of clubs were not included in the general receipts seemed to suggest that some "skimming" was taking place. In about 1980 Rooklyn bought a safe for accountant Garde's office, in which were kept receipts of up to $12,000 a month that were not included in the accounts of Queensland Automatics. This included the money destined for Herbert and those he was allegedly paying, but regular payments were also made to Rooklyn, MacNamara and Garde. The evidence before the inquiry gave the impression that there was little honour among these thieves — Garde said that he, MacNamara and Herbert were taking some $2100 a month, which Rooklyn believed was a bribe to a club official. But Rooklyn had previously been paying Herbert some cash "on the side" to undermine the business of Herbert's then employer, Tony Robinson.

On 1 June I revealed in the *Courier-Mail* that Sir Terence Lewis appeared to have committed perjury in denying any contact with Rooklyn to the Williams Royal Commission on Drugs early in 1980. The article quoted Lewis telling Williams under oath on 4 February of that year:

I have heard the name Jack Rooklyn's (sic) who I am told has been said to be the person behind the introduction of poker machines. I think he has been named for many, many years. I think I can remember that from a poker machine inquiry in New South Wales. I have never had anything to do with him in any way.

This was clearly contradicted by his diary, which recording a meeting with Rooklyn in March 1978 and further contact with him in November 1978. The inquiry was very interested in the article but no response of any kind was received from Sir Terence.

Another form of covert gambling, SP betting, also came under the scrutiny of the Fitzgerald Inquiry when it examined the affairs of a succession of SP bookmakers. The charging and subsequent non-prosecution of SP bookmaker Terry McMahon by the Licensing Branch in 1980 was the first issue considered. McMahon admitted being an SP bookmaker but not at the time he was arrested, admitted meeting with Herbert and Dwyer but denied procuring Herbert to procure Dwyer to procure the dropping of the charges. Dwyer, his memory of these events
somewhat improved, reappeared to tell the inquiry of the earlier meeting with Herbert at which he was told that Commissioner Lewis wanted the charges dropped.

McMahon had set a pattern to which following SP bookies adhered — admit to being involved in illegal activities but on all accounts deny ever having paid police. Doug Drummond QC showed himself to be a most formidable counsel for the commission, with an impressive command of the material and continual outflanking of uncooperative witnesses, but progress for the inquiry was painful and slow.

Toowoomba SP bookmaker Bruce Bowd gave several conflicting accounts of the "accident" which gave him broken ribs just after he had been charged with SP bookmaking for the first time in more than 15 years. He insisted he knew Jack Herbert only as a punter and agreed that the transactions between the two men were about $42,000 in Herbert's favour. Drummond let the commission's hand slip a little and asked how a copy of Bowd's original statement to the commission had come to be in Jack Herbert's possession on his arrest in London. Bowd said he did not know but told the inquiry that he had shown it to retired Gold Coast police chief, Superintendent Mark Jackson.

Former assistant commissioner Graeme Parker returned to the stand to give testimony about a list in Jack Herbert's handwriting that had been found tucked in the leather folder that held his police badge. It was, he said, the list of protected SP bookmakers and their telephone numbers. He agreed that a ringed figure beside numbers could be the monthly amounts paid to Herbert.

This revelation did not budge the bookmakers one iota. All continued to insist they had never paid police or Herbert and could offer no explanation for their names being on the list given to Parker by Herbert. Wynnum SP bookmaker Frank Keenan admitted lying to the inquiry about bank accounts in false names and was sent down to the Magistrates Court on perjury charges. SP bookmaker Anthony Michael Hawke refused to answer questions and was jailed for contempt on 22 June, thus earning the dubious distinction of becoming the first person convicted of an offence as a result of the Fitzgerald Inquiry. According to an
article in the *Sun*, Hawke received a hero's welcome at Boggo Road Prison. Another alleged SP bookmaker, Kingaroy's Hector Robertson, who folded his arms and said nothing in response to questions before the inquiry, was also sent to jail for contempt a month later.

In early June the inquiry managed to round up another two of its long-standing missing witnesses: Hapeta's partner, Anne-Marie Tilley, and Allan Keith Holloway. Tilley was served with a subpoena after being detained with her three-month-old baby daughter at a Brisbane shopping centre in early June. Holloway, first identified as a member of Bellino's "Syndicate" in my original *Courier-Mail* article of January 1987, had, like Tilley, left Queensland as soon as the inquiry started looking for him. He returned a few months later with his hair permed, but was not too difficult to locate in the Fortitude Valley area. On 17 June an early morning police raid on a southside Brisbane house found Holloway allegedly in possession of drugs and a car stolen the previous September from an executive of Queensland Newspapers.

Tilley appeared on Brisbane television soon afterwards and was quoted in the press. Other articles at this time spoke of crises in the police force and treated some of the recalcitrant SP bookmakers sympathetically. Fitzgerald made his views on this known to the media.

Tilley was promptly put into the witness box on Monday, 20 June, immediately following yet another admonishment directed at elements of the media who were persisting in what the commission saw as attempts to popularise organised crime figures. This time it was more strongly worded.

This inquiry is not a competition between a bunch of lovable rogues and a group of narrow-minded prudes intent on imposing puritanical moral strictures upon a reluctant public. ... The demi-monde with which the inquiry is concerned is not a jolly place peopled by happy-go-lucky fun lovers sampling the pleasures provided for them by generous benefactors. It is a world of greed, violence, corruption and exploitation, where the weak and immature are preyed upon even to the extent of the indescribable evil of the peddling of addictive drugs by which youthful lives are destroyed. The connection between so-called victimless crimes and organised crime is well recognised: the
Link is provided by the huge profits which can be obtained and put to other uses.

Tilley's reception before the inquiry was thus much less sympathetic than that she had received the previous week from the media. In the continuing war of attrition, her testimony did advance the commission's cause in going some way to destroying the impression created by Burgess, Dwyer and Parker that they were no more than the weak-willed recipients of graft payments handed over by Jack Herbert. First she described how her first meeting with Herbert followed her request to Inspector Dwyer to be able to operate her businesses. Later she said that Harry Burgess had solicited additional money from her. On the way out of court Tilley said to me: "You! I'd like to push you over and stand on your glasses." It was said with a grin and I laughed in reply. Two days later, referring to the barristers then cross-examining her, she said to me, "Well, you are friendlier than they are." Certainly the woman that the newspapers were calling a "former Brisbane vice-queen" had a gruelling time in the witness box, breaking into tears on more than one occasion.

More drama occurred when the inquiry turned its attention once more to the affairs of the Licensing Branch. Former branch senior sergeant Noel Kelly was sworn into the witness box in mid-August and denied any involvement in corruption. He also denied being in direct contact with Jack Herbert in London although he admitted to meeting John Herbert and giving him information to pass on to his father.

The next morning Kelly was confronted by a battery of television screens and had to watch a replay of his taped meeting with John Herbert in the hotel carpark on 15 March 1988. A shell-shocked Kelly admitted to perjury before the inquiry and to being corrupt, although he later tried to say he had repaid all the money he had received to assistant commissioner Parker. Kelly was sacked from the police force the next day and disappeared from his home.

His former superior, Inspector Allen Bulger, was introduced into the witness box a day later to start giving his evidence.
On the morning of Monday, 15 August, Bulger was not in attendance and his solicitor handed up a medical certificate granting him a month's sick leave for "severe agitated depression". After hearing evidence from Bulger's solicitor and doctor, Fitzgerald ruled that a warrant be issued for his arrest. This was not executed — Bulger attended the hearings the next morning. He repeatedly denied any involvement in corruption but admitted being in contact with Jack Herbert in London and supplying him with documents. Bulger also admitted misleading the inquiry about a 1986 meeting with Herbert where an arrangement was connived for Bulger to pay rent for his Gold Coast unit to himself under the false name Jack Mitchell. Doug Drummond QC, for the inquiry, put it to Bulger that this was a way of "laundering black money". Bulger denied this, saying he did it for taxation reasons. He was sacked from the police force on 18 August 1988.

Noel Kelly re-entered the witness box, this time covered by an indemnity for all criminal admissions except his admitted perjury. He said that after accepting a one-off corrupt payment from Detective Sergeant Noel Dwyer in Mackay, he had been re-corrupted by his Wynnum superior, Senior Sergeant Allen Bulger, in the early 1980s. Payments of $50 for each Saturday afternoon race meeting from Wynnum SP bookmaker Frank Keenan were graft on a small scale — the amounts were much larger when Kelly joined Inspector Bulger at the Licensing Branch as his senior sergeant. He later received the money directly from Herbert and, later still, from Anne-Marie Tilley. When Herbert departed overseas in the wake of the announcement of the inquiry the responsibility for the receipt and disbursement of some of the payments passed to Kelly until the system finally faltered about two months after the inquiry began its public hearings.

The long-awaited Jack Reginald Herbert was the next witness. Security had been tightened and, in expectation of his arrival, the number of journalists attending the hearings had doubled. Fitzgerald returned to the bench and Gary Crooke QC, back as counsel assisting, revealed that an indemnity had been given to Herbert.
Crooke: "For the past quarter of a century is it the case that you have been involved deeply in corruption in Queensland, also involving police officers and other persons as well as yourself?"
Herbert: "Yes, for 29 years."
Crooke: "This is going to be a long road. We are going to start at the beginning."

The beginning was 1959, when Herbert first manoeuvred himself into the SP bookie protection "Joke" in the Licensing Branch.

By the end of his first day in the box Herbert had given evidence of corrupt payments to 28 police up to 1974. These included a number who rose to much higher rank — Police Commissioner Lewis and assistant commissioners Parker, Murphy and Hayes. He also named 52 SP bookmakers who contributed to the "Joke". The next day he added former Consorting and Special Branch detective Don Lane to his list of officers who were corrupt in the early days.

Herbert's early testimony and the stream of anecdotes he offered up made good courtroom theatre. The public gallery was packed to capacity and so was a small additional audio room. Herbert was, in the main, calm and composed, often giving evidence with his arms folded. He still displayed a slight English accent — "a lovely singing voice", Nigel Powell and I agreed. But when he left the witness box fourteen days later many in the inquiry were wondering if he had sung all he knew. He had an amazing memory for detail going back years but failed to recall matters or discussions that one would have expected to be significant to a central figure in a web of corruption. The "jokes" in the Licensing Branch are now much better known but about other "jokes" in the police Herbert professed ignorance, particularly those in the years since 1980.

Reaction to Herbert's evidence was not long in coming. The government immediately stopped paying the $88,000 a year salary of suspended police commissioner Sir Terence Lewis and agonised for a week before deciding not to give him the sack. The state government insurance office, Suncorp, suspended chief claims investigator Glen Patrick Hallahan on full pay. Hallahan, through counsel, denied allegations of having taken a payment
to quash an insurance investigation. Later his counsel returned to court to deny a subsequent allegation that Hallahan had offered and sold a piece of “hot” jewellery to Herbert in the 1960s. Of the other Rat Pack members, Sir Terence Lewis denied Herbert’s allegations during a cross-examination that relied heavily on Herbert’s admissions of verballing; and Tony Murphy, having previously denied any allegation of involvement in corruption, did not attend the court.

Sir Terence and Lady Lewis and also Geraldo Bellino appeared on commercial television to deny Herbert’s allegations. A link was later revealed in that both Geraldo Bellino and Sir Terence Lewis had been signed up as the exclusive “intellectual property” of Brisbane academic Joe Siracusa. In the witness box Herbert revealed that while in London he had been telephoned by Geraldo Bellino and urged to speak to Siracusa for $30,000. By then he was in touch with the inquiry and declined. Siracusa later said the money was to come from a television network. Lewis repeatedly refused the offer of much stronger interrogation by Quentin Dempster on the ABC’s “7.30 Report”. None of his interviewers put to him the only allegation he had not denied – the discrepancy between his 1978 diary entries of conversations with Sydney businessman Jack Rooklyn and his 1980 testimony to the Williams Royal Commission that he had never had anything to do with Rooklyn.

Don Lane, named by Herbert as passing on payments in the 1960s and receiving payments from the in-line industry from the late 1970s, denied the allegations. Judge Pratt was cleared of any involvement in corruption by Herbert. Herbert revealed the disbursement of about $3 million through the Licensing Branch in the eight years up to the Fitzgerald Inquiry — it seemed that other indemnified witnesses, Parker, Dwyer, Burgess and Boulton, had admitted receiving considerably less than Herbert allegedly paid them and that Anne-Marie Tilley had paid over much less than she claimed. Herbert alleged Lewis received $611,650 in nine years (and Lewis promptly received an assessment for more than $665,000 in unpaid tax, interest and penalties from the Taxation Department). In late August Hector Hapeta was arrested and charged with possession of and trafficking in
heroin by police working for the inquiry. Herbert's evidence was largely unchallenged by the SP bookmakers who had previously been before the inquiry. Two entered the witness box after Herbert finished his evidence. It seemed the line was broken — both admitted paying police for protection.

The future course of the inquiry had by that time already been mapped out by Fitzgerald in a surprise announcement on 4 July.
14 Minding the Future

By early July the inquiry’s long pursuit of the SP bookmakers had resulted in it reaching its lowest ebb of public interest. It was in this context that Fitzgerald returned to Courtroom 29 on 4 July to announce his intentions.

He had been absent from hearings then for some months and looked older and more tired. The press had been briefed to expect a major announcement and were suitably attentive. His statement began with a not so gentle barb directed at them.

An attempt has been made to rehabilitate the Deputy to the Commission, but, each time that she has made a statement on my behalf, the stigma of her past as a journalist has been used against her. For that reason, and in order to show that I have not absconded with either the Commission’s petty cash or one of its customers, I have decided to visit to deliver this morning’s homily myself.

Fitzgerald then proceeded to announce the end of his “temporary” inquiry. His intentions were, he said, to wind up hearings on 1 December, hear submissions early in the New Year, and report to the government by May 1989. Those named adversely were given until the end of July to submit signed statements in their defence. Those named in the continuing hearings would have 14 days to reply to the allegations. Fitzgerald also warned that attempts to discredit the inquiry would intensify and he again admonished the media.

It would be hypocrisy in the extreme for the media to claim credit for instigating the cleansing process, then to erode public support when the proceedings are insufficiently spectacular, and later complain that better results might have been achieved. . . . There must be realistic expectations. There are no solutions which are cheap, easy
and expeditious and in which every piece of evidence is of overwhelming interest and involves some prominent name. The reality is more difficult and more mundane.

The announcement took nearly everyone by surprise. But it soon became clear that far from winding down, Fitzgerald’s already very successful inquiry was beginning the process of transforming itself into a more permanent institution. For this there was ample precedent — most notably, the succession of federal royal commissions headed by Mr Justice Stewart in the early 1980s which had been transformed into the National Crime Authority.

When Fitzgerald made this announcement of his intentions, his inquiry was already the most successful ever mounted in Australia into organised crime and its essential associate, official corruption.

The initial terms of reference, those provoked by the activities of myself, Powell and the “Four Corners” team, dealt largely with specific allegations against particular people and associated police. The credit for going beyond those restrictive terms of reference, from particular individuals to the system of which they were a part, belongs to Fitzgerald and his team.

It is a popular conception — but a mistaken one — that the worth of an inquiry can be measured by the eventual number of prosecutions that result. While it is important that justice be done and be seen to be done, a far more important outcome is the changed perception of Queensland society. By the time Fitzgerald had made his statement much had been achieved. The change from an old order of sanctimonious platitudes covering a cesspit of crime, corruption and cronyism to an emerging new order was most clearly marked by the fall from power of Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen. The National Party is still shell-shocked from the traumatic events of 1987 and the government of Mike Ahern has tended to be led by events rather than the other way around. Within weeks of Bjelke-Petersen’s departure the two Opposition parties also replaced their leaders with younger men — all the parties seemed intent on cutting their links to the murky past.
The new government has promised to increase the effectiveness of the forum of state parliament. By September 1988 the promises had led to few actual reforms but the processes were hesitantly under way even if the Nationals were still holding tightly to the electoral gerrymander. The government had become more vocal in its expressions of support for Fitzgerald, and even promised to implement his recommendations sight unseen.

Fitzgerald will present his report to a much more open society than the one which two years earlier commissioned him to look at its dirty washing. Therein lies the real achievement of the inquiry. Part of the reason for its outstanding success must be Fitzgerald’s insistence that, as far as possible, the inquiry be conducted out in the open. It is to his credit that he persisted with this resolve despite numerous annoyances with the media over the reporting of the inquiry and also for perceived services rendered to the corrupt and their fellow travellers.

Just as organised crime cannot flourish without corruption, wrongdoing cannot go on except behind a veil of secrecy. The Fitzgerald Inquiry originated from the activities of a few individuals who lifted the corner of the veil and tried to tell the public what was really going on. Fitzgerald put his terms of reference to one side and continued in the same tradition, thereby having far more effect than numerous otherwise worthwhile inquiries whose deliberations were not part of the daily reading and viewing of the population at large. It is to be hoped that the institution that picks up the Fitzgerald Inquiry’s threads has absorbed this message.

No matter how far-ranging and effective the reforms suggested by Fitzgerald might be, they will not remove the need for continued vigilance, particularly by those privileged to be in positions of influence, unofficial as well as official. Loyalty in our society is usually expressed as allegiance to party or profession, institution or organisation. It should not — but often does — override personal morality, an individual’s sense of right and wrong, of justice and injustice. And individuals can make a difference.
Appendix: The Cast — 
Biographical Sketches


BARNES, Alan Frederick. One of 89 police legally represented before National Hotel Royal Commission, November 1963. Name volunteered by prostitute Shirley Brifman in interview with Queensland Police Crime Intelligence Unit, October 1971. Brought into Crime Intelligence Unit by its new inspector, Anthony Murphy, February 1977. As senior sergeant, Bureau of Criminal Intelligence, allegedly offered and accepted $500 a month from Jack Herbert for information on intelligence relating to Geraldo Bellino, late 1984. Allegedly attempted to bribe plain clothes constable James Slade on behalf of “Uncle Gerry” (Bellino), March, April 1985. Told internal investigation he had lent $200 to Slade, asked for and received it back. Posted to Longreach following internal investigation, later promoted to inspector. His legal representative told Fitzgerald Inquiry he would not be appearing unless subpoenaed, October 1987. Retired with reputed superannuation payout of $220,000, 16 November 1987.

268  The Road to Fitzgerald


revealed in 1982 that in 1964 he had been informed by a deputation of western SP bookmakers that Bischof was in receipt of massive graft, possibly up to $400,000. Hiley required Bischof to crack down on SP bookmakers and later noted that his illnesses dated from around this time.


BRIFMAN, Shirley Margaret. b Shirley Margaret Emerson in Atherton, 1936. Married publican Szima “Sonny” Brifman, 1954. Moved to Brisbane, 1958; worked in Killarney brothel until closed, 1959; thereafter worked from inner city hotel lounges and on her own account paid a number of police. Went to Sydney prior to birth of third child on 3 October 1963. While in Sydney received at least two letters from Tony Murphy, one of which sought information on National Hotel Royal Commission witness David Young. According to Murphy, letters were passed through NSW Detective Harry Louis. Returned to Brisbane, January 1964; before royal commission denied she was a prostitute and gave evidence damaging to David Young. Returned to Sydney, 1965; made acquaintance of Detective Sergeant Frederick Claude Krahe, about 1967. Claimed to be
The Road to Fitzgerald

making $5000 a week from her three brothels, 1969. Despite protection payments to a number of NSW police, was charged in 1971 with procuring her 14 year old daughter for prostitution. Appeared on ABC “This Day Tonight” programme in June 1971; revealed she had paid NSW police and had perjured herself at National Hotel Royal Commission; writ for defamation issued by Detective Senior Sergeant Tony Murphy. Questioned by NSW and Queensland Police teams, July-November 1971; two police most often mentioned in transcripts of these interviews were Fred Krahe (NSW) and Glen Hallahan (Qld). Brifman admitted to hospital seriously ill from alleged drug overdose, 8 September 1971. Detective Senior Sergeant Anthony Murphy charged with four counts of perjury before National Hotel Royal Commission, 4 February 1972; remanded to 22 March. Brifman due to face Sydney court on procuring charges, 17 March. Brifman found dead in her Clayfield flat, 4 March 1972, after alleged self-administered overdose of sleeping tablets. No inquest held.

BULGER, Allen Stewart. Charged with conspiring to pervert the course of justice, 10 March 1976; later acquitted. Detective senior sergeant, Licensing Branch, 21 January 1982 to 5 July 1984; inspector, 16 July 1984; in charge of Licensing Branch, 19 August 1985 — 20 April 1987; then detective inspector, Internal Investigations. Alleged in Fitzgerald Inquiry to have received bribes from SP bookmakers; also from Jack Reginald Herbert both directly and through his senior officers, inspectors Noel Dwyer and Graeme Parker; also to have attended send-off parties at brothels; all allegations except last denied by Bulger. Told Fitzgerald Inquiry (August 1988) that with connivance of Jack Herbert he rented Gold Coast unit to himself under name of Jack Mitchell from March 1986 to November 1987. Denied any involvement in corruption before Fitzgerald Inquiry, 15 October 1987. Witness, Fitzgerald Inquiry, 11-23 August 1988; went on month’s sick leave with “severe agitated depression”, 15 August 1988, but required to continue as witness before inquiry. Sacked from police force, 18 August 1988.


DILLON, Colin William Maxwell. Joined Queensland Police Force, 1965; sergeant, Licensing Branch, 18 October 1982 to 22 August 1984; assisted to close independent massage parlour operated by Katherine James, and refused bribe offer from Sergeant Harry Burgess. Witness, Fitzgerald Inquiry, 15–17 September; first police officer to come forward to give evidence of being offered bribe; drew courtroom applause after emotional appeal asking for other honest police to come forward.


DWYER, Noel Francis Peter. Joined Queensland Police Force, November 1949. While Mackay detective, 1957–70, first heard the term Rat Pack, which he described to Fitzgerald Inquiry as derogatory reference to Tony Murphy, Terry Lewis and Glen Hallahan. In this period, according to evidence before Fitzgerald Inquiry, Dwyer allegedly: took money to protect alleged game; made one-off corrupt payment to Constable Noel Kelly; and made arrangements with Tony Murphy and Jack Herbert to be warned of Licensing Branch visits. Inspector, Licensing Branch, January 1980 to 17 September 1982; allegedly appointed on recommendation of Jack Herbert. Told Fitzgerald Inquiry that in early 1980 told Jack Herbert in hotel carpark that police would not proceed with charges against alleged SP bookmaker Terry MacMahon. Alleged that Herbert later gave him $800 with the words "Sorry it is not more — the Commissioner is like the shark, he takes the big bite"; split the money with Senior Sergeant Graeme Parker; thereafter was paid $500 plus each month by Herbert and passed money to Parker and Sergeant Harry Burgess. Admitted to receiving about $30,000 in corrupt payments before his retirement in September 1982. Witness, Fitzgerald Inquiry, 5–6 August 1987. Denied allegation of making payments to Sergeant Harry Burgess, 31 August 1987. Appeared before inquiry again under immunity from prosecution and admitted corruption in 1980s, 2–3 November 1987.


Scognamiglio on 22 and 29 December 1974, allegedly to provide advance warning of raids on illegal games at 142 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley; Scognamiglio charged with corruptly giving money to Fancourt; Fancourt resigned from police, 25 September 1976. Charges against Scognamiglio withdrawn, February 1977. Fancourt appeared on ABC “Nationwide” programme on police corruption, March 1982. Sued for defamation by Police Commissioner Terry Lewis and Assistant Commissioner Tony Murphy, March 1982; actions still current at July 1988.

FITZGERALD, Gerald Edward (Tony). b 26 November 1941. Educated at St Patrick’s College; University of Queensland. Admitted to bar, 1964; Queen’s Counsel, 1975. Judge of the Federal Court of Australia, 1981; resigned to return to private practice, 1984. Appointed to head Commission of Inquiry into Alleged Illegal Activities and Associated Police Misconduct, 26 May 1987; given extension to terms of reference, 25 June 1987; opened public hearings, 27 July 1987, having said he was conducting “an inquiry into the truth”. Said, on 7 September 1987: “The issue is no more whether there was any corruption as how much and by whom.” Announced, 4 July 1988, that “temporary” inquiry would end hearings on 1 December 1988 to enable government to get a report within two years of its commencement and that inquiries into corruption would continue, possibly under a more permanent organisation.


by Mr Justice Harry Gibbs. First promotion to detective sergeant successfully appealed by Det. Snr Const. Ron Redmond, 1968. Named extensively in NSW and Queensland Police records of interview with prostitute Shirley Margaret Brifman, June-November 1971. According to Brifman, Hallahan was party to her perjury before National Hotel Royal Commission, had been paid by her, and participated in various criminal activities with NSW police officer Det. Sgt Frederick Claude Krahe. Hallahan denied all allegations. Charged, December 1971, with having received money from prostitute Dorothy Edith Knight; charge later amended to refer to alleged 1968 agreement to receive payments from Knight; all charges withdrawn in August 1972. Charged, March 1972, with complicity in bank robbery; found to have no case to answer, June 1972. Reinstated in police force, October 1972, but immediately resigned. Sued Courier-Mail for defamation, July 1976, after a witness in trial of Jack Reginald Herbert and others referred to Hallahan as possibly involved in Beerburrum Mail Robbery (1974). Had numerous telephone contacts at key times with John Edward Milligan during Jane Table Mountain heroin importation, July-November 1977. Milligan arrested for this and other importations, September 1979, and claimed to be acting for an "un-named man" later claimed to be Hallahan. In taped interviews Milligan alleged Hallahan, Murphy and Lewis were a "triumvirate" controlling aspects of crime in Queensland; Williams Royal Commission on Drugs later asked to investigate allegations against politicians and senior police. Hallahan appeared before Williams Royal Commission on Drugs, 1980, admitted business dealings with John Edward Milligan but said he had no knowledge Milligan was drug trafficker. Mr Justice Williams found that evidence available to him "falls far short of establishing as even a reasonable possibility, that Hallahan has ever been involved in wrong-doing in connection with illegal drugs", clears Murphy, Lewis and named politicians, April 1980. Hallahan professed bitter disappointment at not being totally cleared and says "the suggestion that I am still under investigation is wrong"; he was correct as Australian Federal Police terminated investigation into him, 26 March 1980. Described as member of the Rat Pack by fellow members Terence Lewis and Anthony Murphy, 13 December 1985. Employed as chief investigator for state government insurance company Suncorp, early 1986. Declared bankrupt on own petition owing $180,118 in farming related debts to unsecured creditors and having cash in hand of $100, 29 May 1986. Allegedly paid $3000 to "fix" insurance investigation by Jack Herbert, 1986; allegation denied by Hallahan. Any involvement in corruption denied before Fitzgerald Inquiry, 9 March 1988. Suspended (with pay) from Suncorp position, 8 September 1988.


HICKS, Basil James. Valley CIB, August 1969, where he submitted reports on Interlude Club run by former Sydney gunman Donald Smith. Allegedly told by former Sydney gunman Donald Smith (Hicks) would be "put in my place with the kids" shortly before being posted to prosecutor, Children's Court, December 1969. Crime Intelligence Unit, September 1971. Advised Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen in August 1974 that he had investigated and found to be untrue claims that prostitute had visited premier. Destroyed many CIU files on instructions of Commissioner Whitrod, November 1976. New commissioner Terry Lewis split functions of CIU, February 1977; Inspector Tony Murphy took over CIU and Hicks took function of investigating police to new Internal Investigations Unit; had to "scrounge" for facilities. Transferred on own request to Mobile Patrols, June 1977. Advised by premier that he would take over as superintendent of CIB from Tony Murphy, 4 September 1978. Warned premier that he would be shown up as "the greatest villain in
the world". Promotion offer lapsed after a number of statements shown to prem-i er, including one from prostitute Katherine James alleging the existence of photographs of a 1974 sexual encounter between her and Hicks. Attended Brisbane Jail with police officer Lorelle Saunders, 21 September 1987, where James allegedly told Saunders that no such photographs had ever existed. Accepted punitive transfer to Rockhampton, late 1978. Retired, June 1982. Witness, Fitzgerald Inquiry, 14–16 March 1988.


HOOPER, Kevin Joseph. b Brisbane, 9 July 1928. Elected ALP member for Archerfield, 27 May 1972. Named Geraldo and Antonio Bellino, Luciano Scognamiglio and John Hannay as Queensland Mafia godfathers, October 1981. Conducted long campaign on behalf of police officer Lorelle Saunders, who was jailed on charges of procuring a man to kill Superintendent Lobegeiger. Hooper said she was victim of frame-up and saw her acquitted, August 1983. Died in office, 9 March 1984. Because of anomaly in parliamentary superannuation scheme his wife denied benefits she would have received if he had retired from office.

JAMES, Katherine (Assumed name), b mid 1950s. On own account, became nom­inal owner of Fortitude Valley massage parlour, 1972; actual owner 1973. Alleg­edly worked part-time in illegal casino above Pinocchio's nightclub in this period. Acquired or worked in second massage parlour, 1975. Arrested in possession of heroin, August and October 1976. Absconded on bail, February 1977; travelled to Western Australia and Victoria; gave herself up and sentenced to three years jail, February 1978. On contested evidence, taken to police headquarters, 6 Sep­tember 1978, there signed statement alleging that she had sexual relations with


KELLY, Noel Thomas, b Rockhampton, 25 May 1939. Served in uniform at Mackay, January 1963 to April 1973; while there received one-off corrupt pay­ment from Detective Sergeant Noel Dwyer. Wynnum CIB, October 1978 to Sep­tember 1985: served under Senior Sergeant Allen Bulger, introduced by him to payments of $200 a month from Wynnum SP bookmaker Frank Keenan. Licen­sing Branch, September 1985 to October 1987; admitted to receiving more than $70,000 in corrupt payments. Admitted to being in contact with Jack Herbert in hiding in London; meeting with Herbert's son John in hotel carpark video­taped, 15 March 1988. Witness Fitzgerald Inquiry; denied involvement in corruption, 9 August 1988; after viewing video-tape admitted corruption and perjury, 10 August 1988; gave evidence of corruption under indemnity, 25–31 August, 1988.

LANE, Donald Frederick, b Toowoomba, 18 July 1935. Joined Queensland Police Force, 1951; served north-western Queensland, then Consorting Squad, Brisbane. Earned Queen's commendation for Brave Conduct after being menaced with rifle, January 1962. One of 89 police represented before National Hotel Royal

LEWIS, Sir Terence Murray, b 29 February 1928, Ipswich, Queensland. Joined Queensland Police, 1948; CIB Brisbane, 1950-63. With Glen Patrick Hallahan awarded George Medal for Bravery for arrest of gun-wielding German seaman, Gunther Bahnemann, August 1959. Established Juvenile Aid Bureau, 1963, served there to 1973. Allegedly received corrupt payments from Licensing Branch members Tony Murphy and Jack Herbert, late 1960s; allegations denied by Lewis and Murphy. Churchill Fellow, 1968. Inspector 1973, posted to Charleville by Police Commissioner Ray Whitrod who later said it was "for the good of the force" and later still said it was to give Lewis administrative experience. Appointed assistant commissioner over 122 equal and more senior heads by state Cabinet, November 1976. Ray Whitrod resigned in protest and Lewis then appointed commissioner, 29 November 1976. Denied knowledge or involvement in any group known as the Rat Pack, 14 December 1976. Allegedly received payments for protection of in-line gambling machines from Tony Robinson Senior and Jack Rooklyn, via Jack Herbert, from late 1978; allegation denied by Lewis. OBE, 16 June 1979. Allegedly received payments from Jack Herbert for protection of SP bookmakers and illegal casinos from 1980, prostitution from 1981; allegation denied by Lewis. Noel Dwyer, Graeme Parker, Alan Bulger, Kevin Dorries, John Meskel and Mark Jackson allegedly promoted into positions following conversations with Jack Herbert; these people and Alan Barnes allegedly enrolled into corrupt system in connection with conversations between Herbert and Lewis; allegations denied by Lewis. Nomination for knighthood declined by Buckingham Palace, December 1982. Said, prior to 1983 state election, "The people of Queensland and the Police Force owe the Premier a very deep gratitude. The free enterprise policy of the Bjelke-Petersen Government has been responsible for Queensland's tremendous growth." Identified the Rat Pack as a group known within police since the early 1960s and consisting of himself, Anthony Murphy and Glen Patrick Hallahan, in statement of claim on defamation writ, 13 December 1985. Knighted, 1 January 1986. Described ABC "Four Corners"
programme “The Moonlight State” as “disgraceful” and said, “It is amazing, to say the least, if a corrupt police officer can escape this net (of safeguards)”, 17 May 1987. As first witness to Fitzgerald Inquiry said police policy on prostitution and illegal gaming was set down by five successive police ministers, 27 July 1987. Stood aside by Police minister Bill Gunn for duration of inquiry, 21 September 1987. His legal representation terminated, March 1988. Payment of his salary ($88,000 annually) stopped, 1 September 1988. Denied receiving $611,650 from Herbert, September 1988; received tax assessment of $665,000.

LYONS, Sir Edward Houghton, b Brisbane, 13 June 1914. Knighted “for services to commerce and industry”, 1977. National Party trustee and collector for the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation formed in 1978. Appointed TAB chairman over objections of Liberal Party, 1981. Reputedly involved in organising the numbers for Florence Bjelke-Petersen to be given the number one spot on the Senate ticket, 1980. Found by police to have a blood alcohol content of 0.12 per cent while in charge of a vehicle, 18 December 1981, but uncompleted charge sheet was thrown into a waste-paper basket. This was revealed in Sunday Mail, 20 December 1981; charged by summons, 21 December 1981 and later convicted. Reputed in late 1981 to have been involved in efforts to have Justice Dormer Andrews promoted to chief justice, the post going to Sir Walter Campbell after a notable Cabinet brawl. Allegedly insisted that the Dunwich (Stradbroke Island) TAB agency be given to former police assistant commissioner Anthony Murphy, November 1983. On his own account persuaded Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen to accept knighthood, 1984. Same year defended by the premier over allegations of conflict of interest arising from investment of TAB money in merchant bank of which he was chairman. TAB board voted for his removal after credit betting irregularities of $317,968 revealed in his TAB telephone betting account, April 1985. Resigned as director of Channel Nine and as TAB chairman, 29 April 1985. Resigned as National Party trustee, 13 June 1985. Bought a Gold Coast penthouse adjoining that of former police officer Jack Reginald Herbert. Said he had at all times acted in the most honourable manner after allegations that he arranged TAB licence for former Assistant Commissioner Tony Murphy, Fitzgerald Inquiry, 21 November 1987.


MURPHY, Anthony, b Brisbane, 2 October 1927. Joined Queensland Police, 1944; CIB in early 1950s, notable member of Consorting Squad. Witness, National Hotel Royal Commission, 1963–64; said he was not able to establish that Shirley Margaret Brifman was a prostitute and that he had not been in contact with her immediately prior to or during royal commission. Royal commissioner Mr Justice Harry Gibbs cleared him of all allegations and recommended a payment towards his legal costs. Licensing Branch, 1966–71; allegedly involved with Jack Herbert in protection of SP bookmakers and in arranging payments to Terry Lewis. Transferred to Juvenile Aid Bureau, September 1971. Charged by Whitrod's Crime Intelligence Unit with four counts of perjury before National Hotel Royal Commission, February 1972. Discharged, 7 April 1972, after four day hearing three weeks after death, allegedly by her own hand, of Shirley Brifman. CIB, Toowoomba, 13 March 1973 to 1 February 1976; inspector, Longreach, 1976; brought back to Brisbane to head Crime Intelligence Unit by new police commissioner Terry Lewis, February 1977; superintendent CIB, September 1977. Queen's Police Medal, June 1978. Cleared of allegations that he was involved in drug syndicate by Williams Royal Commission, March 1980. Superintendent, Far Northern Region, November 1980; assistant commissioner (Crime), January 1982. Issued writ for defamation against ABC and former police officers Kingsley Fancourt and Bob Campbell, March 1982. Said later, in statement of claim, "Among police officers in Queensland the words 'the Rat Pack' had since the 1960s been used to refer to and include the plaintiff (Murphy), Terence Murray Lewis and one Glen Patrick Hallahan who had served with them in the police force." Retired, 21 December 1982; allegedly told Jack Herbert not to involve him in anything illegal and said he had turned down one approach. Appointed TAB agent for Dunwich, Stradbroke Island, November 1983, allegedly on the insistence of TAB chairman Sir Edward Lyons. Drugs royal commissioner Mr Justice Stewart said, June 1983, it was "unwise" of Murphy in March 1979 to have told journalist Brian Bolton of tape-recorded conversations with Mr Asia drug syndicate members Douglas and Isobel Wilson (both murdered May 1979). Submitted own name for Police Union secretary job, March 1984; later withdrew from contest. Told Sydney defamation hearing, 26 February 1985, that he had been a good friend of plaintiff and former NSW police officer Keith John Kelly for 25 years. This the subject of article in Courier-Mail, 22 February 1988, saying that Kelly named (1983) by police task force as associate of former NSW police officer and drug trafficker Murray Stewart Riley. Murphy replied to this and further articles through opposition newspaper the Sun. Named repeatedly in


Biographical Sketches

in 1972 with encouraging a person in lawful custody on a criminal charge to escape; barrister and former Liberal MHR Sir James Killen alleged in book *Kiuen: Inside Australian Politics* that general phone taps had been placed on PNG lawyers; new attorney-general Lionel Murphy directed that proceedings cease, 1973. Representative, Northern Land Council, 1973-74; Ranger Environmental Inquiry, 1976-77. Queen’s Counsel, 31 January 1980; judge, District Court, 29 October 1982- ; chairman, Police Complaints Tribunal, 7 June 1983 to 1988; chairman, Electricity Authorities’ Industrial Causes Tribunal (set up in wake of SEQEB strike), 22 April 1985- . Named as likely to head corruption inquiry, 12 April 1987; appointment later given to Mr G.E. Fitzgerald, QC. Named in hearsay evidence before Fitzgerald Inquiry as participant with corrupt police and criminal figures in meetings to work out police transfers, 15 October 1987; allegation denied by Pratt and Parker and central figure Jack Herbert. Said numerous entries referring to him in Lewis diaries were “innocuous or incorrect”, March 1988.


ROBINSON, Arthur Anthony. b 3 October 1912. As nightclub manager, appeared before National Hotel royal commission, 1963–64. Brisbane’s most notorious illegal baccarat school operator, 1965–68; employed among others his son Anthony William Robinson and Geraldo Bellino. Alleged by prostitute Shirley Brifman to have paid police for protection for the baccarat schools, in particular Anthony Murphy; this denied by Murphy. Later involved in amusement machine and in-line industry; employed former Licensing Branch police officer Jack Reginald Herbert, 1978–81. Visited office of Police Commissioner Terry Lewis and introduced him to Bally in-line machines distributor, Jack Rooklyn, 20 March 1978; this noted in Lewis diaries but denied by Robinson. Allegedly passed money to Jack Herbert to pay to Liberal MLA Don Lane, Police Commissioner Terry Lewis and others, late 1970s; this denied by Robinson, Lane and Lewis. Arthur Anthony Robinson’s accountant told the Fitzgerald Inquiry, 12 May 1988, that an annual understatement of income in the period 1979–85 included $9600 for police; Robinson admitted payments of $9600 a year to Herbert.

ROBINSON, Anthony William. b 6 October 1942 (son of Arthur Anthony Robinson). Several times charged and convicted of keeping a common gaming house, 1965–67, self-described variously as waiter, principal of a slot machine company and secretary of the Amusement Distributors Club. His associate in


SCANLAN, Desmond Michael. Wife and brother-in-law convicted of SP bookmaking offences, November 1961. Witness, National Hotel Royal Commission, 1963–64; gave evidence on David Young similar to that given by Shirley Margaret Brifman and later described by her as perjury. Started Big Cow tourist development on Sunshine Coast, 1976; Inspector (later Superintendent) Horrie Robertson second-largest shareholder. Started Sunshine Coast helicopter rescue service, 1979. Became one of largest property developers on Sunshine Coast. Enrolled in Merthyr electorate of former Transport minister Don Lane on same day as John Herbert, son of Jack Reginald Herbert. This revealed in
Biographical Sketches


Index

(See also Appendix — Biographical Sketches)

ABCI. See Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence
Ackerie, Steve, 230–31
AIDS, 128, 190, 210
Age, 225
Ahern, Mike, 182, 189, 190, 209, 223, 225–27, 242
Allen, Elizabeth, 196, 197
Allen, Ric, 118, 138, 177, 227
Allen, William, 251
Alpha, Project, 65, 66
Ambrose, Mr Justice Brian, 10, 13
Andrews, Mr Justice Sir Dormer, 118, 178
Anoa drug bust, 62–63
Armstrong, Warren, 191
Atkinson, Syd, 33, 71, 73, 79, 89, 240, 245
Austin, Brian, 105
Australian, 218
Australian Labor Party, 3, 76, 100, 108, 149, 184, 189, 224, 226
Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 34, 119, 127, 149, 165, 181, 184, 234. See also “Four Corners”
Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence, 63, 65, 66, 247
Bahnemann, Gunther, 2
Bally Poker Machine Company, 249
Barnes, Alan, 7, 10, 49, 64, 111, 113–17, 134, 218
Bastin, Brian, 90
Bauer, Norm, 9, 25
BCI. See Bureau of Criminal Intelligence
Beattie, Peter, 189
Becker, Don, 53
Beer, Ross, 101, 157, 161–64, 186, 204
Beerburrum Mail Robbery, 41–42, 53
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 204–5
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 202–3
Bellino, “Syndicate”, 98–100, 122, 136, 137, 144, 162, 167, 209, 211, 258
Bellino, Vincent, 148
Bellino, Vincenzo, 65, 66, 98, 148, 171, 179, 180, 181
Bennett, Col, 8, 9, 15, 16, 100
Bischof, Frank, 5–8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 21, 25, 28, 46, 172, 236, 237
Bjelke-Petersen, Florence, 118, 169, 173
elevates Lewis, 46–47
and Joh for PM campaign, 131, 132, 143, 166, 181, 182, 185, 189
Index

and Licensing Branch, 67-69, 71
fall of, 223-26
Blanch, Ken, 177
Bolton, Brian, 63
Borg, Joe, 2, 30
Borinetti, Ron, 69
Boulton, W.J., 10, 229, 262
Bowd, Bruce, 44, 72, 257
Bowden, Lindsay, 212
Braithwaite, Donald, 196, 197, 199
Brifman, Shirley, 5, 6, 18, 226
allegations made by, 7, 15-17, 19-22, 27, 35, 36, 39, 40, 198
and National Hotel Royal Commission, 11-13, 15, 113
death of, 6, 37, 38, 172, 227
Broad, Judge E., 38
"Brown, Mr", 229, 230, 231
Bulger, Allen, 78, 90, 94, 110, 111, 149, 156, 188, 205, 207, 217, 218, 229, 241
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 199, 259, 260
Bulletin, 211, 243
Bureau of Criminal Intelligence (BCI) Queensland, 64, 94, 111, 113, 114, 115, 145, 248
New South Wales, 76
Burgess, Harry, 78, 82-84, 86, 88-90, 92-94, 97, 111, 114, 153, 170, 187, 188, 196, 204, 205, 209, 210, 217, 218, 221, 242, 259, 262
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 207-8, 219
Burns, Tom, 149
Butler, Brendan, 202

Callaghan, Allen, 29
Callinan QC, Ian, 178, 184, 194, 196, 206, 212, 218, 227, 235, 236
Camm, Ron, 55, 67, 68, 71, 73
Campbell, Bob, 101, 102, 127, 234
Campbell, Gary, 12, 13
Campbell, Sir Walter, 112, 225
Carroll, Andrew, 165
Carter, Judge William, 102, 103
casinos. See illegal casinos
Cedar Bay police raid, 45
Chalk, Sir Gordon, 23
Chamberlin, Greg, 130, 156, 160, 163, 185
Chan, Robert, 139, 148, 160, 228
Channells, Terry, 247
Chant, Col, 102, 103
Chinatown Security Service, 158, 228
CIU. See Crime Intelligence Unit
civil liberties, 54. See also street demonstrations
Clark, Terence, 62, 63. See also drugs
Clauson, Paul, 177-79, 216
Commonwealth Police, 25, 27, 63
Connolly, Mr Justice P., 80
Connolly, Frank, 179-80,
Consorting Squad, 31, 35, 70, 101, 161, 197, 204
Conte, Michael, 159, 163
Conte, Vittorio, 51, 78, 83-85, 93, 98, 101, 121, 122, 132, 139, 140, 146, 159, 163, 168, 169, 172, 179, 184, 200, 207, 217, 221, 233, 242, 245
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 203-4
Corner, Charles, 7-8
Dickie articles in
Bellino syndicate, 150-51 (reprint)
Chinese syndicate, 228-29
Hallahan, 27
Hapeta syndicate, 154-55 (reprint)
Lewis diaries, 238-39 (reprint)
Lewis and Rooklyn, 256
Merthyr electoral roll, 226-27
Murphy, 40, 233-34
Operation Jungle, 61
prostitution, 124-25 (reprint)
Roxy casino move, 160, 162
Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU), 31, 35-38, 41-44, 49-51, 64, 81, 113, 198. See also Bureau of Criminal Intelligence
Crocker, Geoff, 51, 74, 75, 81, 85, 90, 98, 99, 110, 121, 122, 132, 136, 140, 141, 146, 203
Crockett, Steve, 246-48
Crooke QC, Gary, 185, 186, 193, 200, 201, 207, 210, 211, 214, 218, 219, 221, 224, 229, 236, 244, 260
Dautel, Peter, 70
Davey, Frank, 43-44
Dempster, Quentin, 132, 165, 189, 196, 243
Deveney, Eric, 246
Devlin, Ralph, 186, 203, 205, 212, 218
Dewar, Alec, 6, 13
Di Carlo, Salvatore, 80
Dickie, Phil. See also Courier-Mail, Dickie articles in.
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 205, 211-12
Dickson, Ross, 171
Dillon, Colin, 91-93, 96, 97, 187, 210, 214
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 212-213
Director of Prosecutions, 109.
See also Sturgess, Des
Director of Public
Prosecutions (federal), 61
Donovan, Jim, 8
Dorries, Kevin, 196, 232, 245
Douglas, Mr Justice J.A., 10
Draydon, Des, 23
drugs
heroin, 31, 57-61, 65
“Mr Asia” gang, 62-63, 75
North Queensland, 57-61, 64-66, 171
Operation Jungle, 57, 60, 61
and prostitution, 31, 96, 97, 171
royal commissions, 55, 56, 58-60, 62-63
Drug Squad, 31, 97, 111, 145, 176, 198, 209
Drummond QC, Doug, 244, 245, 260
Dwyer, Noel, 77-79, 81, 84, 89, 101, 144, 145, 153, 204, 207, 208, 221, 230, 256, 259, 260, 262
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 237

Early, Greg, 20, 26, 36, 50, 163, 205, 208, 231
Edington, Ron, 8, 28
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 237
Edwards, Sir Llew, 105
elections
state, 3, 4, 30, 54, 105, 119, 120, 180, 185, 221, 223, 242, 243
federal, 181, 182, 185, 189
east agencies. See prostitution
Farrah, Cal, 232, 245
Fancourt, Kingsley, 35, 51, 101, 102, 127, 234
Favell, Paul, 202
Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 56-59, 61, 62
Federal Police, 59-62, 175, 231, 241
Feeney, Ron, 83, 85, 93, 145, 202
Fetting, George, 146, 147
Finch, James, 33-34
Fitzgerald QC, Gerald (Tony), 101, 178-80, 184, 185, 190-96, 198, 200-203, 205, 212-14, 216, 218, 221, 227, 230, 235, 244
statements made by, 191, 193, 207, 210, 220, 227, 243, 258
Fitzgerald Inquiry, 175, 179, 183-84, 185. See also Fitzgerald QC, Tony; indemnified witnesses, evidence of; and under names of witnesses. brackets of evidence in accusers, 205, 208-13
Chinese syndicates, 229-32
Gold Coast, 245-48
historical, 235-40
in-line machines, 249-56
named persons, 200-205
North Queensland, 232-33
SP bookmakers, 256-67
Fitzpatrick, George, 246
“Four Corners”, 27, 34, 101, 107, 114, 118, 132-34, 141, 147, 153, 165, 166, 168, 179, 184, 186, 202, 203, 205
“The Moonlight State”, 169-73, 174, 175, 177
Freier, Neal, 42-45, 52, 70, 102
Fynes-Clinton, Matthew, 108
Index

Index

gambling, illegal. See illegal gambling
Gaming Squad, 157, 161, 162, 163, 186
Ganim, Joe, 230
Garde, John, 255-56
Gibbs, Judge Sir Harry, 9, 11, 13-15, 186, 191
Glasson, Bill, 103, 108, 149, 194
Glover, Basil, 67
Goss, Wayne, 108, 216, 230, 242
Goleby, John, 67-70
Gordon, Bob, 120-22, 126, 146
Griffith, 40, 55, 65
Grindrod, Archbishop Sir John, 210
Gulbransen, Norm, 16, 20, 35, 36, 38, 40, 44, 45
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 197-98
Hallahan, Glen, 2, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 17, 26, 36, 41, 42, 49, 101, 237, 260, 261-62
allegations against, 16-23, 26, 27 113
alleged drug involvement of, 57-61
criminal charges against, 38, 39, 53
and National Hotel Royal Commission, 10-12
Rat Pack member, 1, 77, 219, 221, 234, 236
Hallahan, Heather, 39
Hampson QC, Cedric, 184, 196, 200, 201, 203, 207, 209, 212, 218
Hannay, John, 13, 33
Hanson, Fred, 27
Hapeta, Hector, 75-79, 81-88, 90-100, 105, 107, 110, 111, 121, 122, 127-29, 137, 142, 144, 145, 149, 152, 153, 167, 168, 179, 180, 183, 184, 187, 190, 192, 198, 205, 209, 212, 216, 262
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 200-202
Harper, Neville, 109

Harris, Keith, 91, 92
Harriott, Charles, 224, 225
Hart, Mr Justice, 12
Harvey, Leisha, 111, 146
Hatcher, Ian, 144, 147, 149, 152, 153, 156
Hayes, Brian, 71
Hayes, Colin, 249
Hawke, Bob, 131, 132, 143, 181, 182, 184, 189
Hawke, Michael, 257, 258
Helman, Judge, 44
and dealings with Licensing Branch, 77, 78, 81, 83, 84, 86, 88, 89, 110, 111
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 260
London arrest and return of, 231, 232, 241, 242
as member of Licensing Branch, 17, 18, 26, 34, 40, 41
and National Hotel Royal Commission, 10-12
in SP Bribery Trial, 42-45, 52
53, 67, 102
Herbert, John, 221, 226, 259
Herbert, Peggy, 89, 188, 241, 255
Hicks, Basil, 20-23, 36, 41, 42, 44, 50
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 240
and Bjelke-Petersen, 63, 68, 69
Hiley, Sir Thomas, 5-7, 28
Hilker, Allan, 197
Hing, Jack, 229, 232
Hoare QC, Mr 13
Hodges, Max, 24, 25, 28-30, 35, 45, 46, 50, 70, 103, 215
Hoggett, Ken, 26
Holloway, Allan, 98, 100, 121, 122, 140, 141, 203, 258
homosexuality, 106, 107. See also prostitution
Index

Hooper, Kevin, 70, 100–102, 161, 164
Horton, Don, 198
Howard, John, 131, 143
Hoyt, Shaun, 132. See also “Four Corners”

illegal casinos, 40, 51, 73, 78, 100, 103, 137–40, 148, 188
Asian Youth Social Club, 143, 158, 160, 228
Chinese, 140, 143, 158
definition of, 162
Matador Club, 51
police raids on, 52, 66, 147, 149, 171, 182
142 Wickham Street, 34, 51, 78, 98, 100, 101, 111, 138, 139, 147, 202
illegal gambling, 7, 30, 32, 99, 250. See also illegal casinos
indemnified witnesses, evidence of
Boulton, 229
Burgess, 207–8
Dwyer, 198, 219–20
Farrah, 232, 245
Herbert, 260
Kelly, 259–60
Parker, 214, 220–21
in-line machines, 70, 78, 249–56
Innes, Angus, 149
Interlude Club, 21–22
Internal Investigations Unit, 50, 102, 117, 156, 177
Iwasaki, Yohachiro, 224

Jackson, Mark, 245, 257
James, Katherine, 30–33, 42, 43, 68, 69, 81, 82, 85, 86, 88–92, 98–100, 105, 186, 205, 210, 211, 218, 240
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 208–210
Jamieson, Ian, 114, 116
Jeppesen, Alec, 43, 51, 66–68, 70–74, 78, 80
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 240
John the Jeweller (John MacKinnon), 96–97
“Joke”, 17, 18, 35, 261
Katter Jnr, Bob, 190
Keenan, Frank, 111, 257, 260
Kelly, Donald, 38–39
Kelly, Keith, 40, 233, 234
Kelly, Noel, 111, 187, 188, 241
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 259, 260
Kelly, Ray, 18, 19, 237
Kimmings, Judge J., 144
Kingsnorth, Ron, 247
Koch, Tony, 107–9, 132, 139
Komlosy, John, 11, 12, 14, 15, 176
Krahe, Fred, 19, 21, 22, 27, 38–40, 237
Lane, Don, 10, 18, 28, 30, 42, 43, 104, 105, 120, 134, 177, 181, 188, 220, 221, 224–27, 230, 249, 251, 252, 255, 261, 262
Leadbetter, Graham, 68–70, 246
Leavy, Sean, 160
Lewis, Lady Hazel, 208, 215, 241, 255, 262
Lewis, Michael, 176
Lewis, Ron, 74, 78, 79, 81
as commissioner of police
appointed, 46–49
suspended, 214–15
and dealings with Licensing Branch, 67–70, 78
diaries of, 67–71, 104, 112, 134, 156, 161, 176, 177, 184, 215, 235, 236, 243, 252, 256
Liberal Party, 3, 30, 105, 118, 120, 131, 143, 149, 189, 221, 242, 243
Licensing Branch, 17, 18, 31, 34, 35, 40, 42–44, 52, 53, 101, 110, 121, 126, 127, 133, 136, 144, 148, 152, 156, 157, 195, 199, 204. See also Jack Herbert; and under officers’ names.
corruption of, 75–98
Jeppesen and, 51, 66–74
Index

Licensing Commission, 133, 251
Lloyd, Pat, 51
Lucas, Mr Justice G., 12, 53
Lucas Inquiry, 47, 53, 66, 71, 110, 191, 195
Lusher, Mr Justice, 243

McCulkin family, 34
MacDonald, Vern, 46, 69
MacIntyre, Patrick, 42, 44, 45, 52
Mackay, Donald, 55
Mackinnon, John. See John the Jeweller
McMahon, Terry, 80–81, 256–57
MacNamara, Barry, 253–56
MacMahon, Bruce, 156
McQuillan, Leo, 251, 252
Macrossan, John, 10
Maher, Don, 39
Maher, Nick, 103
Mahon, Tom, 113
Manhattan (nightclub), 139, 142, 159
Manning, Peter, 179. See also “Four Corners”
Marlin, Brian, 67, 70–72
Marxson, Bob, 80
massage parlours. See prostitution
Masters, Chris, 27, 107, 114, 118, 133, 134, 135, 141, 142, 143, 148, 149, 153, 169–73, 175, 177, 179, 184, 186
Maxwell, Barry, 112
Maynard, Fred, 198
Meekin, Jack, 113, 249
Meissner, Joseph, 76
Meskell, John, 41, 245, 246, 249
Milligan, John, 55–61
Moffitt, Mr Justice A., 251, 255
Moore, David, 108, 109, 112
Moore, Rodney, 90
Mulholland QC, Bob, 184, 194, 196, 202, 219
Murdoch, Rupert, 130
Murphy, Lionel, 104, 178

defamation writs of, 1, 15, 35, 40, 62, 101
National Hotel Royal Commission, 10–13, 37
Rat Pack member, 1, 26, 49, 77, 219, 221, 236, 237
Murphy, Vince, 232

National Crime Authority, 66, 175
National Hotel, 8–11, 13, 39, 140
National Hotel Royal Commission. See royal commissions
National (Country) Party, 29, 105, 118–20, 123, 131, 143, 166, 181, 182, 185, 189, 194, 205, 221, 223, 224, 226, 230, 242, 243
Needham, Bob, 231, 254
Neilsen, Juanita, 40
Newbery, Tom, 45–46, 55, 194
New South Wales Police, 6, 15, 18, 19, 21, 22, 27, 36, 38–40, 57, 62, 72, 251
Nicklin, Sir Frank, 9, 23
Nugan family, 40

O’Brien, Barry, 59, 69, 78
O’Connell, Terence, 52, 236
O’Dempsey, Vince, 34
O’Gorman, Terry, 176–77
Osborne, William, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 35

Palmer, Frank, 246–48
Parker, Dawn, 211
Parker, Graeme, 10, 17, 78, 79, 83, 90–95, 97, 110, 114, 115, 117, 134, 144, 149, 152, 153, 156, 161, 163, 167, 168, 176, 181, 188, 196, 197, 204, 205, 207, 208, 210, 211, 217, 218, 224, 226, 229, 242, 247, 259, 260
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 214, 220–21, 257
Peacock, Andrew, 143
Pearson, Col, 249, 251
Perger, Virginia, 76
Pharaoh’s (nightclub), 95, 96
Pincus QC, Bill, 102
Pinocchio’s (nightclub), 32, 33, 56, 202
Pitts, Arthur, 42–44, 69
Index

Pizzey, Jack, 23
Pointing, T., 59
Police. See under various branches and squads; and under officers’ names
Police Complaints Tribunal, 102, 103-4, 109, 135, 174, 175, 177, 218, 242
Police transfers, punitive
Barnes, 117
Davey, 44
Di Carlo, 80
Hicks, 50, 69
Jeppesen, 71
Jeppesen’s officers, 71
Osborne, 17
Powell, 95
Slade, 117
police union, 10, 28, 29, 35, 45, 46, 102, 103, 105, 108
pornography, 108, 109, 134
sex shops, 88, 110, 111, 120, 129
Powell, Nigel, 79, 81-83, 85, 87, 90, 93-95, 105, 126-29, 133, 136, 139-44, 153, 168, 175-77, 186, 190, 191, 200, 203, 207
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 217-18
Pratt, Judge Eric, 103, 104, 109, 112, 114, 115, 135, 174-78, 218, 242, 262
prostitution
breaches for, 87, 88, 90, 199
in brothels, 5, 7, 8
child, 111
Dickie investigation of, 120-23
and escort agencies, 81, 87, 94, 148, 156, 170, 183
homosexual, 107, 108, 170, 195
in hotels, 5, 8-10, 14
in massage parlours, 30, 31, 51, 66, 74, 85-88, 101, 156, 188
Bubble’s Bath-House, 85, 86, 98, 144
Fantasia, 85, 86, 96
Pinky’s, 99
Top of the Valley, 31, 75, 120
Xanadu, 90
Sturgess investigation of, 110
Queensland Bar Association, 102, 178
Queensland Bookmakers Club, 79
Queensland Law Society, 184
Queensland Parliament, 8, 9, 15, 16, 58, 71-73, 108-9, 225-26
Queensland Television Ltd, 119
Quick Courier Services, 129
Rat Pack, 1, 2, 6, 26, 36, 40, 47, 49, 77, 101, 219, 221, 233-37
Redmond, Ron, 10, 20, 33, 34, 45, 74, 110, 215, 221, 227, 247
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 195-96
Regan, John, 56
Richards, Ron, 130
Riley, Murray, 40, 62, 233
Rizzo, Santo, 51, 139, 142, 143, 204
Robbins, Matt, 101
Roberts brothers (publicans), 13, 14
Roberts, Tegwyn, 246
Robertson, Hector, 258
Robertson, Horrie, 112-13
Robertson, John, 62
Robinson, Tony Jnr, 32, 56, 250
Robinson, Tony Snr, 17, 250-54, 246
Rooklyn, Jack, 250-56
royal commissions
Moffitt (Bally), 251, 255
National Hotel (Gibbs), 9-16, 37, 113, 176, 250
Stewart (drugs), 62-64
Williams (drugs), 58-60, 64, 253, 256
Woodward (drugs), 55-56
Ross, Neville, 78, 89-91, 186, 207, 209
Ross, Trevor, 90, 207
Roxy (nightclub), 133, 139, 142, 147, 148, 157, 159, 163, 204, 228. See also illegal casinos
Ryan, John, 69
Ryan, Lilly, 5, 11-13
Ryrie, Kim, 98, 121, 203
Saffron, Abraham, 76, 94, 202, 251
Saunders, Lorelle, 69, 70
Saunders, Stan, 43, 53, 71-73, 245
Scanlan, Des, 11-13, 15, 113, 226, 227
Scognamiglio, Luciano, 32-35, 51, 101
Scotland Yard Inquiry, 43, 52, 191, 236
Seagulls Rugby League Football Club, 249
sex shops. See pornography
Shambrook, Bob, 86, 219
Shanahan, Judge John, 39, 130
Shobbrook, John, 57, 58, 60, 61
Short, Roland, 31, 51, 69, 74, 101
Sinclair, Ian, 131, 143, 166, 189
Simpson, Bill, 22, 28
Sissons, John, 144, 146, 203
Slade, Christine, 115, 116
Slade, Jim, 63-65, 114-17, 132, 134, 171
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 218
Smith, Donald, 22, 23
Southport SP Betting Case, 43, 44, 51-53, 66, 71
SP Bookmakers, 72-73, 256-57. See also Southport SP Betting Case; SP Bribery Trial; and under individuals’ names
graft from, 5-7, 17, 18, 28, 72, 77, 78, 89, 111, 188, 260, 261
operations against, 66, 72, 79, 80-81
SP bookmaking legislation, 64, 80
SP Bribery Trial, 42, 44, 51-53
Sparkes, Sir Robert, 29, 223, 224
Special Branch, 18, 28, 54, 55
Spence, Doug, 122, 145, 149, 229
Springbok Rugby tour, 29-30
Stanaway, Glen, 216
Stanley, Mr Justice E., 12
Stefan. See Ackerie, Steve
Stewart, Mr Justice, 184. See also royal commissions, National Crime Authority
Stopford, John, 170, 171, 176, 205
street demonstrations, 29, 45, 53, 54
Stuart, John, 33
Stubbs, John, 194
Sturgess, Des, 38, 39, 41, 44, 45, 53, 102, 109, 110, 116, 122, 123, 189, 191
Sturgess Report, 109-112, 122, 123, 169, 195
Sue, Gawain, 228, 229
Sue, Malcolm, 158, 228-31
Sun, (Daily), 40, 107, 130, 214, 233
Suncorp, 113
Sunday Mail, 63, 103, 118, 132, 138, 162, 177, 227
Sunday Sun, 63, 120, 130, 194
Sydney Morning Herald, 177, 183, 191, 193, 194, 212, 215
TAB, 79, 112, 113, 118, 119, 178, 217, 224, 225
Taeffe, Leon, 212, 213
Taxation Department, 203, 217
Tegg, Reginald, 112
Telecom, 80, 136, 157, 246
Telegraph, 51, 160, 164, 193
Theeman, Frank, 40
Thompson, Col, 65, 66, 114-17, 248
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 258-59
verballing, 33, 34, 54, 194. See also Lucas Inquiry
Vines, Mac, 160
Vogel, Simone, 30
Voight, Jim, 8, 14, 42, 68
Wainer, Bertram, 24
Walker, Bob, 246-48
Ward, Peter, 218
Waugh, Jim, 157, 198
Weidinger, Val, 5, 11, 12
Whiskey Au Go Go (nightclub), 33, 34
White, Robin, 135-37, 141, 148, 183
White, Terry, 105
Whitmont, Debbie, 132
Whitrod, Ray, 25-30, 35-37, 40, 41, 45-50, 55, 68, 74, 81, 85, 135, 172, 198, 215, 216
Fitzgerald Inquiry witness, 237-40
Whitton, Evan, 18, 24, 177, 183, 184, 191, 192, 194, 197, 198, 200, 212, 214, 215, 217, 220, 235
Wilson, Douglas and Isobel, 62-63
Wolfe, Patsy, 244
Woodford, Tony, 95
Woods, Sir Colin, 61
Woodward, Mr Justice, 55, 56, 233
World by Night (strip club), 122,
132, 133, 140, 144, 203

Wright, Keith, 72

Young, David, 9–16, 37, 176, 226
This is the decade’s most sensational story — tracing events that have sent shock waves through the nation. It is also the dramatic inside story of the journalist whose painstaking and dangerous undercover work led to the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

Here is a journey back across four decades of corruption — with an extraordinary cast of crooked cops and heavy crims, pimps and prostitutes, politicians and SP bookies.

Read how such free enterprise flourished behind the pious facade of the Bjelke-Petersen government.

Investigative journalism at its best

"A police car drove into the dead-end street outside, did a U-turn and stopped. It then drove off at high speed... Some time later my friends arrived home and wanted to know why there was a bullet-hole in the front window."

Phil Dickie

Foreword by former Qld police commissioner Ray Whitrod

Cover design and illustration by Kirsty-Ann Allen

UQP PAPERBACKS ISBN 0-7022-2186-4