

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 24 MARCH 1976

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. J. E. H. Houghton, Redcliffe) read prayers and took the chair at 11 a.m.

INVESTIGATION BY OMBUDSMAN OF ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING THE AURUKUN PROJECT

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable members, in view of recent publicity and also requests from various churches and other interested parties concerning the Aurukun affair, I have requested the Ombudsman to proceed to that location to investigate and ascertain the facts surrounding this project. He is to report back to me, and his findings will be presented to Parliament.

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

INVESTIGATION BY OMBUDSMAN OF ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING THE AURUKUN PROJECT

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (11.2 a.m.): Further to the matter mentioned by you, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that the Ombudsman has gone to Aurukun following a deputation to me led by certain church leaders in this city, including Archbishop Rush and Archbishop Arnott. They said they were confused and uncertain as to the whole position and the claims and counter claims that had been made by various people both in Queensland and throughout Australia, and asked if an independent person could be sent to the Aurukun area to ascertain from the people themselves what the facts were. I then approached Mr. Speaker, asking if he would request the Ombudsman to carry out this particular task.

The Ombudsman is answerable to this Parliament, and he will report his findings to Mr. Speaker and then to this Parliament.

Last night, during the debate on the Parliamentary Commissioner Act Amendment Bill, the Leader of the Opposition said that he respected Mr. Longland's ability and integrity. I am quite sure that everybody in Queensland does so. The Ombudsman is in Aurukun at this moment, making inquiries

from the people direct. He will advise you, Mr. Speaker, and this House at the appropriate time of the result of his investigation.

I have made this statement to inform Parliament of what has happened. Eventually we will hear the outcome.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

Industrial Development Act 1963–1975.

State Housing Act 1945–1974.

Regulations under—

The Hide, Skin and Wool Dealers Act of 1958.

The Firearms Acts, 1927 to 1967.

Apprenticeship Act 1964–1974.

Factories and Shops Act 1960–1975.

Rules under the Police Act 1937–1973.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. INQUIRY INTO AUSTRALIAN LOANS AFFAIR

Mr. Burns, pursuant to notice, asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) How much did the State Government inquiry via Switzerland into the so-called Australian loans affair cost?

(2) As this inquiry involved the services of the State Agent-General in London and a State police inspector, together with other people, on what date was it authorised by the State Cabinet?

(3) On what date did Cabinet approve the involvement of the Agent-General in these activities and on what date did it approve the transport of a police inspector based in Queensland to assist?

(4) On what date did Cabinet approve the participation of Mr. Wiley Fancher, an American residing in Atherton, in these activities and to what extent?

(5) Under what appropriation of the State Budget were funds allocated by Cabinet for the purpose of this inquiry?

(6) If no costs have been incurred to his knowledge from State Consolidated Revenue in regard to the State's Swiss loan inquiry and Mr. Wiley Fancher of Atherton, is he able to say who paid for this inquiry which proved so unsuccessful and who met the costs of Mr. Fancher, who, on all evidence prior to these initiations, could not meet his debts in North Queensland?

(7) Is he able to say if these costs at public expense came from the Premier's Department?

Answer:—

(1 to 7) I refer the honourable member to the ministerial statement made by the Premier in this House yesterday morning.

2. EDUCATION STANDARDS

Mr. Powell, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

(1) Has he read an article in "The Australian" of 13 March entitled "The Teachers Dilemma"?

(2) As the article expresses an opinion commonly held among the people of Queensland, will he take steps to ensure that the standard of scholastic ability in Queensland is restored to a level more closely associated with that demanded by the community?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) I have read the newspaper article referred to by the honourable member and note that it is particularly linked with recent strikes by teachers in another State. It castigates teachers for allegedly becoming concerned with politics rather than education. I have no evidence to suggest that this article "expresses an opinion commonly held among the people of Queensland."

Regarding the standard of scholastic ability of children presently attending schools in Queensland, I refer the honourable member to my answer to a similar question by the honourable member for South Brisbane on 17 March.

3. PUBLIC USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES,
HOWARD

Mr. Powell, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

(1) In view of the public statement attributed to him with regard to the public use of school buildings and facilities out of school hours, is it his intention not to proceed with an agreement with the Howard District Swimming Association, as promised in November 1975?

(2) If he does intend to proceed with the agreement, when will it be ready for the parties to sign?

Answers:—

(1) I would refer the honourable member to the discussions which took place on 17 November 1975 among myself and my colleague the Honourable R. E. Camm, M.L.A., and a deputation of Howard district citizens and the honourable member himself. At those discussions, all agreed it was most desirable that the Howard State School swimming pool be utilised by the community outside of school hours. My understanding was that the representatives from Howard were to take action to reconstitute the Burrum District Citizens' Swimming Pool Association and to forward for my consideration the draft of an agreement between that association and myself. This agreement was to allow for the management of the swimming pool

outside of school hours by the association. I am decidedly in favour of this agreement and have no knowledge of any suggestion that it should not be completed.

(2) I cannot say when the agreement will be ready to sign since, to date, I have received only a first draft of the constitution of the Burrum District Citizens' Swimming Pool Association. The proposed agreement will be given my prompt attention when it is received.

4. INSPECTION OF SAND-MINING,
FRASER ISLAND

Mr. Powell, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) What was the date of the last inspection on Fraser Island of sand-mining operations carried out by D.M. Minerals and Q.T.M.?

(2) What are the names and qualifications of the persons who carried out the inspections?

(3) How long did the inspection team spend on the island?

Answers:—

(1) The most recent inspection was on 15 and 16 March 1976.

(2) The names and qualifications of the inspecting party are—

Mr. D. A. Barr, B.Sc.(Agr.), Senior Dune Conservationist, Beach Protection Branch, Department of Harbours and Marine;

Mr. T. J. McDonald, B.Sc., Supervising Botanist, Ecology Group, Department of Primary Industries;

Mr. A. Lee, B.Agr.Sc., Agronomist, Department of Lands;

Mr. R. F. Grimes, B.Sc.(Forestry), Forester, Department of Forestry; and

Dr. P. Gollidge, Ph.D., M.Sc., Inspector of Mines, Department of Mines.

(3) The inspecting party arrived on Fraser Island on the afternoon of 15 March 1976 and carried out an inspection of the activities of Queensland Titanium Mines Pty. Ltd. that afternoon; the party spent the night on Fraser Island and inspected the activities of D. M. Minerals on the morning of 16 March 1976.

5. DETECTIVE ON CAMPUS OF UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND

Mr. Lane, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Police—

As an article which appeared in the newspaper "University News" dated 10 March in relation to the secondment of a new detective constable of the Queensland Police Force to the University of Queensland seemed to imply that the officer's duty shall only be concerned with

dealing with breaches of criminal law on the campus, will he give a public assurance that there will be no hindrance applied either by the university authorities or by the police administration to this officer in exercising the powers conferred on him under the other laws of this State to which the public at large are subject, such as the Vagrants, Gaming and Other Offences Act, the Health Act in respect of drug offences, the Liquor Act and the Traffic Act?

Answer:—

There are no restrictions placed on the police officer in exercising his powers and authority.

6. ROYAL COMMISSION ON MARITIME INDUSTRY

Mr. Lane, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Tourism and Marine Services—

(1) In relation to the Royal Commission on the Maritime Industry conducted for the Commonwealth Government by Commissioner Summers, do the terms of reference of the inquiry include port administration and development?

(2) Has the report yet been completed and has it been made public or available to the States?

(3) Is it relevant and will it be taken into consideration in the planning of the Port of Brisbane?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) A commission of inquiry conducted by Commissioner M. M. Summers into the maritime industry in Australia included in its terms of reference—

“The adequacy of existing port and associated facilities and their future development requirements having regard to such factors as location, capacity and user needs, and the requirements of interstate and international trade and commerce”.

The report on this term of reference has been completed and, whilst I am not aware of the extent of its publication, copies have been made available to the Government of this State.

My Department of Harbours and Marine has examined the report and I am advised that the planning proposals for the Port of Brisbane are in no way inconsistent with the contents of the report.

7. AUSTRALIAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Mr. Lane, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) With reference to the Senate “Hansard” of 25 February, which shows that Senator Guilfoyle, the Minister for Social Security, in answer to a question in relation

to the A.A.P., stated that representatives from each of the State Governments have been invited to attend a national conference to be held in May to discuss the plan, has an invitation yet been received by the Queensland Government?

(2) What action has been taken in respect of the invitation, will a representative be sent to the conference and who will this be?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) To date no invitation to the conference foreshadowed by Senator Guilfoyle has been received but no doubt one will be forthcoming. When it is received, consideration will be given to the question of appropriate State Government representation thereat.

8, 9 and BUREAU OF SUGAR 10. EXPERIMENT STATIONS

Mr. Tenni, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) With reference to his answer to my questions on 17 March wherein he stated that he was not aware of any uneasiness or low morale amongst staff of the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations, is he aware of a motion passed at the recent Cane Growers' Association Conference at Cairns requesting the Sugar Experiment Stations Board to hold an inquiry into why staff were leaving the bureau and what could be done to stop further resignations?

(2) Is he aware of a motion to be put to the Australian Sugar Producers' Association Conference in Brisbane this week drawing attention to the same problem?

(3) As the sugar industry is clearly concerned about the staff position in the bureau, will he take steps to find the reasons for this concern?

Answers:—

(1) The Queensland Cane Growers' Association, at the Cairns conference, expressed its concern over staff losses from the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations and recommended to the Sugar Experiment Stations Board that the situation be investigated to see if further loss of valuable, experienced staff can be forestalled.

(2) I understand that the Australian Sugar Producers' Association has a similar motion for consideration at its conference.

(3) The Sugar Experiment Stations Board will take all appropriate steps to ascertain the reasons for this concern.

Mr. Tenni, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Did staff vacancies in the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations occur

recently at Innisfail and Proserpine and have new positions been created at Babinda and Mackay?

(2) How were applications called to fill the positions?

(3) How many applications were received for each position?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) A staff vacancy occurred at Innisfail and was filled by transferring the officer at Proserpine to Innisfail. It has been the policy of the board to advertise positions vacant within the extension services and to fill any key positions vacant with experienced staff recruited some years earlier. The lower positions are then filled by advertising in the appropriate newspapers.

The board is planning to station an officer at Babinda when office and housing accommodation becomes available. The reference to Mackay probably refers to Sarina. When suitable office and housing accommodation became available in the town, one of the officers previously servicing the area was transferred there.

Mr. Tenni, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Are the Sugar Experiment Board and the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations set up under legislation of this Parliament?

(2) Is he aware of the requirements of section 3g. (1) and (2) of the Sugar Experiment Stations Act?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

11. GAMBLING

Mr. Dean, pursuant to notice, asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

In view of the Cabinet decision to enter the soccer pools and a report in the Sydney "Sunday Telegraph" newspaper of 21 March which stated that Australians gamble at the rate of \$500 per head each year, how much does he estimate is at present gambled each year by Queenslanders on (a) the T.A.B., (b) the Golden Casket, (c) bingo and (d) art unions?

Answer:—

(a) In 1974-75—\$173,900,000.

(b) In 1974-75—\$30,700,000.

(c and d) I have no data available on which to make an estimate.

12. SANDGATE AND SHORNCLIFFE RAILWAY STATIONS

Mr. Dean, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Has a new design concept of the Sandgate and Shorncliffe Railway Stations been approved?

(2) If so, what stage has the development of the scheme reached?

(3) Has a date been approved for commencement? If so, what is the date and, if not, will he ascertain the reasons for the delay?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) Planning for interchange facilities is at an advanced stage and I expect to make an announcement about the commencement date in the near future. Insufficient funds have been approved by the Commonwealth Government for any new station this financial year, but concept plans for a future station at Sandgate have been drawn up.

13. PROSECUTION FOR MOTOR VEHICLE EXHAUST EMISSION

Mr. Dean, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) How many prosecutions were instituted in the last five years under section 88 (b) of the Traffic Regulations 1962, which states, "A person shall not, upon any road, drive a motor vehicle . . . from the exhaust or any other part of which smoke is projected"?

(2) What was the result of these prosecutions and what was the general order of fines imposed?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) As this is a matter of enforcement of the law, the honourable member should direct his question to the appropriate Minister, the Minister for Police.

14. MR. A. NICHOLSON, SECRETARY, BUILDERS' REGISTRATION BOARD

Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) Has he been informed that an action authorised by Mr. A. Nicholson, Secretary of the Builders' Registration Board, is listed to be heard before a Townsville magistrate on 5 April next, the defendants being two reputable citizens?

(2) If so, is he aware that these two defendants claim that they acted honestly and completely on the emphatic personal oral advice and assurance given them by Mr. Nicholson?

(3) Will Mr. Nicholson enter the witness-box in this case to personally substantiate his issue of the summons and

submit to cross-examination by the defendants or, alternatively, can the defendants subpoena him as a witness?

(4) In view of the claims by the two defendants, is it possible that the Builders' Registration Board will expose itself to charges of bureaucratic cowardice if Nicholson does not go into the witness-box, one way or another?

Answers:—

(1) I have been informed that the matter of the complaint and summons issued against Nikita and John Dimitriou by the Builders' Registration Board of Queensland has been set down for mention in the Townsville Magistrates Court on 5 April 1976.

(2) Yes.

(3 and 4) The summons was issued by the registrar for and on behalf of the board. It is not necessary for the registrar to appear in court to identify his signature as complainant. I am advised that the registrar can be subpoenaed as a witness.

15. COMPETENCE OF SOLICITORS

Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

In view of his answer to my question on 18 March last on the infamous Murphy case in which he told Parliament that if Murphy had engaged a solicitor he would not have been robbed by the solicitor for the other side, will he have clearly incorporated in one of his expensive Press advertisements strong advice to the people who pay for these advertisements that, if any Queenslanders engages in any business transaction with another, solicitors should be engaged by both sides to ensure that one party to the transaction is not robbed by the solicitor for the other party?

Answer:—

The simple facts of the situation as I know them are that the solicitors acting for the purchaser in a sale by Mr. Murphy deducted from the final amount of settlement the sum of \$22.10 on the understanding that rates to this extent were in arrears. The matter is now some six years or more old. It transpired that the solicitors were in error in making the deduction in that the rates had in fact been paid. What rights Mr. Murphy had against the solicitors is a matter on which I cannot pass comment and I am not in a position to make any judgment on how the mistake of fact occurred leading to the deduction. On any view of the facts it is a gross distortion to refer to the circumstances either as robbery or legalised robbery. In my previous answer I merely pointed out that if the rates were

not in arrears and Mr. Murphy was aware of this, then it would have been possible to establish this fact to the satisfaction of the solicitors. I again repeat as a general proposition that people who are engaged in the transfer of any real property should be properly advised. Adjustment of rates is a regular feature of such transaction and, as we all know, mistakes can occur. The legal liability for any mistakes is a matter, in the final result, for a court to determine. I realise that the honourable member is a bush lawyer, and his extravagant comments have in fact cast unwarranted and unnecessary aspersions on an honourable profession. I hope that he will treat it with greater respect in future.

16. DISTRICT COURT TRIAL OF POLICE SERGEANT A. J. W. BARRETT; COMPLAINANTS

Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) Has he been informed that a nolle prosequi was filed in the District Court at Townsville on 19 March last against Sergeant 2/C A. J. W. Barrett, who had been charged with assault causing bodily harm to an Aboriginal named Watson in the Strand Park, Townsville, on the evening of 26 June 1975?

(2) If so, was the charge laid following complaints from four grubby, no-hoper-type New Zealanders, who were thumbing rides around the country and sleeping in parks and public places, and were these witnesses soiled on by a notorious Townsville clique of Black Power supporters to lay the charge?

(3) Did it emerge in evidence that these New Zealand no-hopers had been virtually thrown out of the office of "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" because their mangy dog had urinated on the carpet in the editor's office?

(4) In view of all the facts, will he inform the House how much public money was spent to ensure that these no-hoper New Zealanders were returned to Townsville to give evidence against Barrett in both the Magistrates and District Courts, and why, when criminals break into and rob premises of reputable Townsville businessmen and run off to another State, the Crown refuses to meet any of the costs necessary to bring the criminals back to Townsville to face trial?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) I would have thought that, with his vast knowledge, the honourable member would know to which Minister this question should have been addressed. I suggest he direct it to the correct Minister.

17. NEW SCHOOLS, NORTHERN END OF GOLD COAST

Mr. Gibbs, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

Because of the urgent need for a new high school to be constructed at the northern end of the Gold Coast, what are the latest developments in relation to recommendations for a high school and a primary school site in this area?

Answer:—

My department already holds a primary school site of approximately 4 acres situated in Pine Ridge Road and action is presently in hand to enlarge that Reserve. A park is adjacent to the additional land being acquired.

A preliminary investigation of a second area between Pine Ridge and Biggera Waters for the future establishment of a high school and possibly an additional primary school was made on 18 December last by representatives of my department and the Department of Works in company with the honourable member. Action by my department to have further technical investigations carried out was taken shortly thereafter.

These further investigations are being conducted by the Department of Works.

18. POLITICAL LEAFLET WITH ELECTRICITY ACCOUNTS

Mr. Doumany, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) Is he aware of blatant electioneering by the Brisbane City Council Electricity Department by means of a politically suggestive enclosure containing a photograph of the Lord Mayor now being mailed with electricity accounts to consumers?

(2) Will he look into this situation and assess the legality of such political enclosures under the terms of electricity supply agreements existing between the city council and the State Electricity Commission?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Expenditures which are not reasonably justified or necessary for the efficient operation of an electric authority's undertaking would not be allowed as a legitimate charge on electricity revenues for tariff-fixing purposes. This principle applies in the existing legislation and in the agreements between the Brisbane City Council and the Southern Electric Authority. The State Electricity Commission is charged with the responsibility in this field. I would not expect that any expenditures on electioneering could possibly be admissible as a charge to electricity consumers.

19. INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE ON PRIMARY INDUSTRY AFFAIRS

Mr. Doumany, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Has the interchange of research data and publications between officers of the Department of Primary Industries and their counterparts in certain other countries, including Rhodesia, been curtailed for political reasons?

(2) If so, what countries have been selected for such restriction?

(3) Will he review this matter in the light of the global priority of food production and the need to maintain an open professional arena so that maximum progress may be achieved in productivity?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) I would request that the honourable member redirect his question to the Honourable the Premier.

20. RIVER FERRY TRANSPORT

Mr. Doumany, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Will he give his support and full co-operation to a new Liberal Brisbane City Council after 27 March in fulfilling its policy undertaking to achieve optimum utilisation of the Brisbane River's transport potential?

(2) Will he give special consideration to the rapidly growing problem of ferry transit between the University of Queensland and Dutton Park, where existing ferry services are seriously deficient, particularly in after-hours periods, and at best represent a poor substitute for a cross-river vehicular-traffic linkage which is urgently needed at this point?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) The current operations and possible extensions to passenger ferry services are undergoing a detailed study by the University of Queensland in co-operation with the Metropolitan Transit Project Board. This includes the problem of ferry transit between the university and Dutton Park.

The prime concern in the evaluation of this transport option is to establish the financial implications of providing new extended services or of providing different levels of ferry service to meet real specific demands—in terms of both initial capital costs and recurring operating expenditures.

The honourable member will be aware that I gave notice yesterday that today I would move that a Bill be introduced for a new transit authority and these aspects will be taken care of when the authority is established.

21. INDUSTRIAL PERMITS UNDER CLEAN WATERS ACT

Mr. Marginson, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads—

(1) In each year since the implementation of the Clean Waters Act, how many permits have been issued under the Act allowing industrial discharge of waste into Queensland bays and waterways?

(2) What are the names of the companies, firms and people concerned?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) In answer to both questions, I table the information sought. I should point out that some of the licences listed are no longer current.

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the information on the table.

22. EXCLUSION OF MORNINGTON ISLAND FROM LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTROL

Mr. Marginson, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads—

(1) Did the Government decide on 18 December 1975 to honour its promise of 2½ years ago to place all off-shore islands in Queensland under the control of local authorities?

(2) Did the December 1975 decision place all local islands, except Mornington Island, under the control of local authorities?

(3) Was the decision to exclude Mornington Island due to the large Aboriginal population of the island, which would have allowed the Aborigines to dominate election voting in the nearby local authority and, if not, what were the reasons?

Answers:—

(1) The Government has been progressively including off-shore islands within the areas of local authorities. The Order in Council of 18 December 1975 was one of the steps in this direction. Before that date, action had already been taken in respect of other islands, such as the inclusion of Torres Strait islands in the Torres Shire, the Palm Island group in Townsville city, Moreton Island in Brisbane city, and other Moreton Bay islands in the Redland Shire.

(2) As mentioned in (1), inclusion of off-shore islands in local authority areas has been taking place for some time. The only locality not so far dealt with is the Gulf of Carpentaria, which, of course, includes Mornington Island.

(3) Mornington Island was excluded from the December 1975 Order in Council so that the question of this island and the

adjacent shire of Carpentaria could be further studied. I am sure that the honourable member will appreciate that Mornington Island is an Aboriginal reserve, and as such would make no rate contribution whatever to the adjacent shire even if included in that shire, and conversely the shire council would have virtually no jurisdiction over the island. However, I do see merit in participation by the Mornington Islanders in local government on the mainland, and I am looking at ways in which this may be achieved, with due regard to the fact that the Islanders would make a cultural rather than a monetary contribution.

23. PETROLEUM PRICES STABILISATION SCHEME

Mr. Turner, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

As western areas of the State are paying from 20c to 30c per gallon extra for fuel above that paid for fuel in urban areas, what steps have been taken in an effort to get the present Commonwealth Government to reintroduce the fuel equalisation subsidy which was removed by the previous Commonwealth Government?

Answer:—

I am aware that the Petroleum Products Prices Stabilisation Scheme, which operated nationally under a Commonwealth Government subsidy scheme introduced by the Menzies Government in 1965, was terminated by the Whitlam Government in July 1974, no doubt supported by honourable members opposite. I am also aware of the price burden borne by those Queenslanders resident in outlying areas of the State as a result.

As a matter of fact, when the then Prime Minister informed the Premiers' Conference on 7 June 1974 of his intention to discontinue the scheme I registered an immediate protest and in this regard I refer the honourable member to my ministerial statement in this House on 1 August 1974, when I quoted from the official record of that particular Premier's Conference.

I also raised it on a number of subsequent occasions with Mr. Whitlam. The matter was discussed with the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister as recently as last week.

While the Prime Minister made it clear that the present financial problems facing his Government as a result of the Whitlam Government's administration would not allow the granting of my request, he also indicated that he would review the matter as soon as these problems eased.

24. CONCESSIONS TO GRAZIER

Mr. Turner, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service—

In view of the present financial returns to wool and beef producers, will concessions in relation to land rentals and freeholding instalments in these areas continue?

Answer:—

In accordance with a report and recommendation by Mr. W. F. G. Smith, now President of the Land Court, who conducted an inquiry into the sheep industry, the Government, during 1970, approved that the standard of sheep rents applicable to grazing selections and pastoral leases used predominantly for wool production and which had been drought stricken be reduced by 30 per cent. Subsequently, as a result of a further review, particularly in relation to the central and western districts, remissions were increased, depending upon the particular district, up to 50 per cent.

Valuations submitted to the court in respect of further sheep rental reappraisal periods as they fell due have had regard to the recommended remissions and in effect the court continues to determine rentals in the sheep industry at reduced levels.

The Government, early in 1975, approved of deferment of land rents and freeholding instalments in necessitous beef industry cases with prescribed interest rates reduced from 10 per cent to 5 per cent to be effective until 31 December 1975. Rental on blocks used dominantly for cattle has been reduced from the 1970 to the lower 1960 standard.

Recently the Government reviewed the position of the cattle producer and, having regard to the continuing adverse economic position, decided that similar concessions will prevail until the end of this year. In addition, substantial funds have been made available to beef producers for carry-on needs, which include rates and rental. These funds are available at concessional rates of interest.

Finally, because it is clear that a return to satisfactory market prices will be of longer term than originally anticipated, it is now the intention of the Land Administration Commission to go to the Land Court and establish a completely new cattle rental standard based on the 1976 economic climate and future prospects.

25. DREDGING OF CREEKS FOR FLOOD MITIGATION, BRISBANE

Mr. Young, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads—

(1) In view of the statement by Alderman Walsh in "The Courier-Mail" of 17

March that the lack of State Government approval was holding up the dredging work in Breakfast Creek, that the council, in conjunction with other levels of government, had spent \$4,826,023 on flood mitigation along Enoggera, Breakfast, Ithaca and Fish Creeks and that money has been spent on design and construction and on the acquisition of flood-prone land along the creeks, what is the true position?

(2) What dredging or clearing has taken place in Enoggera, Breakfast, Ithaca and Fish Creeks?

(3) What amount of money has the State Government allocated and, of this money, how much has been taken advantage of by the council?

Answers:—

(1) The Brisbane City Council formally applied for approval to dredge Breakfast Creek on 12 January of this year. Irrigation and Water Supply approval was given on 19 March and the Harbours and Marine Department gave conditional approval on 23 October 1975. This Department has examined the proposed works and considers them to be satisfactory, but preparation of the Order in Council is awaiting submission of revised documentation for the work. These revisions were discussed at a meeting held on 10 March between Brisbane City Council officers and departmental officers.

(2) Accurate figures are not available but it is possible that the council has spent \$4,800,000 on flood works along Enoggera-Breakfast Creeks. The construction of Enoggera Dam is well advanced and the estimated cost of this over 12 months ago was about \$4,000,000. In the 1974-75 financial year the Brisbane City Council spent \$400,000 acquiring properties along Enoggera-Breakfast Creek and another \$40,000 on Ithaca Creek. Detailed design of the dredging of Breakfast Creek cost \$45,000. A further \$1,550,000 is to be spent on acquiring properties along Kedron Brook.

(3) No dredging or cleaning work has been done in any of the Enoggera-Breakfast, Fish or Ithaca Creeks. The Enoggera-Breakfast Creek flood mitigation works are being financed on a 40 per cent Commonwealth, 40 per cent State and 20 per cent Brisbane City Council basis. The whole scheme, including the dam, dredging, etc., is estimated to cost about \$12,000,000, of which the State's share is \$4,800,000. Financing of the other works has not yet been finalised. The Kedron Brook works have been submitted to the Commonwealth Government for 40/40/20 financing but no commitment has been received. On 13 October last, State Cabinet decided to limit expenditure on flood mitigation works financed on a 40/40/20 basis to \$3,000,000 per financial year at 1975-76. Prior to this, on 31 October 1973, the State Treasurer

in a letter to the Lord Mayor indicated that the Government was prepared to offer 33½ per cent subsidy on flood mitigation works up to a total estimate of \$15,000,000. These works would be financed as quickly as funds would allow but over not more than five years.

26. DRUGS REMOVED FROM FREE LIST

Mr. Young, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Is he aware that from 1 April over 40 drugs will be taken off the Commonwealth Government free list?

(2) Will any of these drugs be still available from State Government hospitals from 1 April?

(3) As one of the most important groups of drugs to be dropped from the free list is the milk substitutes for children over 18 months old who need them because of various allergies, is he aware of any such children who are in need of the milk substitutes?

(4) Will the State Government hospitals make milk substitutes available to patients over 18 months old and, if so, will they be reimbursed by the Commonwealth Government?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) I am advised that there are children over 18 months of age with a milk protein allergy.

(4) Milk substitutes are available from State hospitals on the recommendation of specialist staff. The cost of pharmaceuticals comes within the hospital side of the Medibank agreement.

27. INLET FITTING ON MILKING MACHINES

Mr. Gunn, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Have milking machine manufacturers and suppliers been given twelve months to phase out the present type of milk inlet fitting on milking machines?

(2) Does this mean that farmers purchasing such a fitting will find themselves in possession of a milk inlet which will be condemned in 1977?

Answers:—

(1) No, but the opinion of the industry has been sought as to whether this should be made compulsory after December 1976.

(2) No. The new inlet would only be required to be fitted on new or renovated installations after December 1976.

28. MILK QUALITY STANDARD

Mr. Gunn, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Is a total count test procedure for milk quality planned to come into operation on 1 January 1977?

(2) Is the bacteriological standard to be 50,000 bacteria per cubic centimetre and is this necessary, as New South Wales has a total count of 150,000 and Victoria, the largest dairying State, has no standard?

Answers:—

(1) The total count test procedure for determining the quality of raw milk for pasteurisation was listed as an alternative prescribed test under the regulations of the Dairy Produce Act in June 1975. The test procedure was published as a standard method by the Standards Association of Australia in 1973.

(2) No standard bacteria count has yet been defined in regulations. Based on field experience of acceptable cleaning and sterilising practices, industry has been recommended to work towards a maximum bacterial content of 50,000 bacteria per ml in such milk at the farm gate by the end of 1976. Testing by those dairy associations who have adopted this procedure indicate the standard of 50,000 can be satisfactorily met by the producer who is reasonably conscious of good hygiene. The more extreme circumstances of milk production in Queensland with smaller milk volumes, increased atmosphere temperatures, variable quality of water and long transport and storage conditions of raw milk, require a standard somewhat more stringent than cooler southern States.

29. USE OF RESERVE R47, BUNDABERG

Mr. Jensen, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

As his department holds Reserve R47 containing 6 acres 20 perches in North Bundaberg and as plans have been scrapped for shunting yards in this area, will he transfer some of this area back to the Lands Department for allocation to various sporting bodies in Bundaberg that are in need of further sporting fields?

Answer:—

Reserve R47 is occupied in part by the railway station yard at North Bundaberg. Investigations will be made to ascertain whether any portion of the area could be regarded as being surplus for future railway requirements.

30. FIVE SUSPENDED PERMANENT BUILDING SOCIETIES

Mr. Alison, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) What are the respective net accumulated losses or profits for each of the five permanent building societies recently suspended?

(2) If any of the societies can demonstrate to the registrar of building societies that they are now trading profitably, would consideration be given to permitting such societies to continue trading without being absorbed or amalgamated?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) All societies which have recently been suspended have indicated substantial unaudited operating losses and/or capitalised establishment expenses (to be written off, if possible, by future returns) since the date of their last published accounts.

Senior chartered accountants have been appointed as special auditors to assess and audit the current situation of the societies, including their ability to trade out of their current loss situation either alone or by merging with others.

Accumulated profits and a low level of trading profitability, if applicable, would not necessarily be true indicators of the actual situation or of their ability to meet all demands which could be placed on them.

31. INTEREST RATES CHARGED BY PERMANENT BUILDING SOCIETIES

Mr. Alison, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) Is Queensland the only State in Australia where interest rates paid to depositors and interest charged on home loans by permanent building societies are fixed by the State Government?

(2) Are the permanent building societies accordingly expected to operate on a smaller margin than societies in other States?

(3) Is it because Queensland societies are made to operate on a very small margin that it is necessary for them to have a very large turnover of capital before they reach break-even point?

(4) Has this necessity to have such a large turnover resulted in an increasing tendency to a semi-monopolistic situation?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Although some variations do occur, generally the operating margins in other States are in line with the effective 2.264 per cent allowed in Queensland.

(3 and 4) No. A society can be viable and effective on the margins set, through efficient management.

32. CENTRAL PRE-SCHOOL, MARYBOROUGH

Mr. Alison, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

When will construction of the Central Pre-school Centre at Maryborough be completed?

Answer:—

A tender for the construction of this pre-school centre was accepted on 22 January 1976, but construction work has not commenced because of the continuous wet weather. The job has been pegged, but an inspection earlier this week indicated that the site is still too wet for excavation work to proceed. At this juncture no firm date can be given as to when construction will be completed.

33. ELECTRICITY SUPPLY TO DAJARRA

Mr. Bertoni, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) What is the cause of the continuous delay in providing generated power to the township of Dajarra?

(2) When does he expect planned connection to be completed?

Answers:—

(1) A number of factors have contributed to the delay in this project. These include uncertainties about the number of new homes to be built in the township and difficulty in obtaining suitable tenders for the erection of the overhead reticulation.

(2) All works are now complete with the exception of the generating plant, which has been tested in Brisbane and is programmed for delivery on 23 April. The project will be commissioned by the end of April.

34. SMALL INVESTORS IN BUILDING SOCIETIES

Mr. Kaus, pursuant to notice, asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) Is he aware that the proposal to cover only the first \$50,000 of any investment in building societies with the contingency fund does not in fact cover all the little fellows?

(2) Is he aware that there are many little fellows who hold shares in companies which have investments in building societies in excess of \$50,000 and that imposing such a restriction unfairly transfers to those small investors the total problems of any building society?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) The legislation has not yet been drafted, but the proposal envisages that the contingency fund would create a backing for the first \$50,000 of any investment. Anyone with more than \$50,000

invested would have backing towards the first \$50,000, the thinking being that anyone with more than \$50,000 invested would be experienced and capable of assessing the value of the security rating of his investment.

35. DR. H. F. RECHER'S STATEMENTS ON CONSERVATION

Mr. Kaus, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to statements made by Dr. H. F. Recher, Curator of Environmental Studies at the Australian Museum, at a symposium in New South Wales that if rabbits and kangaroos did better in the west than sheep and cattle, we should manage the rabbits and poison the sheep, and that, when advocating a review of the concept of a pest, he said that the farmer who grows sunflowers for oil may do better to consider the parrots that plague his fields as part of the crop to be harvested and marketed than as pests to be destroyed, and that, as well, he described national parks as errors divorced from ecological realities?

(2) Would this be a conservationist's normal policy in relation to these matters or was Dr. Recher joking at the time?

Answers:—

(1) My attention has not previously been drawn to the statements which the honourable member attributes to Dr. Recher of the Australian Museum, and therefore I am unaware of the circumstances in which the remarks were made. It is difficult, however, to imagine any context in which the alleged quotations are other than nonsense.

I can appreciate that someone holding a position of Curator of Environmental Studies would rather have the Australian environment populated by kangaroos than by people or sheep; but even if one totally disregards economic realities in favour of environmental considerations, it would be impossible to justify favouring an exotic species so destructive to the Australian environment as the rabbit.

It appears that objection is being made to a native species being regarded as a pest, and in this regard I would point out that this term has not applied to kangaroos under Queensland legislation since 1954. Moreover, no species can be declared a pest under any other Queensland Act except with my recommendation.

Concerning the export of Australian parrots—the Australian States and the Commonwealth have always felt that this would be an undesirable industry to promote.

I find it difficult to believe that a responsible scientist did refer to national parks as “errors divorced from ecological realities.” There is often an element of ecological unreality in statements made about national parks by the more emotional of the conservationists, but to say that a national park itself is an ecological unreality is patently nonsense.

When I recall the tenor of some of the letters I have received from conservationists, I was tempted to answer the honourable member's question by saying that one should not expect a conservationist's policy to be normal; but out of respect to many sincere and sensible people who are doing so much valuable work in assisting the Government in conserving our natural resources, I am treating the question seriously.

(2) I do not think the remarks were meant to be taken seriously, nor do I think Dr. Recher was joking. It seems more likely that he was indulging in hyperbole to make a particular point, and I would be grateful if the honourable member would give me the reference to the symposium to pass on to my Director of National Parks and Wildlife.

36. TREATMENT OF SUSPECTS BY LICENSING BRANCH OFFICERS

Mr. Frawley, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Police—

(1) Will he give an assurance that an investigation will be carried out into the false arrest of Mr. B. O'Brien by a Licensing Branch officer named Phillips, who used unnecessary force and downright standover tactics at Redcliffe on 19 March?

(2) Will he give an assurance that the officers concerned in this affair will be instructed to treat members of the public with a little bit of courtesy instead of behaving as if all people are criminals?

(3) Why was Mr. O'Brien refused release at 2 a.m. on 20 March after spending the necessary four hours at the police station?

(4) Why did all staff at the station refuse to accept responsibility for Mr. O'Brien's release until the officer in charge returned?

(5) Why was Mr. O'Brien's solicitor, who was one of his witnesses, told by the arresting officer to push off or he also would be arrested?

Answer:—

The allegation will be investigated.

37. COMMONWEALTH GAMES, BRISBANE

Mrs. Kyburz, pursuant to notice, asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

What amount has the State Government promised to the Brisbane City Council

towards the proposed staging of the Commonwealth Games, and has any other form of commitment been promised?

Answer:—

The State Government has not yet made a commitment to contribute any specific amount to the Brisbane City Council in the event that Brisbane is selected as host city for the Commonwealth Games in 1982. However, the question of State Government assistance towards the staging of the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane in 1982 was considered by Cabinet and it was decided inter alia—

(a) that the State Government indicate its intention to provide a substantial cash grant towards the provision of the new athletics stadium, swimming and diving facilities, velodrome and badminton courts should Brisbane be selected as the host city for the 1982 Commonwealth Games;

(b) that conditions attaching to the grant include that the projects and their estimated costs will need State Government approval in broad principle;

(c) that the extent of the grant be considered and announced later when the projects and estimates are clearer.

38. BUNDABERG MINING LEASES

Mrs. Kyburz, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

What are the terms and conditions applying to mining leases 152, 164 and 165, Bundaberg, recently granted by the Mines Department?

Answer:—

Mining leases Nos. 152, 164 and 165, Bundaberg, were granted to Mineral Deposits Limited for periods each of 20 years from 1 February 1976. The special conditions applying to these leases are numerous, but in accord with my policy they are regarded as an agreement between my department and the lessee and as such are not made public. However, they are available to the holder of the background tenure upon application. This policy applies to all leases.

39. PROTECTION OF GREAT BARRIER REEF AND FISHING AND PRAWNING INDUSTRIES

Mr. Houston, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) Did the High Court decision validating the new National Seas and Submerged Lands Act give the Australian Government responsibility for protecting areas such as the Barrier Reef, when the Australian Government did not have the legal machinery to protect it as the Marine Environment Protection Bill, which sets out rules and penalties, has not been passed?

(2) What action has the Government taken to provide protection for the Barrier Reef and the State's fishing and prawning industry?

Answers:—

(1) The High Court decision confirming the validity of the Seas and Submerged Lands Act is under study for the purpose of identifying the respective rights of the Commonwealth and State Governments to legislate with respect to marine areas surrounding Australia. The honourable member will be aware that the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975 provides for protection of the Great Barrier Reef and makes provision for both Queensland and the Commonwealth to participate in formulating measures for its protection.

(2) The Fisheries Act 1957–1974 already provides protection for the fishing and prawning industries and Queensland intends participating in the implementation of the Commonwealth's relevant marine parks legislation.

40. PRIVATE RESIDENCES, MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT

Mr. Houston, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads—

(1) What is (a) the number of private residences in Brisbane now owned by the Main Roads Department, (b) the amount collected in rent per month for them and (c) the amount expended on the maintenance of the properties during the 12 months to 31 December 1975?

(2) How many of these residences were acquired in terms of the Commonwealth-States Roads Agreement?

(3) How many other properties are at present under any form of option to the Main Roads Department?

Answers:—

(1) (a) 460; (b) \$44,632.68 rent for February 1976; (c) An estimated amount of \$164,000 has been spent on maintenance, which includes rates and charges.

(2) All were acquired under these terms.

(3) There are none under option but 23 under negotiation.

41. POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT ON COMMONWEALTH GAMES FOR BRISBANE

Mr. Lamont, pursuant to notice, asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) Has he seen the political advertisement in "The Courier-Mail" of 22 March about the proposed Brisbane games and signed by Bryan Walsh?

(2) Is this claim by the current Lord Mayor factual and, if not, what is the true situation?

(3) Does he know whether the advertisement was paid for by the city council, using ratepayers' money, or by the Australian Labor Party?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) As far as the State Government is concerned, no commitment has been made to provide other than a substantial cash grant to the Brisbane City Council towards the capital cost of providing sporting facilities. I am not aware to what extent the Commonwealth Government has indicated that it might provide financial support.

(3) No.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

RELEASE OF FUNDS FROM SUSPENDED BUILDING SOCIETIES

Mr. MELLOY: I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: As some depositors who have placed all their funds in building societies suspended by the National-Liberal Government are experiencing extreme difficulty because all their money is impounded by that decision, will he direct that, where personal hardship can be shown, limited funds can be released to depositors from their funds in these frozen societies?

Sir GORDON CHALK: The honourable member's question appears to be based on a false premise. The suspension of the building societies was not a decision of the National-Liberal Government. The decision was taken in accordance with the Act on the advice tendered by the registrar, who indicated that it should be done because he considered protection should be given to the investors as well as the creditors associated with the particular building societies.

As to the second portion of the question, concerning action being taken, we are bound by the ambit of the Act. Where a liquidator is in charge, he must pay attention to this matter. In relation to those societies that were suspended and are in the hands of administrators, steps were taken to ensure the payment of the wages of staff involved in the administration. Until the reports of the administrators are to hand no other action can be taken.

STATEMENT ON TV ABOUT GOVERNMENT PARTIES

Mr. MELLOY: I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Has his attention been drawn to a statement by the State President of the National Party, Mr. Sparkes, on the "Monday Conference" programme on A.B.C. television this week that not only was the National Party senior to the Liberal Party in numerical strength within the coalition but also that it was senior in wisdom and breadth of policy?

Government Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members know the rules of the House. If anybody interjects while an honourable member is on his feet, I shall have to deal with him under Standing Order 123A.

Mr. MELLOY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am only quoting the statement by Mr. Sparkes.

Does the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, as the State Liberal leader, agree with this determination by Mr. Sparkes which, in effect, means that the Liberal Party is more narrow-based and more narrow-minded than its National Party partner?

Sir GORDON CHALK: I paid Mr. Sparkes the respect of watching the broadcast for approximately one hour on Monday of this week. Nothing was said by Mr. Sparkes to which I could take exception. In the Government's view it is not a question of who has the best brains but a question of co-ordinating the thinking of the party, its philosophy and its policy. Consequently, while there may be differences of opinion from time to time on certain aspects, we have demonstrated over almost the past 19 years that we can live and work together in the interests of the State, unlike what has been demonstrated by the A.L.P. when it has been in government.

Mr. Melloy: It isn't a question of who has the brains but rather whether they have the brains.

Mr. Knox: It is how you use them that counts.

Mr. Melloy: I'm using my brains, anyhow.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST HEALTH DEPARTMENT BY DR. WILSON AND DR. GARDNER

Mr. LAMONT: My question is directed to the Minister for Health. During a TV interview recently the Minister commented that on a previous occasion he had met Dr. Paul Wilson and others to discuss the administration of the Mental Health Act and that on that occasion, after extensive and frank discussions, Dr. Wilson and others admitted to having no tangible evidence to support their claims. In view of that, I ask the Minister: Is that the true picture? Did Dr. Wilson and others then agree to seek further information on the question and come back to him on the matter? Did Dr. Wilson and others then breach a gentleman's agreement with the Minister by attacking him and his administration through the Press without coming back to him with their new allegations and so-called findings? Have Dr. Wilson and others produced any further evidence to him which supports their current alarmist claims?

Dr. EDWARDS: I am aware of the Press releases over the last day or so about an

alleged report prepared by Dr. Wilson and Dr. Gardner. I wish to make it quite clear that Dr. Gardner and Dr. Wilson are both psychologists employed at the Queensland University. They are not medical practitioners. The second point I make is that in May last year they began a campaign against the Health Department by investigating mental institutions and the intellectually handicapped. At my request (and I emphasise that), after they had made allegations against staff members, against conditions and against the Mental Health Act, they called upon me at my office. They had no tangible evidence at that stage except small pieces of paper in which holes had been cut, which they claimed bore the names of certain people who had written to them complaining about wrongful detention in our mental hospitals under the Mental Health Act.

On that occasion I asked both Dr. Wilson and Dr. Gardner if they would seek the authority of the patients to give me the information which they claimed they had. I said I would guarantee them a confidential inquiry into those allegations and that I would report to Parliament and to them about their allegations of wrongful admission of patients under the Mental Health Act.

I made it public also in this House, in the Press and in the media throughout the State that, if any patient in the State had any evidence whatsoever of wrongful admission under the Mental Health Act, I would certainly have it investigated. Five people contacted me as a result. Four had been wrongfully admitted, in their opinion, under the previous Mental Health Act, which was repealed in 1974. The fifth was the son of a man who had admitted himself voluntarily and had not been a regulated patient. There had been a misunderstanding and a communication breakdown between the father and the son; there was no evidence of wrongful admission.

On the occasion that I spoke to Dr. Wilson and Dr. Gardner, they assured me that they would give me a submission. The submission was received. It is a document of weak, inaccurate information. It has no relevant story whatsoever of any patient—no names and no details. I shall tomorrow table that document in this House, Mr. Speaker, to let honourable members see the quality of the submission that was given to me on that occasion.

They promised on that occasion that they would come back to me when they had obtained the permission of those patients. I have heard nothing since from Dr. Gardner or Dr. Wilson until a leakage some week or so ago in the "Sunday Sun" that they had statements, that they had information, and that there would be a scandal in the history of the Health Department and of this Government.

They made accusations of malpractice by staff. They indicated that staff in our mental hospitals were attacking and bashing patients. The unions—the State Service Union and the

Hospital Employees Union—have made public statements. They have decried these defamatory statements made by these two people without any information whatsoever. I again appeal to these two men to give me the evidence that they say they have.

They made a statement then that they had 33 statutory declarations which they would release to the media yesterday. Again I have still not heard anything from these people. I believe that a report was given to the Press yesterday. I still have not seen this report, nor do I think any honourable member of this House has. On information from newsmen who have rung me, I believe that they have again spoken about figures and other information.

I read in the Press this morning that the rates of death in our hospitals from such causes as hepatitis, tuberculosis and other diseases are far greater than the average in the community. I called for information this morning. Last year there were two deaths in our hospitals from tuberculosis, which is far below the average within the community, one death from hepatitis, one death from diarrhoea and two deaths from gastroenteritis. Every death that occurs in our hospitals in this State is reported to the coroner, who can at that stage accept the death certificate from the hospital concerned or hold a coronial inquest into the death of the particular patient.

I could go on and on arguing about the situation presented in the Press. I deplore the attitude adopted by these two irresponsible people within the community. They have lost the respect of their own academic friends. I make it quite clear that many university people have rung me during the past 24 hours about this matter, and I know of other members of this Parliament who dissociate themselves from these two academics. It is part of a campaign against Ministers in this Parliament. I am the first and I believe that Sir Gordon could be the next.

This Government is pledged to the care and welfare of our patients. We will make every effort to carry out that pledge. If there is malpractice—and occasionally this might occur—I expect every sensible member of the community to report it to the appropriate authority, through me as Minister, through the police or through any other avenue. I assure the public again that it will be investigated fully. At the present time we have two or three cases where staff have been accused of hitting patients and of dealing with patients. We have taken action and already these matters are being dealt with.

In further answer to the honourable member's question, I deplore the action taken by these two dishonourable gentlemen and ask them again, if they have any information, to do the correct thing and present it to the authorities.

SUGGESTED PURCHASE OF NEW GOVERNMENT
AIRCRAFT

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: I preface a question to the Premier by referring to an article that appeared in the early edition of the "Telegraph" on Thursday, 11 March 1976 (it was subsequently removed from later editions). I ask the Premier if he is considering spending, or intending to spend, \$1,500,000 of good taxpayers' moneys on the purchase of a new Falcon 10 business jet, which his personal pilot, Miss Beryl Young, examined and in which a test flight was scheduled for her and the Premier, thus making it the Premier's fourth aircraft following the Piper Navajo purchase in 1971 for \$250,000, the Beechcraft Kingair, and the Super Beechcraft Kingair delivered last year at an estimated cost of \$750,000?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: The honourable member ought to know that many things that one reads in the Press are put there purely for speculation.

Mr. Knox: Like his own political future. There's a lot of speculation there.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: There is indeed a lot of speculation about the honourable member's political future, as the Minister for Justice suggests. Seriously, as the honourable member must know, there is no intention to buy a new aircraft. The fact that I fly in a Boeing or any other make of aircraft does not indicate that I will buy one. I can assure the House on that point.

ABOLITION OF PAY-ROLL TAX

Mr. McKECHNIE: I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: With reference to the State Liberal Council meeting that was held in Ipswich a few weeks ago, as a resolution calling for the abolition of pay-roll tax was passed without dissent, does the Treasurer plan to oppose it with the same vigour that he has displayed in opposing the possible elimination of State death duties in the next State Budget?

Sir GORDON CHALK: It is true that at a council meeting of the Liberal Party at Ipswich a resolution was passed suggesting the elimination of pay-roll tax. I was not at the council meeting at the time the resolution was discussed, but I was at the meeting later in the afternoon, and I took it upon myself to indicate to the meeting that, while the resolution had been passed and no doubt would find its way to the executive of the party, I believed there was no possibility whatsoever of having it implemented at this time. I indicated quite candidly that pay-roll tax represented a return of something like \$150,000,000 to the State of Queensland and that it was wrong for any council meeting to pass such a resolution without having any regard to just what the loss of that amount of revenue would mean to the finances of Queensland.

I think the headline in the newspaper the following morning read, "Chalk said it wasn't a goer".

Decisions on the finances of this State are ones that must be made at the time a Budget is being prepared, and while there are proposals from many angles to eliminate taxes and to give relief in certain directions (and not necessarily in taxes), the final decision must be made at the time when Cabinet is determining the Budget having regard to the availability of funds both from the Commonwealth and from the natural resources of this State.

In reply to the honourable member's specific question: the decision as far as I am concerned is one that will be made at the time the Budget is being prepared.

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

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY
BILL

INITIATION

Hon. K. W. HOOPER (Greenslopes—Minister for Transport): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to provide for a Metropolitan Transit Authority, its functions and powers and for related purposes."

Motion agreed to.

CORONERS ACT AMENDMENT
BILL

INITIATION

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Coroners Act 1958-1972 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

PICTURE THEATRES AND FILMS ACT
AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Picture Theatres and Films Act 1946-1974 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

DISTRICT COURTS' AND MAGISTRATES
COURTS' JURISDICTION BILL

INITIATION

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General): I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to vary the civil jurisdiction of District Courts and Magistrates Courts in certain respects.”
Motion agreed to.

MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Dr. Edwards, read a third time.

MEDICAL ACT AND OTHER ACTS
(ADMINISTRATION) ACT AMENDMENT
BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Dr. Edwards, read a third time.

HOSPITALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Dr. Edwards, read a third time.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER ACT
AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, read a third time.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT
BILL

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, read a third time.

FORESTRY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

DAIRY ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM
AGREEMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

PRIMARY PRODUCERS' ASSISTANCE
ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

CLEAN WATERS ACT AMENDMENT
BILL

THIRD READING

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

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

PREMIER'S INVESTIGATIONS INTO AUSTRALIAN
LOANS AFFAIR

Mr. JONES (Cairns) (12.10 p.m.): On 9 December last year the Premier used the privilege of this House to prostitute parliamentary decency in Australia. This Parliament was recalled for a few hours, in the shadow of a Federal election, as the vehicle for a vicious unfounded smear on innocent members of the Australian Labor Party.

Let me quote the Premier's words on that infamous occasion as follows:—

“It is now clear that two Ministers of the Whitlam Government, together with a number of other people, were due to receive staggering sums of money as a consequence of secret commissions and kick-backs.”

Last week in the National Parliament these unnamed Ministers and unnamed people were completely cleared by the Liberal Attorney-General, Mr. Ellicott, of the vile charges that had been laid against them by the Premier of this State.

Yesterday, after notice had been given of a question directed to the Deputy Premier and Treasurer as to the cost of this Swiss loans adventure, the Premier tried to escape his guilt with a three-minute statement, which included two lines of so-called financial detail. He tried to palm off Parliament by producing the convenient figure of \$11,465 as the total expenditure on his exercise, and incredibly concluded his statement by uttering the words, “Let sleeping dogs lie.”

In my view we should turn the dog over, find out who is beating it, who is feeding it and who owns it. On behalf of the Opposition I warn the Premier that we are totally dissatisfied with his explanation and totally dissatisfied with his financial detail (if it could be called that). We certainly do not intend to let sleeping dogs lie, as he suggests, especially as, in this case, the sleeping dog is a mongrel, mangy dog.

It is strange how history repeats itself. On two occasions during his parliamentary career, the Premier has had flirtations with

what I would term shady Americans. The first, a Mr. Gene Goff, taught him how to convert a piece of oil script which he valued at \$4 into \$50,000 and a share empire. His guilt on that occasion was exposed by Mr. Justice Taylor in the Australian High Court when the Premier cynically, and unsuccessfully, appealed to dodge taxation on his financial gain.

His second association, and the one that I am concerned with now, involved this other shady American, Mr. Wiley Fancher. Last year the Premier involved him directly and personally. Mr. Fancher is a mysterious resident who, to the best of my knowledge, still resides—deeply in debt—in the town of Atherton on the Tableland. Fancher is a man who could not even pay for the funeral of his mother. He was recruited by the Premier as a conspirator in this sinister international loans affair.

The Opposition demands to know how much Fancher was paid for his part in this sordid spy drama and how much public money was squandered on his expenses and travel. I believe it cost \$16,000 at least to go from Cairns to Switzerland on either 3 or 4 January this year.

At the time he earned the Premier's patronage, this same Wiley Fancher could not pay his rates to the Cook Shire Council and owed so much money—which I have listed—in North Queensland that anyone in Atherton would have shuddered if he had asked for a loan of 20c for a chook ticket. In fact I am told that not so long ago he even bounced a cheque to pay for his accommodation at the R.S.L.'s Anzac Club in Brisbane.

Suddenly this man, who could not afford the price of a postage stamp in Atherton, appeared living in style at the Zebra Motel opposite the Executive Building, and near Parliament House, flying in the Government aircraft (something that few Ministers can do), and telephoning and travelling abroad with reckless financial abandon at the behest and cost of the State.

Is it any wonder that Mr. Ellicott hastily wiped his hands of this farcical political exercise! No wonder the Opposition in this Parliament is dissatisfied with the Premier's statement of yesterday.

There are others in this shabby, murky misuse of public money and the State Parliament. Our Agent-General in London was assigned to wander the streets of Switzerland like some ageing James Bond. His expenses alone would have exhausted the \$11,000 that the Premier cited yesterday. A Queensland police inspector was sent all the way to Zurich to act, I suppose, as a body-guard. Another person who was involved was a shadowy Englishman named John Bracey who, according to my last information, was still an international fugitive from fraud charges exceeding \$100,000 in Sydney. We can assume that like Ronald Biggs and the Bartons he is overseas never to return.

When we dig deeper we discover a very mysterious American named Sunderman, who was in Basle at the time the loan hunt began, and who, I am told, was promised a luxury motor-car at Government expense if he supplied certain documents.

What a motley, ill-assorted gang for any Premier of any State to recruit to engage in a malicious, so-called spy-hunt against the former Government of this nation! The Premier's friends make the Lavender Hill boys look like a bunch of clean-skins—a bunch of pansies.

Can anyone seriously believe that the Premier, Fancher, Bracey, Sunderman and Wally Rae could crack the secrets of Swiss bank vaults which, for generations, have defied the Swiss Government and the most skilled investigators in the world?

Far from feting Fancher, I believe our Governments should be taking a long look at him with a view to deportation before he burgles further money from Queenslanders or Australians. The Premier's other friends named Bracey and Sunderman are no better. One is a fraudulent fugitive and the other a shady, fringe financial dweller.

This was an illegitimate exercise at great public expense, including the special recall of this Parliament; an illegitimate, putrid exercise by a man who has become possessed by his own hatreds and bigotries.

Last year the Premier talked of royal commissions. After his part in this he should be the first to deserve one and the last to invite it.

WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE

Mr. PORTER (Toowong) (12.18 p.m.): I draw the attention of the House to a place in Little Roma Street called the "Women's Health Centre", which in other places is sometimes called the "Women's Community Aid Centre" and sometimes the "Women's Health Collective". It is one of the things that were spawned during the period in which the Whitlam Government lavished spending on way-out radical propositions which tended to drench the abnormal few in our community in a golden shower provided at the Australian taxpayers' expense.

It is called a health centre, but obviously it is an out-and-out political centre. This building in Little Roma Street contains a number of rooms one of which is dubbed Kid's Lib. I wonder what that term means. Is it a place where children are conditioned to promote a permissive society, to learn how to defy parents, teachers and all other authority?

Another room is the headquarters of a Secondary Schools Feminist Movement, which meets every Saturday afternoon. Here is the genesis or the driving force of the extreme feminist attitudes being promoted in our schools—not our universities. In so many

of these esoteric circles, feminism is just a polite euphemism for Lesbianism. High school principals are only too well aware of the dangers posed by this movement.

It is obvious to anyone who calls at the so-called health centre that it is a place for extreme radical indoctrination. It has all the usual Leftist literature, all the posters of the anti-Fascist, pro-abortion and pro-feminist lobbies on its walls. Sometimes obscenities are provided for general viewing. I had a complaint from a woman—I will call her Mrs. T of Indooroopilly—who with another woman went in off the street for a genuine purpose. They were much distressed when they sat down to find themselves viewing a poster which started off with, "Mother f'd, daughter f'd, sister f'd"—and not in the anaemic version that I am giving honourable members, either. Naturally, the women wondered what kind of a place they had gone into. Incidentally, they had been recommended to go there by a social worker.

It is a further clear indication of the centre's political purpose that it has a tie-up with 4ZZZ, the University Students' Union radio station, for which the university senate must carry a very heavy load of responsibility—but that is a subject that should be pursued on another occasion. The university journal "Axis" of 8 March said that the centre had bought taping and recording equipment so that programmes of 4ZZZ could be piped to women in the waiting room of what they referred to as this Women's Health Collective. The article went on to boast, as if people did not already know, that 4ZZZ "is entirely staffed by people with their roots in the Left".

Whilst we get infuriated with this misuse of public moneys for political ends, what is a matter of very real public concern is its alleged health services. I wonder precisely what they are. Who determines who should see what doctors? Who, if it comes to that, are the doctors that women are trusting themselves to? A roster on the notice board alludes to Christian names only—Monday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Chris; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., Jan; and so on. Who are these doctors? Are they qualified? What are their credentials for the roles they apparently undertake? Why the anonymity? This is hardly compatible with the usual concepts of medical ethics, I would think. Is it to promote an air of informality? That is provided ad nauseam by the general demeanour of the place and by the dress of many of those who appear to be permanent inhabitants there.

I suggest we would be very remiss if we were not concerned at this, because the Women's Health Centre is set up on identical lines to that which operates at Liverpool in Sydney. Yesterday's Press reported that a doctor and a nurse from the Liverpool Women's Health Centre have been charged with performing a criminal abortion on a

girl of 15 in the health centre. They not only performed the operation; they then bulk-billed Medibank for the service! It is interesting to note in the Press report that when the doctor was approached by the police she said, "Yes, I am known as Rose." "I am known as Rose."! Is that the way we expect doctors to provide their services to genuine people in the community?

Dr. Scott-Young: I can assure you it is not.

Mr. PORTER: The honourable member for Townsville is quite right. Of course it is not the way it should be done.

I say that, as the Brisbane Women's Health Centre has been set up and operated on identical lines to the one in Sydney and is in the hands of precisely the same class of people, we are certainly entitled to know how the taxpayers' moneys are being used there. What sort of counselling is being given to people? What manner of advice is tendered? What type of medical services are offered? What equipment is used? Under what conditions are the various services performed? A whole host of questions not only call for answers; they scream for them. Does anybody really argue that there is any real value in this type of operation for our community? Do we want this deliberate debasement of all normal standards? Are we not only to permit, but also to assist with our money, an extreme Left-wing element, financed out of the public purse, to white-ant the very basis of our society, to white-ant the morals and the standards which every election and every public assessment poll has shown that the overwhelming bulk of the people in our community want to support?

I am indebted to my colleague the Minister for Health for providing me with a little bit of factual information. It appears that the Women's Health Centre for the year 1975-76 was funded to the extent of \$110,800. Of this, the salaries grant was \$74,850. That provided for a doctor, two social workers, a nurse, two counsellors, a co-ordinator, a health educator and one receptionist/typist. Of course, they are getting the money; but what are they doing with it? What is the staff position at the centre?

On the latest information that the Minister's officers were able to ascertain, there are three doctors—but on a sessional basis only—one qualified nurse, two unqualified social workers, two counsellors with no apparent qualifications at all, one receptionist/typist and one health educator. There is no co-ordinator. This is vastly different from what was proposed when the money was sought and granted, and it reveals a situation that is shot through with contradictions and ineptitudes to say the least.

I personally have had complaints over months from women regarding this health centre. They have visited it in good faith and been repelled by their experience. The report in yesterday's Press of this criminal

abortion charge at the Sydney centre prompted me to bring this matter to a head. I decided that I should not rely entirely on what I have been told but go and see for myself. Yesterday I went up there. It was a remarkable experience to say the least. I asked to see the co-ordinator. I was told there was none. I then asked to see the person in charge. I was told that there was none; a committee ran it. What did I want? I said that I wanted to see what the centre did and how it did it. What was my name? I said, "Why do you want to know?" I was told, "We cannot tell you anything unless we know your name." It was rapidly made quite plain to me that although this was supposed to be a public service, operating on public funds, I would not be told anything unless I first of all indicated who I was. Indeed, I was told that I had an aggressive attitude and apparently that was the close of the interview.

I find it difficult to believe that I am an aggressive person in these circumstances. As I saw the place, it would not induce confidence in anyone wanting real counselling or useful medical help. This is the impression I got. I do not give it as a judgment. One thing is certain; the political complexion of the place was beyond doubt. It was adorned with the usual radical, Left-wing claptrap posters and cards—anti-Fascist, anti-authority, anti school discipline, profeminist, pro-abortion and pro all the miscellany of eccentric political causes so beloved by the extreme Left.

I have been told by women that the place has that seedy air of a somewhat camp, grubby and clubby place for radicals to call their own. My impression is that that is precisely a proper description of it. I believe that we should take very violent exception to the cruel pretence that there is a Women's Health Centre available here, when it is being used as a front, at the taxpayers' expense, for propagandising extreme Left-wing views.

I say that two lines of action urgently require to be taken. The Premier should ask the Prime Minister to investigate and to see whether this centre and others like it are in any sense filling the role for which they were established and whether they are worth the money. Our Health Department should check what is being offered in this place in the name of medical services to women to ensure that it conforms with the situations, the safeguards and the responsibilities that customarily attach to tendering medical service and advice.

ABATTOIR OPERATIONS

Mr. CORY (Warwick) (12.28 p.m.): Today, the matter that concerns me is the future problem of the meat market in Brisbane, particularly in the light of the losses now being experienced by the Metropolitan Public Abattoir Board and more particularly when it enters the new facility which is

nearing completion. I am not criticising the board itself. I sympathise with and recognise many of the problems that now confront it. However, I do not believe that its problems should be a tax on the producing industries and the processing industries that have spent their own capital to supply the public of Queensland or an expense to the consumer in Brisbane, who will have to pay something towards this problem.

Looking back quickly through the history of this matter, I can remember when the possibility of building a new facility in Brisbane was first mooted. The figure quoted was around \$4,500,000. By the time it was decided to go ahead with the project, the cost had risen to \$7,000,000. Now, the cost is \$17,500,000. Perhaps it will further increase. The size of the commitment that the board finds it has to service is the problem of the whole issue.

It is particularly significant that we realise that private operators have been able to build private works, with the same type of through-put and with at least as many facilities, for \$9,000,000. The problem they have got and who is going to pay for it must be brought out. It is very easy to use someone else's money but it is not so easy to pay it back. This is something that needs to be watched.

What worries me also is the unrealistic suggestion, in both the 1973-74 and 1974-75 annual reports of the board, of control of legitimate trading by forcing the through-put of the Brisbane Abattoir at the expense of private capital invested in private works and the stock industry and of the consumers of Brisbane. Such a suggestion appears at page 11 of the 1974-75 report. It is contrary to the Government's policy of supporting free enterprise and I object to it. It was this Government that opened the Brisbane market to outside works. This system has worked very well and in the result the Brisbane consumer is now getting meat of better quality. I say to the Government, "Watch what is happening in this direction or your own policy will be threatened."

It is also contrary to the wish of the industry because if any such action is taken it will, because of increased costs involved in providing the product, reduce the prices paid at saleyards to the producers of stock. Surely if a Government has made a mistake and has invested more money than reasonable operations of the facility can service, it should not arbitrarily use its legislative and bureaucratic power to make the private meat operator and the farmer who has wisely spent his own capital pay for the losses sustained by the unwise spending of public money.

It also seems unreasonable that the consumer should have to be, as it were, the bunny. The forcing of an unnatural through-put into Brisbane will, in the first place, increase the price of meat to the consumer because the killing charges at the Brisbane

Abattoir, which are higher than those at any private works, will automatically put up the price to the consumer. I understand that the cost of treatment at the Brisbane Abattoir will increase to \$23 a beast, whereas privately the cost of killing at an approved works can be as low as \$15 and in most cases probably from \$18 to \$20. Either the consumer has to pay the extra cost of killing or the producer is paid less for the raw material. Whichever is the case, I do not believe it is the responsibility of either to have to pay for the unwise expenditure of a considerable amount of public money.

There will also be a reduction in quality to the consumer because in the main the private works send only the choice cuts from the animals that they kill—the loins, rumps and fillets—to the Brisbane market, the balance being sent overseas. When Brisbane receives its product from a wide area, it can receive a large quantity of prime cuts. If the system is changed so that a whole beast has to be eaten to the ears before the next one is consumed, the quality must be lowered.

I therefore think that the consumers must take an active interest in what is being done and give some thought to how they will be affected. The private works sell the balance of the beef outside the Brisbane area. As long as they can use the Brisbane market for the sale of top-quality meat, they can dispose of the balance to other markets that do not require prime cuts. If private operators have their entry to the Brisbane market restricted, obviously their kills must be reduced. An operator's kill will not be reduced by the tonnage of the meat that he sends to Brisbane; it will be reduced by the number of animals from which he takes portions to send to Brisbane. Those portions are only small parts of each beast.

The number of stock that will be affected will be large and could be in the vicinity of 50 per cent of the present through-put of country works. I do not think that one has to be very bright to see that if these works reduce their kill by 50 per cent the competition at saleyards will also be reduced by 50 per cent. This will tend to drag down the price that producers will receive for their stock. A reduction of the through-put of country works, with a consequent reduction of competition and prices, will automatically have a multiplying effect on the economics of the whole industry.

Finally, even if in theory this were a reasonable approach to the problem, the introduction of such a restriction to reduce country works through-put would not help. It would not help the Brisbane Abattoir, and although the restriction appears to be there by stopping the Queensland works kill, we cannot stop New South Wales killing. So the Brisbane Abattoir would not gain although in theory one might think it would. This is why I believe it is an academic approach to the problem—it will not work. This is so because under section 92 the products of

approved works in N.S.W. would be able to enter Brisbane. We know there are operators in the Brisbane market now who kill at Gunnedah and Guyra. There is nothing to stop that meat coming in here. The only restriction is because of health reasons, and that does not apply to beef being killed at those works, so instead of increasing the through-put of the Brisbane Abattoir, it would in effect leave it on the same basis but we would kill the Queensland beef industry and processing industry to the advantage of the New South Wales beef industry and processing industry.

I believe that, so that the consumer will continue to receive our country meat—a quality product, properly processed, inspected and presented as it is at the present time—the products killed at country works should be allowed to continue to enter the Brisbane market. This will automatically protect the producer and those people who have put capital into private works. It is not only private works which are affected; it is some of the service works in country districts such as the Toowoomba Abattoir which have the right of entry into Brisbane. I think 14 or 15 of these private works at present have a permit to enter Brisbane. Let me say that they are not getting in for nothing. They have to pay a large permit fee to enter Brisbane. The Brisbane Abattoir does not have to pay such a fee. Surely we are reasonable enough in our outlook to think that, when they have to pay to get in, they should be entitled to a fair go. As I say, if entry into Brisbane is on a free and competitive basis, it will automatically protect the producer and private capital.

My solution to the problem is to reduce the commitment of the Metropolitan Public Abattoir Board to a figure which it will be able to service on a competitive basis. This can be done, I believe, by the Government's buying the assets which will become redundant when the new works come into operation. There is a large area of land on the river which I believe must have quite a large value as industrial land. I believe that rather than chase an annual loss—last year it was well over \$800,000—which will continue whether restrictions are introduced or not, because as I said the alternative will be the sale of New South Wales beef, not more cattle through the Brisbane Abattoir, the Government should pay a lump sum to reduce the commitment of the Public Abattoir Board so that it can operate on a competitive basis and service the reduced commitment. Then the Government could sell parts of the land from time to time when the market would take it. Even if it takes some years and the Government has to hang onto it, at least it has an asset which might make up for the money that has been lost whereas the other way it has spent money and has nothing to show for it.

DELAY IN ISSUE OF MOTOR VEHICLE
REGISTRATION STICKERS

Mr. YEWDALE (Rockhampton North) (12.39 p.m.): The matter of public importance I would like to raise in the House this morning relates to the Main Roads Department, specifically the motor vehicle registration section of that department. I want to mention the continued and protracted delays being experienced by vehicle owners throughout Queensland in receiving their vehicle registration stickers after paying the fees. To my knowledge, many, many people have waited not weeks for recognition of the payment of their registration fees in the form of a sticker, but months and months. I will later refer to some specific cases.

Some people might say that this is not a very important matter to raise in this House, and I know there are many other matters that could create more interest; however, I believe that this problem is widespread and affects a great number of people. As we are all aware, there are a large number of vehicles in the State.

In my opinion, a matter pertaining to a Government department that has been causing widespread public concern should be ventilated in this Chamber, and I think it is about time the responsible Minister got off his tail and did something about it. One often reads in the Press about the Minister—about his new bedroom and his new bed, and the fact that he is interested in trotters—and I think he should come a little nearer home, take an interest in his departmental responsibilities and do something about this matter.

As we are all aware, Mr. Deputy Speaker, notices are forwarded to vehicle owners advising them of the due date for renewal of registration and the amount that they are required to pay. The majority of people pay on the due date; in many instances people pay before the due date. What is the end result? As I said earlier, in many cases it is a wait of up to three or four months for a small piece of paper in the form of a registration sticker.

I have written many letters on this subject to the Main Roads Department; I have also taken the matter up personally by telephone. I have been advised by many people that they have written—not once, not twice, but on three occasions—to the particular section of the Main Roads Department, inquiring about the service and the need to have the sticker affixed to their motor vehicle because of the expiry date of their previous year's registration. Without exception, these people have not received any acknowledgment of their correspondence. There is procrastination; nothing happens. Obviously, people either give up hope or go to their State member or someone else and say, "What can I do about it?" It is a fairly simple matter for a State politician to chase the department—in fact, it is possibly one of the easiest things for him to do—but why should he have to chase a department in such circumstances?

Let me give the House instances that I think are interesting. A person renewed the registration of his car on the due date in November 1975. He received no acknowledgment other than a further renewal notice in January 1976. In February 1976 he received a final renewal notice. He then panicked and decided that he would pay, having received that final notice. Because he thought that the matter was becoming a bit complicated and he could be involved in litigation, he in fact paid a second time. After he had paid a second time, he received the registration sticker for his first payment. Subsequently he received a second sticker. He then entered into negotiations with the department to try to have refunded the second amount that he paid, the amount that he did not in fact have to pay. Can any honourable member or anyone else tell me publicly how a thing such as that could happen?

Mr. Turner: He had a problem, didn't he?

Mr. YEWDALE: Yes, and so has the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads. He is not in the Chamber at present—I presume he has other commitments—but I will personally send him a copy of my contribution to the debate, with comment attached.

In another instance, a person decided to sell a vehicle that was currently registered and on which he had already paid the renewal of registration fee. He sold it to a car dealer in Queensland, thinking that the registration was valid and that the certificate was in the glove-box; in fact, he advised the dealer to that effect. The dealer held the car for some time in his yard. A prospective buyer looked at the vehicle and the dealer was on the point of disposing of it when it was discovered that the registration papers in the glove-box were for the previous year and that, although several months had elapsed since payment had been made for renewal of registration, the new certificate of registration had not been forwarded. It was only by sheer coincidence or good luck that on the very day on which the car dealer discovered this the new registration certificate arrived and was handed to the dealer and the sale was able to be completed in a proper manner.

As I said earlier, I have been approaching the Main Roads Department over a period of many months—I think I could say with some certainty that it is almost years—and I have received nothing but courtesy from the staff when I have made such approaches. To my mind that is not good enough. If I receive courtesy and satisfaction, why should not other persons be treated likewise? This whole problem should be looked at. Considering the number of complaints that I have received, I would suggest that the whole system is in a state of chaos.

From time to time during election campaigns we have heard members of this Government claim that the Government's policy is one of decentralisation, to provide a service to the people in outlying areas. In

terms of that policy why has not the Government set up Main Roads offices in provincial towns? We must not forget that a resident in such a town has to write to the department, whereas one in the metropolitan area is simply able to make a telephone call or attend personally at the Main Roads Department.

The current Minister for Local Government and Main Roads is on record as having made some rather loose promises to the effect that the Government would decentralise. I admit that in Rockhampton registration plates can be obtained by a person who registers a new vehicle. But why, in the name of heaven, cannot registration labels, too, be issued? The whole of Central Queensland could be catered for by a Main Roads office in Rockhampton. I am not being parochial, but it seems to me that Rockhampton is the logical choice as such a centre. Similarly, I suggest that Townsville could provide the same type of service to motorists in North Queensland. It is useless for the Minister merely to make promises; he should take action.

The Minister has also said that he would provide similar facilities in the various outlying suburbs of Brisbane. I have no quarrel with that, but why should such a service be provided in the metropolitan area when one is not provided in provincial cities? Surely the provincial cities are entitled to such a service first. The need for it is nowhere near as great in the metropolitan suburbs as it is in the country areas.

Liberal Party candidates in the current local authority elections are claiming that they will provide more services to the outlying areas of Brisbane. I believe the time has passed when the Government should give service to the country people.

Many people show more concern than others, and in most instances those who show the most concern are in the middle and older age-groups. They are concerned about registering their cars and about displaying on them the current registration labels. I know of one elderly gentleman who was stopped on two occasions by police because he did not have a current registration sticker. His car was in perfect condition, so the police had no cause to stop it on that count. He suffered great inconvenience from being pulled up on two occasions, and was annoyed especially as he had been waiting for three months for a registration label. I was able to arrange for a sticker to be issued to him in about three or four days. My approach was well received and the matter was expedited. But that again is not good enough.

Some people who are waiting for a current registration label ask why should they be pulled up by the police for not having the label. It is a wonder that the police have the gall to pull anybody up for not having a current registration label. If they embarked

upon a campaign to pull up all motorists who did not display current labels they would be fully occupied.

(Time expired.)

DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Mr. POWELL (Isis) (12.49 p.m.): "Instruction having for its aim to form the pupil to proper conduct and action" is a definition given in a dictionary of the word "discipline". Whenever the word is raised in argument or discussion there are those who immediately run for cover and those who claim that discipline is synonymous with child-bashing and police bashing. Today I wish to put forward a case for greater discipline in our schools as well as in our country, for it is quite obvious even to the casual observer that discipline is being lost and that people are being encouraged, to use the colloquial term, to "do their own thing". In doing their own thing they are obviously hurting other people.

As a teacher it has been my privilege to discipline and instruct many children in this State. As recently as last Monday, in addressing a group of school-children on government, I asked why we make laws. The most lucid answer from that group of children was, "So that we do not hurt people." I suggest that we should encourage discipline so that people do not hurt others.

I am fed up to the back teeth with so-called psychologists and so-called teachers telling us that we must not smack little Johnny because we might injure him for life—not physically, but mentally; that we might give the poor fellow a crooked idea of life. I suggest that he will have a crooked idea of life if he is not disciplined and if he is not smacked.

Spare the rod and spoil the child is a fairly good rule to live by. I would say that 95 per cent of the people, 95 per cent of the time, want to be disciplined. They want to do the right thing. It is the other five per cent of the people about whom the teacher in the school, in particular, is concerned. At the moment we are facing a situation, particularly in our secondary schools, but also in the upper primary schools, where young people are just taking over. How many honourable members have walked into a schoolroom, sat down and looked around to see what is going on? How many times have honourable members seen a number of children in class completely ignore the teacher and what is going on? Any honourable members who have done that would agree that the situation is appalling. The teachers are concerned about it, and people generally should be very concerned about what is happening.

Let us look at adult life. Every day people walking down the street or driving motor-cars are disciplined. Drivers are disciplined to drive on one side of the road. They should be disciplined to drive at a

certain speed that is safe under prevailing conditions. But some people do not acknowledge this discipline. Some people ignore the advice of not mixing drinking with driving, the advice to stick to the left-hand side of the road and the advice to drive at a sensible speed. The result is obvious in too many accidents and deaths on the road. That is but one form of adult life in which discipline is being ignored. The discipline of being able to do what one wants and how one wants is gained over a period of time. It is quite obvious that this discipline will be achieved only with experience. Experience is the best teacher. But how are we to be taught if discipline is not exerted and no training is given?

According to some psychologists, the thing today is that children should be allowed to go their own way, and that they should never be chastised severely, because that may have some detrimental effect on their lives. Let me put the case of the person who is never disciplined and who is able to carry on as he wants to through school and into adult life. He comes to a fairly solid stop when he goes out into the commercial world and he works for a boss who insists on his doing things in certain ways. He then complains of victimisation, and organisations which talk about discrimination in employment spring up.

It is most important that we should go about discipline in an orderly fashion. Nobody, I would think, wants us to return to the days when a child in school was flogged because he could not understand something. I am sure that nobody wants us to go back to that era. But surely we must get to the situation—and it means going back to a situation—where, at school, the teacher is in command of his own class. The teacher should have the professional right to decide whether a child requires discipline and the type and extent of that discipline.

Presently we have the ridiculous situation in schools where, if a child misbehaves, the teacher has to send him to the principal for punishment. Anybody who has had anything to do with children knows that, if they are to be disciplined effectively, they have to be disciplined on the spot. One does not wait for half an hour; one does not wait till the principal can be found; one does it straight away. The ridiculous stage has been reached in our schools today whereby if a child misbehaves, cannot be controlled or is found to be incorrigible, he has to be sent to the principal. First, one has to find the principal. Most school principals are doing their jobs by getting round and finding what is going on in their schools. Once the principal has been found and informed of the child's misdemeanour, he then has to mete out just punishment. Usually that consists of, "Don't do it again. Get back to your class. I don't want to see you again."

That sort of attitude is breeding contempt for teachers in our schools. I know of one instance when a parent was most concerned with the progress of his child. The teacher suggested that the best solution was that every time the child played up he would write it down on a piece of paper and send it home with the child, and the parent could punish the child the best way he saw fit. This is not good enough. It is breeding in our schools a lack of discipline and a lack of respect. Surely, if we are to have a community that is to progress in any orderly fashion at all, the people in it must have some form of self-discipline. It is ridiculous to suggest that one should reason with a child of five or six years who wants something. At that age children have no reasoning other than what their nature dictates they want. The only way is to tell them what they can or cannot have. One does not stand with a child of five or six years—surely some honourable members have children of this age themselves—and try to reason with him, expecting him in half-an-hour's time to understand that reasoning. That just does not work.

Some psychologists who may have taught for 12 or 18 months have felt they could not stand the pace of the classroom and sought the cloisters of the university or some cushy desk job somewhere, from where they can dictate to teachers what should happen. I, for one, am fed up with these people—some of whom have never taught at all—telling teachers what they should or should not be doing. Let them get out into the classrooms. Let them spend 10 or 12 years in the classrooms until they have some sense and until they know what is going on in the school, before they start trying to dictate to teachers what should or should not be done about discipline in schools.

(Time expired.)

The House adjourned at 12.59 p.m.