

Queensland



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[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 1976

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

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under the Forestry Act 1959–1976.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

CURRUMBIN BIRD SANCTUARY

Hon. R. J. HINZE (South Coast—Minister for Local Government and Main Roads) (11.2 a.m.): I prepared a ministerial statement on the Currumbin Bird Sanctuary question, which with the permission of the House I had proposed to read this morning. As a member of this Parliament and a Minister of the Crown with a deep sense of my obligations to uphold the dignity of this House and to abide by its customs and procedures, I submitted this statement to you, Mr. Speaker. After giving it your deep consideration you told me that to read it would transgress your recent ruling on the question of sub judice matters at this time. Naturally I accept your ruling. But I think that public attention should be drawn to certain aspects of the matter which are, at present, causing considerable controversy.

Briefly, an allegedly generous gift or offer has been made, supposedly, to the people of Queensland. The whole ramifications of it have not been disclosed and, in accordance with your ruling, cannot be disclosed in this House, which must be regarded for all time as the highest forum for debate in Queensland. While I am “gagged”, certain newspapers and other sections of the media are having a glorious time publishing anything and everything about the case, quoting people with vested interests who would seek to ensure that the public gets only one side of the question.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I give this House and the people of Queensland my firm assurance that, as soon as I am permitted to do so, I will disclose the complete story about this so-called generous gesture to the people of Queensland, and the persons, organisations and issues concerned. I will do this in this House, when I am able to. As the highest forum for debate in this State, I believe this is the place for the whole issue to be aired; not in the columns of newspapers or on the radio and television air waves. And when I do, I am convinced that this House and the people of Queensland will not only approve but will applaud any and all actions I have taken and propose to take in the interests of public welfare and truth and decency in this matter.

In the interim, I would welcome an interpretation by you, Mr. Speaker—possibly by way of reference to the House Privileges Committee—on when the appropriate time for a full and detailed statement in this House would be, and precisely how far the sub judice ruling extends now as it relates to matters directly (or indirectly) involved in this particular question.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. GLOBAL READERS

Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs—

Is he aware that the go-getting firm of Global Readers, whose office is in New South Wales, is again fleecing old people in North Queensland and that the victims are put to tremendous trouble and expense in having their money refunded under the Queensland Door to Door (Sales) Act because the young men who actually fleece the old people immediately hand over the money to the head con-man, who hides in a car at the corner and, when questioned by the police or victim, claims that he has sent the money to head office in New South Wales? If so, what steps does he propose to take to protect old people from these cheap and conscienceless swindlers?

Answer:—

I am advised that the Consumer Affairs Bureau has received only three complaints against this company from residents of North Queensland during the past 12 months. In respect of these complaints, full refunds were obtained in response to the Consumer Affairs Bureau's representations on behalf of two of the complainants, and the third complaint, which concerned the activities of the salesman, was referred to the Commissioner of Police, from whom advice was subsequently received that the complainant was not desirous of having any person prosecuted and did not want any further police action taken in the matter.

Should the honourable member care to forward specific details with respect to his question, I shall have them investigated. However, if the honourable member is of the opinion that an element of fraud is involved, I suggest he take this aspect up with my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Police.

As the honourable member is aware, there are several trading organisations whose operations are concerned primarily with door-to-door sales, and the weight of evidence does not suggest that further restrictions should be placed on door-to-door salesmen.

2. LIBRARY FOR HERMIT PARK INFANTS SCHOOL

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

(1) Have frequent applications been made for the provision of a library at the Hermit Park Infants School and, if so, can he give any indication if the matter has been favourably considered?

(2) As the school was opened in 1961 and now has an enrolment of 203 pupils, when will this facility be established?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) Yes, there have been several requests to have a library constructed, but funds are not presently available for such project. I am not in a position to indicate when it might be established.

3. STATE AID TO SPORTING BODIES IN TOWNSVILLE

Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Community and Welfare Services and Minister for Sport—

For the last twelve months for which figures are readily available, how much financial assistance was given by the State Ministry of Sport to sporting bodies in Townsville?

Answer:—

During the 12 months ended 30 June 1976, \$42,830.15 was paid to sporting bodies in Townsville by way of subsidy and grant from funds allocated for encouragement to sport. An additional \$12,852.61 was paid to youth organisations in Townsville over the same period.

I would also mention for the information of the honourable member that State subsidy to the extent of \$67,886.81 was paid for the National Fitness Centre, which was opened in October 1974. Part of this subsidy was paid in the 1975-76 financial year.

Approval has also been given to provide financial assistance for the Castle Hill Branch of the Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association, Townsville, which is to be opened later this year, and it is anticipated that subsidy payments by the State on this will be at least \$45,000.

4. BREACHES OF PROBATION

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

Is he aware that certain Supreme Court justices continue to release criminals on probation, even when they are found guilty of or plead guilty to breaches of existing probation and, if so, how many times must a criminal deliberately breach probation before being sent to gaol?

Answer:—

The question is not specific. Probation orders may be breached in a number of ways, and not every person ceases to be eligible for probation because he has breached an order. Courts are given a wide discretion and must consider each case in its own particular circumstances. I have a right of appeal against any punishment which is considered inadequate, including the granting of a probation order.

5. GOVERNMENT USE OF SOLAR ENERGY

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

(1) Is he aware that a new hospital planned for Gulargambone, New South Wales, is to be the first in Australia to utilise solar energy?

(2) Has the Queensland Government decided to use solar energy in any such enterprise or is any Government department conducting experiments with solar energy?

Answer:—

(1) No.

(2) Some Government departments have used solar energy for water-heating purposes in isolated cases where special circumstances have made it economic. Use has also been made of solar-operated equipment for communication purposes by statutory bodies, again in very isolated situations. In addition, the electricity supply industry has supported research, which is still in progress, on the utilisation of solar energy for remote rural consumers.

6. HOSPITALS WITHOUT FULL-TIME MEDICAL SERVICE

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

Which hospitals in Queensland are without the services of a full-time medical officer?

Answer:—

Of a total of 134 hospitals in Queensland, 41 have an establishment for a full-time medical superintendent. Apart from Mackay, which has an acting superintendent at present, none of these is without the services of a full-time superintendent.

7 and 8. LEVY TO FINANCE AUSTRALIAN DAIRY CORPORATION

Dr. Lockwood, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) With reference to the Commonwealth levy on liquid milk to finance the Australian Dairy Corporation, is he aware

of a Press release by Mr. B. L. Whip of the Queensland Dairymen's Organization dated 16 September concerning the I.A.C. dairy report, which states, "Legal advice of the highest order which suggests a challenge against aspects of the enabling legislation could be sustained."?

(2) What action has been taken with reference to my letter of 17 June to the then Minister (Hon. W. E. Knox), suggesting a High Court appeal on this same matter?

(3) Is he prepared to do all in his power to help end the Commonwealth discrimination against Queensland dairy farmers?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) I have seen neither the Press release nor the legal advice referred to by the honourable member. If there are grounds for a legal challenge, it is open to any person directly affected to take appropriate action. There does not appear to be any record of a letter from the honourable member dated 17 June 1976. A letter dated 22 July 1976 from the honourable member on the subject of recent Commonwealth dairying legislation was replied to by my predecessor on 6 August 1976.

Dr. Lockwood, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Has he read the Industries Assistance Commission report of 9 September, which deals with the dairy industry, and in particular section 4.1 on fluid milk at the sixth paragraph, which suggests that a levy on the production of fluid milk should be imposed at the point of processing?

(2) Does he support this further proposed levy being applied, firstly, within the State and, secondly, between States such as Queensland and Victoria?

(3) If implemented, what would this scheme cost Queensland dairymen on 1975-76 production figures?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) As I said in Parliament last week in answer to a question from the member for Somerset, I have consistently backed the Queensland dairy industry at the Australian Agricultural Council and elsewhere in opposition to the inclusion of market milk in equalisation. I have always held the view that fluid-milk arrangements are a matter for each State to determine and that any stabilisation arrangements for manufactured products should exclude fluid milk.

It is not yet completely clear whether the Industries Assistance Commission intends this levy to be purely a regulatory mechanism to discourage interstate movements and price-cutting of fluid milk or whether there are longer-term implications such as the possible involvement of fluid milk in stabilisation arrangements. I do note, however, that the commission has made the following point in regard to the levy:—

"The proceeds of the levy would be refunded to the States in proportion to the existing State milk quotas and any additional quantity allocated by State authorities. The States would in turn refund the proceeds to processors or farmers."

I would point out to the honourable member that, if the levy were to be applied and reimbursed in such a way, either within Queensland or between States, as to result in a transfer of industry revenue out of Queensland, then he should know that I would oppose it.

(3) Until such time as more details are available on the proposed refunding, no costing can be made.

9. MINE SAFETY REGULATIONS

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

(1) Has he seen an article in "The Courier-Mail" of 21 September which states that mines were about to introduce or would introduce mine safety recommendations following the Kianga disaster before they are legislated for in Parliament?

(2) When will these recommended safety regulations be tabled in Parliament?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Draft rules requiring installation of stone dust or water barriers and the provision of barographs are currently under examination by the Solicitor-General's Office. These rules should be ready for discussion with the management and with unions by November 1976 before being tabled in Parliament.

Similarly, it is expected that draft rules on return monitoring, preparatory seals and qualifications will be ready for discussion with management and unions by December next. The matter of standardisation with New South Wales legislation has been discussed by the two State Departments of Mines and our new legislation will be drafted with a view to ultimately achieving this, where practicable. It will be appreciated that because the New South Wales Coal Mines Regulation Act is being completely rewritten, standardisation is not immediately possible.

ORDER IN CHAMBER

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) proceeding to give notice of a question—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much noise in the Chamber.

Mr. Jensen: They are not obeying rule 6 over there.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Bundaberg that if he does not obey my ruling I will invoke Standing Order 123A.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

AVAILABILITY OF PRIVATE BEDS IN HOSPITALS

Mr. MELLOY: I ask the Minister for Health: Will he give a guarantee that a sufficient number of private beds will be made available in hospitals in Queensland to meet the demands of people who have taken out private bed coverage under the new Medibank and private insurance schemes? As Queenslanders will pay heavily for this coverage and may elect to take out only public hospital cover, will he guarantee that public ward beds will be available when they are needed and that people will not be forced to go onto waiting lists in order to receive treatment?

Dr. EDWARDS: I can give an absolute guarantee that no-one who needs a bed in an emergency will be denied that bed. I cannot, of course, give the same guarantee in relation to elective surgery, as there is already a waiting list for beds in that field. With the completion of the Wesley Hospital in Brisbane and the proposed establishment of another private hospital, together with the extension to Block 7 to include many private and intermediate beds, adequate private beds will be available in future. I assure the honourable member that the matter is kept under constant review and that every effort will be made to make private and intermediate beds available as they are needed throughout the State.

EXEMPTION FROM MEDIBANK LEVY FOR COUNTRY AREAS

Mr. MELLOY: I ask the Minister for Health: What approaches has the State Government made to the Federal Government to seek exemption from the new Medibank levy scheme for Queenslanders in country areas who have neither a local doctor nor a hospital?

Dr. EDWARDS: The imposition of the levy is a Commonwealth matter. I remind the honourable member that the Medibank programme was introduced by his party in the Federal sphere. The results of this imposition are still being felt throughout Australia. I also remind the honourable member that it was introduced by his party in the form of a 1.35 per cent levy. In

fact it was taken to Parliament and was defeated in the Senate at that time. The imposition of this levy is a Commonwealth matter which was approved and introduced by a Federal Labor Government. It has also been introduced by the present Federal Government. The Queensland Government made its position quite clear to both the Labor Federal Government and the present Federal Government. Unfortunately there is nothing that the Queensland Government can do in this matter.

TENURE OF LAND OCCUPIED BY CEDAR BAY COMMUNE

Mr. MELLOY: I ask the Minister for Police: In view of yesterday's visit to Cedar Bay by police and a State Government survey team, is he able to say whether the people concerned were in fact trespassing on Crown land as he alleged, or whether they were camped on an adjacent miners' homestead lease?

Mr. NEWBERRY: So far as I am concerned they were on Crown land.

STATE AID FOR COMMONWEALTH GAMES

Mr. LANE: I ask the Minister for Community and Welfare Services and Minister for Sport: In relation to the proposal by the Labor Brisbane City Council to stage the next Commonwealth Games in Brisbane, for which no detailed costing has yet been made, and the fact that the Government has given an undertaking to provide substantial assistance for the games if and when a proper budget is presented, will he give an undertaking that any such assistance will not erode the normal grants given to many worthy but perhaps less glamorous sporting bodies which benefit under the existing arrangements?

Mr. HERBERT: The position has been spelt out several times by the Premier. Until the council actually produces figures showing what the games will cost, obviously the State Government cannot make any decision on the assistance that it will be able to offer. Of course, the Federal Government is involved in this matter, too. I presume that any assistance so offered to the council would go through the Treasury, not through my department, and certainly it would not affect the vote for allocation to the small sporting organisations that now depend on the Government for assistance.

TAKE-AWAY LIQUOR PRICES

Mr. LANE: I ask the Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs: Will he give an indication that the Queensland Government does not intend to impose a minimum price on take-away beer, as is apparently intended in the State of Victoria?

Mr. CAMPBELL: This might be a question for the Minister for Justice because I believe the relevant legislation is within his realm.

However, speaking generally, the policy of this coalition Government in the matter of price control is, with one or two minor exceptions, crystal clear. We are implacably opposed to price control in this State, even though there is repeated advocacy for it from certain sections of the community. Our policy and attitude are justified by experience. When the Queensland experience is matched against that of South Australia, in which there has been rigid price control for many years, it is seen that the comparison favours Queensland. I refer to food prices in the broad sense rather than specifically to liquor prices. I give the honourable member an assurance, if he needs it, that price control will not be introduced as a general policy in this State.

PUBLIC APPROVAL OF MR. HAWKE

Mr. LANE: I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Did he see in this morning's newspapers the result of a Gallup poll which seemed to indicate that 50 per cent of the Australian people are opposed to Mr. Hawke's entering Federal Parliament, 57 per cent are opposed to his becoming Leader of the Opposition in Federal Parliament, and 61 per cent are opposed to his becoming Prime Minister of Australia? I ask him to indicate if this necessarily means that a majority of Australians approve of the way in which Mr. Hawke is conducting himself as President of the A.C.T.U. and President of the Australian Labor Party?

Mr. KNOX: I would like to expand on this matter, but as honourable members can hear I am hindered in my ability to speak. It is quite apparent that not only do the people of Australia not want Mr. Hawke to become a member of Federal Parliament but his own party does not want him to become a member of Federal Parliament either.

"EVERTON", CONDOMINE ELECTORATE

Mr. LINDSAY: I ask the Minister for Primary Industries: Is there a wheat property called "Everton" in his electorate, and if so, can he give some of its history?

Mr. SULLIVAN: There is a wheat property in my electorate near Jimna named "Everton". It was one of the first properties settled in one of the first areas to produce wheat, as I remember. Had the honourable member mentioned this to me I could have done a little research and given him some interesting details. I do recall that some years ago the local historical association at Jimna—I do not think it was the National Trust—preserved what I think from memory was the first steam tractor to be used in the growing of wheat on the Darling Downs. That was by a man of American origin known as Bunny Ewing, who later developed a garage

in Dalby and ran a very good business there. The tractor was enormous but it did not have a great deal of power. Because of the techniques used in those days wheat farming was not successful. This was in the early 1920s. It was not until the Tuppacks, the Brimblecombs and the Prices came there, people who understood the farming of that type of country, that the wheat fields successfully replaced the natural grasses on the Jimbour Plains and many other parts of the Darling Downs.

The property the honourable member refers to was the home of Arthur Tuppack. There were a number of people in the family and, as I recall it, the honourable member's mother-in-law was the daughter of the said Arthur Tuppack. It is rather a coincidence that the honourable member's wife originated on a property named "Everton", which is the name of the electorate the honourable member now excellently represents.

BUILDING SOCIETY INTEREST RATES

Mr. BURNS: I ask the Minister for Works and Housing: In view of the report in last Saturday's "Courier-Mail" to the effect that building society interest rates will not be varied until 1 November, in six weeks' time, will he advise the House why the Building Societies Act Amendment Bill was rushed through Parliament in one day?

Mr. LEE: At no time have I advised Parliament or anyone else that the regulations under that legislation would not be brought down until that date.

Mr. Burns: The building societies are saying it.

Mr. LEE: They may be saying it; but they are not in charge of the legislation. I am the Minister in charge of it, and before its provisions can be implemented certain procedures must be followed. For example, Royal assent must be obtained; the regulations must be drawn up and they must be published in the Government Gazette. All these steps are being taken as quickly as is humanly possible, and it may even be that the regulations will be promulgated before that date.

INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION IN TINGALPA-MURARRIE-CANNON HILL AREA

Mr. BURNS: In directing a question to the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads, I remind him of the repeated complaints that I have made to him on behalf of the people in the Tingalpa-Murarrie-Cannon Hill area about recent outbreaks of odours from industries there. I now ask him: What action is being taken to enforce the provisions of the Clean Air Act and to protect the people of the area from industrial pollution? What promises will the Minister

give them on this occasion to keep them quiet for a while or will he take some action this time instead of merely giving promises?

Mr. HINZE: It is now some time since the Leader of the Opposition and I paid an official visit to the area, which is in the Lytton electorate. The area is one in which we have to try to get some compatibility between high-class-residential zones and noxious-industry zones. This problem goes back to very bad planning in the early days.

As I anticipated a question of this nature, I have had some answers provided for me.

Mr. Knox: A Dorothy Dixier.

Mr. HINZE: It's not a Dorothy Dixier; the first one is a Donald Dixon.

Donald Dixons have been ready to connect for some time but are held up through failures in the joint pipeline with Provincial Traders. The date of the connection is now estimated to be 20 September.

This information is a week old. I anticipated the question from the Leader of the Opposition a week ago. I have kept this information on ice waiting eagerly for his question.

Provincial Traders are waiting to connect as soon as the joint pipeline is ready. This pipeline is in P.V.C. and the fabricated bends have failed to take a test on a number of occasions. The contractor has now undertaken to replace the plastic bends with cast iron, and the pipeline should now be ready by 30 September. Constant pressure is being exerted on Provincial Traders to get this joint pipeline into use.

Borthwicks have received approval from the Brisbane City Council to connect to the sewerage provided stormwater is excluded. The company has not maintained satisfactory progress and will certainly have to be brought into line.

The Fish Board is connected to the sewerage and is ready to discharge when the council gives permission. Hans Smallgoods are ready to discharge but are waiting for a connection to be provided by the Brisbane City Council. Gardner Smith are ready to pump when Borthwicks are connected.

I hope that this answer is satisfactory to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Burns: I'll invite the Minister out to a barbecue. If he can hold down the meat that he eats on that night he will receive first prize from the people who have been suffering for months.

MINERS' HOMESTEAD LEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. R. E. CAMM (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Energy): 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 Miners' Homestead Leases Act 1913-1975 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT 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 amend the Railways Act 1914-1972 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

HOUSE-BUILDERS' REGISTRATION AND HOME-OWNERS' PROTECTION BILL

INITIATION

Hon. N. E. LEE (Yeronga—Minister for Works and Housing): 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 the establishment of a House-builders' Registration Board and the registration of persons competent to build houses, and to provide protection to owners of homes and for related purposes."

Motion agreed to.

PORT OF BRISBANE AUTHORITY BILL

THIRD READING

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

CO-OPERATIVE AND OTHER SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

DISTRICT COURTS' AND MAGISTRATES COURTS' JURISDICTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

THE HONOURABLE JACK LAWRENCE KELLY ENABLING BILL

THIRD READING

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

SUPREME COURT LIBRARY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

LAW REFORM COMMISSION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ANTIENT
FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF
QUEENSLAND TRUSTEES ACT
AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

BUREAUCRATIC RESUMPTION OF LAND FOR
PRIVATE PURPOSES

Mr. MILLER (Ithaca) (11.58 a.m.): Today I want to call for a new deal for land and property owners in Queensland. I do so because I do not believe that at present they are being protected from bureaucracies such as the Brisbane City Council or, for that matter, the State and Federal Governments. I want a new deal for the people of Queensland—a new deal in protection, a new deal in compensation. In future I do not want to see any land resumed for private purposes by the Brisbane City Council or any Government. I can understand land being resumed for public purposes, but I cannot go along with land being resumed for private purposes.

Mr. Jones: Alderman Miller!

Mr. MILLER: It is a pity the honourable member for Cairns is not a little more concerned about the people in this area. If he cared to check on the number of people who own properties, he would find that probably 90 per cent of property owners are workers. Apparently he is not concerned about small property owners. However, today I call for a new deal for them. I demand that no compensation be paid unless it adequately provides for the purchase of another home.

Mr. Jones: Why don't you have a go at one of the wards?

Mr. MILLER: One of the properties I wish to discuss today I have already referred to in the House. I now have in my possession a letter from Mr. Kinivan, a valuer, dated 21 July 1976. The first paragraph reads—

“With reference to the Brisbane City Council resumptions from your property at the above address, I would say firstly that I am surprised that the Council was able to resume the land at the rear for the benefit of a private individual (the flat owner). I feel that, on the basis of the decision in the Prentice case, it is doubtful whether the resumption could have proceeded if you had taken the same action as Prentice.”

The point I want to make today is that unlike Mr. Prentice not everybody has the money to fight the Brisbane City Council in a court of law. It is quite obvious that what the Brisbane City Council did to this woman was illegal. But we as a Government did nothing about it, and that is what hurts me.

This woman lost 4.5 perches of land, of which 1.5 perches fronted Milton Road. It was resumed for public purpose and I have no argument against that. The description of the land resumed shows that the remainder of 3 perches was taken to give access to two adjoining properties, one of which is a block of flats.

This woman was offered \$2,000 compensation by the council. I refer to a letter written by the Brisbane City Council to Alderman Beanland. I am indebted to him. He is the new alderman for the district. In no instance when I wrote to the Brisbane City Council trying to find out how this woman was faring in the matter of compensation could I get any satisfaction from the Town Clerk. Even though I was acting as agent for the woman and even though I have to go to the Land Court on behalf of this woman, Mr. Thorley refused to give me the information in reply to my letters.

For a start I wanted to know whether or not this woman could build on 14.1 perches of land, which is all she has left after the council resumed portion of her land. The council would not tell me. Surely she is entitled to know whether or not she may rebuild. If she cannot, the land is valueless unless the people next door want to purchase it, and the purchase price would be up to the adjoining owner. He could offer \$200 or \$250, as the council did for 24 perches in Bardon.

I have since seen a letter from the Brisbane City Council pointing out that, should her house burn down, she will not be able to build on the property. The Brisbane City Council has now left this widow with 14.1 perches of land which is completely valueless if her home burns down; yet the council says that it will give her only \$2,000.

This has been going on since 1969. There has been no move by the Brisbane City Council to finalise the matter. And the honourable member for Cairns accused me of taking up council matters! I am here to protect the interests of my people in Ithaca. As the Brisbane City Council has ignored this woman since 1969, I will certainly take the case up.

Not only is she now left with 14.1 perches of valueless land but originally she had a permit to convert to flats. The only area of land on the southern side of Milton Road zoned residential A is opposite the Milton tennis courts; the remainder is residential B. The land opposite the Milton tennis courts was rezoned residential A prior to the Brisbane City Council's resumption of a block

of ground in that area. According to the letter to Alderman Beanland, the council cannot even tell her if she can proceed with the conversion to flats. She cannot rebuild if her present home is burnt down and, although she had a permit from the council, it is not prepared to allow her to convert her home to flats.

In part, the letter to Alderman Beanland reads—

“However, this approval referred to the site of the dwelling, which at the time was 18.8 perches in area. Since then, acquisitions by the Council have reduced this area to 14.1 perches.

“In the light of this development, it is considered a legal opinion is required to determine whether the approval as granted in 1961 is still valid.”

This woman has been left with a valueless block of land and she cannot convert the house into flats and earn some income from them.

The council has taken some of her land for the private purposes of allowing access to a block of flats two doors up the road. Surely to goodness we, as a Government, have to do something about this. We have to see that private land cannot be resumed by any bureaucracy, whether it be a local authority or the Government. If people lose their land for public purposes, we have to see that they get adequate compensation for it.

Mr. Jones: You don't know what you're talking about. You are talking at aldermanic level. Why don't you let the aldermen and the council deal with it?

Mr. MILLER: It is this Government that controls the Brisbane City Council. It is this Government that will say to the Brisbane City Council, “You cannot resume land for private purposes.” Here we have the honourable member for Cairns wanting the Brisbane City Council to be able to decide whether people should lose their land by council resumption for private development. There are 17 people in Bardon who have had had their land resumed by the Brisbane City Council for redevelopment purposes. They were paid \$240 for 24 perch allotments and the council then asked \$10,000 for the cheapest block when that land was developed. The honourable member has the hide to say that the Government should allow that sort of thing to continue.

(Time expired.)

PROMOTION OF TOURISM IN CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

Mr. PREST (Port Curtis) (12.7 p.m.): I wish to speak on tourism—or, should I say, the lack of it—in Central Queensland. It is no good the Minister's making play on tourism on television when officially opening tourist week unless he is willing to assist with the

promotion and fostering of the tourist industry. This industry could have a wonderful future in this State because of the many attractions in Central Queensland. It could bring a great deal of money not only to my electorate in particular but to Queensland as a whole; but it must be promoted and assisted.

The Queensland Government Tourist Bureau has made some efforts to promote tourism in Central Queensland but, as the Minister just said, the promotion of Queensland in southern States leaves a lot to be desired. One film on attractions in Central Queensland has been shown in the southern States. We all know that one film is merely a drop in the ocean compared with what other States are doing in the promotion of tourism in their areas. They spend a great deal of money and, as we all realise, the financial return to those States from that expenditure is quite substantial. Money spent on the promotion of tourism is well spent.

It is now much cheaper to travel overseas than to tour within our own country. This is the result of increases in domestic air fares and the lack of accommodation facilities. To my way of thinking, the provision of such facilities within Queensland should be encouraged by the Government. People who are willing to invest in facilities to attract and accommodate tourists should be given assistance in other ways. I consider that they should be given a tax-free period for the first few years, or a major portion of their capital expenditure should be allowed as a tax deduction. This would encourage them to invest in the provision of facilities for tourists. An alternative for the Queensland Government would be to follow the programme adopted by the New Zealand Government under which new tourist areas are opened by direct Government investment in roads, motels, etc.

My area has much more to offer than meter maids. It has a climate that ranks among the best anywhere in Australia. In this area tourists could swim and sunbake on the beautiful beaches at Tannum Sands and Boyne Island in the Port Curtis electorate, and Yeppoon and Emu Park in an adjoining electorate. They could enjoy fish, crabs and oysters that are in plentiful supply at most periods of the year. They could then enjoy the beauty of the wonderful Gladstone Harbour, which is very safe and offers good boating for all those who today own boats. Today those who own their own boats outnumber those who do not. I am told that there are more than 60,000 small boat owners in Queensland today.

The natural beauty of the islands off the Central Queensland coast makes for very pleasant holidays and outings. Visitors to those islands can also see the wonders of the coral reefs. When we ask, “Should tourism be promoted and given Government

assistance?", we should not forget that Central Queensland has other attractions which tourists would enjoy such as the world's largest alumina plant and the largest power station in Queensland which is presently under construction. In addition we have many other things which would be of interest to the tourist such as the open-cut coal-fields, the Carnarvon gorge and the gem-fields of the Central Highlands.

Mr. Lester: Give the Fairbairn Dam a mention.

Mr. PREST: I will, too. I had the pleasure of viewing the Fairbairn Dam not so very long ago, and I was very impressed with the work that had been done to make a visit there a very pleasant one. Just recently the Minister for Education was asked by the Mt. Morgan Chamber of Commerce for his views of the future of Mt. Morgan. His answer was negative. He did say, however, that Mt. Morgan has possibilities as a tourist centre but that these must be developed by the local community. We realise that Mt. Morgan has potential as a tourist attraction. Unfortunately we have been told that the Mt. Morgan mine has a limited life. As against that I have been told that its life expectancy is greater than we have been led to believe. However, instead of promoting tourism and helping these people, the Government is sitting back and telling them that they have the potential to develop a tourist industry but must promote it themselves. These people need financial aid and other incentives to promote tourism.

We need better roads. As we all know, the roads in Central Queensland are in a terrible state. Because of the inadequate accommodation in most places in Central Queensland, tourists are forced to tow caravans, and the roads are so bad that a lot of damage is done not only to their cars but to their caravans. So the roads in the Central Queensland area must be upgraded to make all-weather travel possible.

The financial return from increased tourism would flow not only to my electorate but to other centres adjacent to it. The industry will benefit if there is a continuous line of tourist attractions right through Central Queensland. Besides being able to see the beauty of the Port Curtis electorate, tourists would have the opportunity of seeing the Central Highlands, the gem-fields and the Carnarvon gorge. I was very impressed when I visited the Carnarvon gorge.

I am told that the Blaxland Tableland is another area which could be developed as a tourist attraction if suitable land could be leased from the department responsible. I understand that there are beautiful waterfalls, moss gardens and other attractions which would make it possible for the area to be developed successfully if we had a Government that was willing to promote tourism within Queensland.

Mr. Lester: We have had a lot of trouble with vandals in the Blaxland Tableland area.

Mr. PREST: Yes; vandals are everywhere. I asked the Premier a question yesterday concerning vandalism and received a negative reply. Vandalism would concern a government that was interested in promoting tourism, but this Government is ducking the issue.

As I said, people from the South could go from the Port Curtis electorate into the Central Highlands and enjoy the attractions of that area. I would like to see a full-time information officer appointed to Gladstone to promote Central Queensland. He could assist in the promotion of festivals, shows and other annual events which attract tourists.

The Railway Department could assist by allowing the tourist rail-motor to remain in Gladstone much longer than it does. We realise that the tourists who travel on the rail-motor are mainly aged persons. They are herded into a bus and taken to a hotel for a meal. If time permits a quick trip around the city by bus is arranged. That is not enough. They should be allowed time to visit the shopping centre where they could buy a gift or a card which promotes the area—something that features the attractions of Central Queensland. The Railway Department does not operate a store where tourists could buy a gift, card or brochure dealing with Central Queensland. That is something the Minister for Transport should look at. It could be of assistance to the tourist industry in Queensland.

Mr. Jensen: You can still get a pie there; we can't get a pie at Bundaberg.

Mr. PREST: Visitors can't get a pie in Gladstone, either. There are much better things than pies in Central Queensland. Anyone who has visited the area before would not be looking for pies, but looking for some of the excellent mud crabs and oysters that are available, particularly in the Raglan area.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: You can get pies at Bororen.

Mr. PREST: Not now.

(Time expired.)

QUEENSLAND-PAPUA NEW GUINEA BORDER

Mr. DEERAL (Cook) (12.17 p.m.): Recently a group of Canberra public servants visited the Torres Strait area. I understand this group comprised members of the committee negotiating with Papua New Guinea on the so-called Torres Strait border question. As a result of their visit to the Torres Strait area, grave apprehensions are felt that some part of the strait may be given away. I have received an urgent appeal on behalf of the people to seek Government support again

for their cause that no part of the Torres Strait be abandoned or ceded in negotiations with New Guinea.

I understand that the delegation conveyed to the people that the islands of Saibai, Dauan and Boigu were retained in Queensland, and that the principle of a protected zone has been agreed to by New Guinea, but—this is most important—it was said that the price which had to be paid was agreement to a sea-bed boundary.

I want to emphasise that the people of Torres Strait, and we the people of Queensland, insist that all of the land masses of the Torres Strait are Queensland sovereign territory. They cannot and must not be given to anyone. The Queensland territorial waters around those islands to a limit of 3 miles, and from that 3-mile boundary to a 12-mile limit Commonwealth waters, are the property of Australia. These must not be given under any terms of barter.

The people of the Torres Strait and the coastal people of Papua New Guinea now have had friendly relationships. They accept a sharing of the resource for their daily sustenance, and do not wish to break this traditional usage. It was in this spirit of good will that they proposed, and this Government generally accepted, the principle of a maritime protected zone which encompasses those areas other than sovereign areas, that is, the land and the water-ways outside the 12-mile limit.

The tragedy of the whole exercise is that now we have a group of people negotiating the life-style and the future way of life of many thousands of Queenslanders. They are people who had never seen the Torres Strait area until last week let alone had any knowledge or understanding of its peoples or its way of life. Now we have the Commonwealth apparently expecting the people of Torres Strait to accept the dictate of so-called experts of the area with only a three-day contact.

Surely the people of Queensland are entitled to something better than that. I appeal to the House to see that justice is done for the people of the Torres Strait area, rather than the pathetic attempt at international diplomacy which, boiled down, means give and keep giving while it hurts the people of the area as long as it does not affect Canberra and the south.

Recently I spoke with Mr. Getano Lui, the chairman of the Islands Advisory Council, who said that they had written to the Prime Minister (Mr. Fraser) stating that after further consideration it was decided that they could no longer go to Port Moresby over the Torres Strait border matter or to Canberra to speak with the Prime Minister, as mentioned in a letter signed during Dr. Coombs's recent visit. Mr. Lui said that they felt they had expressed their feelings and wishes many times and that they

expected the Prime Minister to support them. Our Premier supports their stand; the Prime Minister, his Ministers and officers should do this, too. Since the letter, the Torres Strait people have seen and heard some people in Canberra still talking of a sea-bed boundary. In time this will become a reality. They expressed concern and asked the Prime Minister to visit them with our Premier to get their feeling themselves.

The claims and needs of the people of Torres Strait are simple. They seek the protection of this Government; they seek the support of this Government and they seek the right to continue to live as fellow Queenslanders in the area that they claim as their birthright. In their own words, they seek "Border not change".

Surely it is not too much to ask that the Prime Minister visit Torres Strait with the Premier, in view of the national long-term importance of the area as well as the present fears of the people. I ask that this House take whatever steps are possible to ensure that the wishes of the people are met.

Mr. Jones: Watch out for the poori poori.

Mr. DEERAL: If Opposition members do not back us up, I hope the poori poori gets them!

MEDIA COVERAGE OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS

Mr. PORTER (Toowong) (12.21 p.m.): I believe that we are facing a situation fraught with a great deal of peril, and this lies in the continuing denigration of proper authority by so much of the media. This denigration is well exemplified in the treatment that is usually given by the media to the proceedings of this Parliament and, of course, the treatment that is accorded to police action.

We will all admit that the power of the Press and TV is massive. In these times the daily newspaper enters virtually every home as does our daily bread and there is a TV set in virtually every living-room. People find themselves confronted by a sort of omnipresent, gigantic force, which is not always benign. I believe that if our society and the media's proper role in it are to survive, it is essential that the media role be constantly and critically evaluated.

Let us consider the approach by the media to this Parliament as a general rule. The media cover of it is sparse indeed and most of what does appear covers the trivial and what are alleged to be colourful incidents involving personal clashes, small rebellions, bucketing of people and so on. No-one denies that such incidents occur here, regretably, and no-one questions the right to report them, but to consistently play up these incidents and to focus on little else is to so trivialise Parliament as deliberately to debase it.

Constructive speeches here are very seldom noted. No section of the media tries to strike a balance, nor is there any weekly review attempting to tell people what really happens in Parliament and who said what, even in the briefest of terms.

A pretty classic example of this rubbishing occurred last Thursday with the publication of "The Courier-Mail" cartoon depicting the Premier demanding an inquiry not into the Cedar Bay affair but into finding out who disagreed with him. The implication was, of course, that all back-benchers are spineless, mindless helots. Not one fact was adduced to support this—not one jot. For my part, I deeply resent the insulting implication that my judgment here on any matter is not my own but merely a reflection of cringing submission to the Premier.

Mr. Lester: That does not apply to the country Press.

Mr. PORTER: I am glad to hear it doesn't.

In Friday's "Australian" a Richard Farmer wrote an article in which he said of Government members and the Cedar Bay affair, "Most of them knew this was a shameful action reminiscent of a totalitarian approach to law and order." Note the phrase "knew this was".

Never confuse the Richard Farmers of journalism with first establishing facts before leaping to partisan conclusions. Like so many of today's practitioners in the media, for him it is dead easy to conclude, "It happened in Queensland; ergo the police are the baddies, the druggies or the street-screamers are the goodies and the Government is wearing jackboots and shouting 'Seig heil!'" It is all so partisan as to be contemptible.

Another facet of this misrepresentation lies in the constant A.B.C. attacks against police, particularly in the "This Day Tonight" programmes. Whether the action is against suspected drug offenders or against screaming street marchers, invariably the police are presumed to be at fault and the allegations coming from those committing the offences are trumpeted as being sufficiently substantial to warrant an inquiry. The consistent A.B.C. pattern is to present the police as presumed guilty unless and until they can clear themselves.

How fair and how reasonable are these media charges? Let us take the Cedar Bay matter as an example. I understand that there are at least two commune groups in this area, one whose behaviour does not warrant police attention and another, miles away, suspected of being heavily involved in unhappy offences against the law. Yet the A.B.C. deliberately combined two separate film clips (without indicating what it was doing) so that most people felt that nice No. 1 group (shown at length with obligatory

nudity and a great deal of focus on a pendant male) were the innocent victims of a violent police raid—a raid which, in fact, involved only the second group—and the pictures showed the people only after the raid occurred. The segment was clearly designed to arouse maximum emotional hostility against the police and to generate sympathy for the offenders. If that sort of fraud were perpetrated outside the media, it might well be seen as virtually criminal fraud.

After due reflection one has to ask how it is that the A.B.C. can so easily locate people who, for others, have gone into very careful hiding. Does the A.B.C. manage to get special contacts? How much camp rubbish-dump junk was retrieved to provide film footage of allegedly destroyed personal possessions? How did it happen that papaw trees, said to have been chopped down by the police a week or so earlier, were still shown by the camera erect and with leaves fresh? I raise these matters to demonstrate that if there are pertinent questions (based only on allegations) clamouring for an answer, we should not accept that they must be directed solely at the police.

Unfortunately many well-meaning people have a great tendency to accept A.B.C. versions of alleged police transgression. In the matter of street demonstrations, the A.B.C. much more so than any of its rivals seems to be right on the spot at the right moment to catch an outburst of violence on film. How does that happen? Is it luck? Is it constant coincidence?

Mr. Lindsay: It is organised.

Mr. PORTER: Could it possibly be by pre-arrangement with the demonstration organisers, as one of my colleagues suggests? I fully realise that for saying these things I shall probably be excoriated, calumnified and boycotted. I have been through it before. There will be anguished screams of "Bias", "Censorship", and so on. After all, no greater sin committeth any man than to suggest that the media are less than fair, less than honourable. Any public person's reply to media excesses inevitably meets with impassioned denials and vehement counter-charges.

Sir Paul Hasluck, a former Governor-General of Australia, put it very well when he said—

"If a politician alleges bias he has to be discounted as someone who is only expressing a partisan opinion. But if a television authority denies bias, then he is presented not as one expressing a partisan opinion, but as a defender of the faith."

I remind the House that I worked for many years in the Press and for many more years with the A.B.C. I know the essential professional elements involved in what I am

talking about; I know them well. I know also only too well the enormous gulf that appears to separate the frame of reference for today's media—and many of those in it—pettiness, vulgarisation, lack of objectivity and obvious partisanship, from the standards obtaining until a couple of decades ago.

As I said at the beginning, I want it to be understood that the power of the media is massive. All of us cherish true freedom of the Press. We see it as an essential part of practising democracy. We must remember that true freedom has to be earned and justified. That means that media power must be used wisely, justly and responsibly. I emphasise that great power imposes great responsibility on those who want to use it. Freedom of the Press can never be construed as unlimited licence for the practitioners in the media. It does not mean open slather to denigrate authority and exalt wrongdoing. It is most certainly not *carte blanche* to trivialise and vulgarise meaningful events to the extent that the substance is often suffocated in sensationalism. Certainly the freedom of the Press is not open season to distort the truth, to carefully present only selected facts, to draw unjustifiable conclusions from unwarrantable assumptions in order to provide partisan TV programmes. If democracy's fourth estate—the media—ever finds itself under real restraint in our society (and let us remember that the A.L.P. enshrined the nationalisation of the Press in its platform, and announced last year in its closing stages as a Federal Government that it was moving to that end), then I say that it will be a case of the media bleeding from self-inflicted wounds.

I conclude by saying that one hopes that, just as parliamentarians will never seek to inhibit the essential role of the media to inform and to throw light on dark corners, so, too, the various branches of the media will never prostitute their role and see information as misinformation and assumption as part of a distortion deliberately designed to sensationalise and vulgarise in the utterly mistaken belief that this is what their readers and viewers want. They do not. They want to be properly informed, they want to be educated and they want the truth above all else.

SUGAR INDUSTRY STABILISATION SCHEME

Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (12.31 p.m.): Twelve months ago in this House I spoke about a decision of the Queensland Government to allocate \$37,500,000 from the finances of the sugar industry for the establishment of a new jetty at Lucinda Point. I was strongly critical of that decision. As I recall it, I stated quite clearly that a better use for the money would be to set up a stabilisation scheme for the sugar industry. However, my pleas fell on deaf ears—not only of the Government but also of an industry that was then buoyantly happy with the record prices it was receiving on the free world market.

Lately we have heard much in this Parliament and in other areas about the proposal of the Queensland Government and its committees to encourage the Commonwealth to form a beef stabilisation scheme to try to assist beef producers throughout Australia to survive, because the extremely low prices have brought that industry to the stage of veritable collapse. That in itself confirms what I have been trying to get across: the time to establish a stabilisation scheme is when prices are high. I reiterate that there is still time to do that within the sugar industry.

Unfortunately, the sugar industry is now at a stage similar to that reached in the 1950s and 1960s, when very low prices followed very high prices. The fluctuation of sugar prices is historical: it has been going on for a considerable period. It is brought about because only a small volume of sugar is actually traded on the free world market. Consequently, the price is subjected to all sorts of factors, such as weather conditions in Europe and the Southern Hemisphere and political decisions in some of the major sugar-producing countries. Those things have a very marked and rapid effect on free world sugar prices.

As I said, the Queensland industry is now in a situation similar to that of the 1950s and the 1960s. It is still meeting the cost of a major industry expansion—to the tune of \$300,000,000. Repayment of the debts incurred by growers and millers alike has to be met from far lower cash flows than were anticipated 12 months, 18 months or two years ago when expansion was commenced.

I make it quite clear at this stage that I am not in any way trying to knock the sugar industry. Usually after I speak on sugar matters the Minister comes into the House the next day with a ministerial statement in which he uses the words "knocking", "embarrassing", and similar comments. I am not endeavouring to embarrass the Queensland sugar industry. I am merely trying to draw further attention to something that is sadly needed within this State's sugar industry, and this is still an opportune time for it to be introduced. I believe it will improve the industry in Queensland, and the place for this matter to be raised—and it is the right and privilege of any member of Parliament to do so—is in this House.

Again, this is the place to remind the Government that the decisions that have been taken in the sugar industry in recent years have been, in actual fact, political decisions. The decision on Lucinda Point was political. The contractual sale agreements overseas were political decisions. They were good ones and I repeat that I am not knocking them in any respect.

Mr. Sullivan: But you have said that if there is any criticism, this is the place to voice it.

Mr. CASEY: That is right, and I will keep criticising.

We are facing an International Sugar Agreement conference next year—in a situation where prices are again on the downward swing. Prior to 1974, when the last negotiations were attempted, and 1968, when the last International Sugar Agreement was entered into, the same situation prevailed. It has become pretty obvious to those in the sugar industry that this has been brought about by the manipulation of a certain market by certain traders in certain areas.

Many people in the sugar industry do not realise the situation that is facing them and they should be made aware of it. They must also realise that the industry has the answers to this problem in its own grasp. One of the answers is to defer the Lucinda Point project and then to introduce a price stabilisation scheme while there is still time. Another alternative is to continue spending in this way and suffer lower incomes this financial year, perhaps next year and possibly the year after that.

We have reached the stage where the export price for sugar quoted on the London market for the free world trade is almost down to the cost of production in Australia. It is certainly below that in some countries and, indeed, it is possibly below the cost of production in some northern areas of our sugar industry in Queensland where, because of low c.c.s., the productivity is not the same as that in other areas.

I support the action of the Sugar Board in setting aside some finance about two years ago and using it to provide additional storage. I believe that we must continue with the proposals that are envisaged for additional storage because this will provide us with buffer stocks in Australia. We have seen the important need for this in the past, not only when prices have been a problem but also when we have had over-production in the industry and have had the opportunity of storing sugar which could have been made available at a better price the following year.

Costs of production and of manufacture are still rising and this has not been helped by the existing Commonwealth Government. It has refused the equalisation proposal put forward by the industry under which there would be equalisation of incomes for taxation purposes. Consequently, with the very high prices last season and the season before, Queensland cane growers paid tremendous amounts of taxation instead of having a proper equalisation scheme in Queensland, under which the high incomes could have been offset by lower incomes in other years. Unfortunately this proposal has been rejected again.

The Federal Government has reintroduced the superphosphate bounty for the benefit of the Victorian farming group which controls the Federal Government, but it has lowered

the nitrogenous fertiliser bounty, which is more important to the sugar industry than superphosphate is to any other primary industry.

There have been increased costs at all levels for both the grower and the manufacturer of sugar. The manufacturers have caused some concern in the industry in recent times because of quality standards. But the blame has not been entirely with the mills; in many cases, it has been the result of poor-quality cane being sent to the mill by certain growers. The industry must be warned strongly at all levels that, while we have contractual agreements that were entered into in the last few years with Japan, Malaysia, Korea and other countries (and those agreements are helping to keep the price more buoyant at this stage), efforts are already being made by people in those countries to get out of those contractual arrangements because the price under them is much higher than the current free world market price. Because of the way the contracts are written, they will not get out of them on the price conditions, but we do have problems with quality.

Recently I referred in this Chamber to a report on the quality of Australian sugar last year. This is a very serious problem because if the overseas countries find a chink in the armour of our contractual agreements, it will be because of poor quality. I think it is unfortunate that there are some mills that are very much to blame in this matter, and they are the ones who are also creating environmental problems in the industry. In many respects they are "do nothing" mills. When lower prices come, they will say, "We can't afford to bring about quality standards and we can't afford to do anything about environmental problems." This unfortunately is another undesirable aspect of the sugar industry on the milling side.

I make it quite clear that I believe it is most necessary that the Lucinda Point project be deferred and that a price stabilisation scheme for sugar be established in Queensland.

(Time expired.)

DEVELOPMENT OF MORANBAH

Mr. LESTER (Belyando) (12.41 p.m.): It is my desire to state from the floor of the House a few of the needs, problems and achievements of the people of one of Queensland's newest and most modern towns, namely, the mining town of Moranbah, which is situated 122 miles west of Mackay and 64 miles east of Clermont. It is a town that is serviced daily by air and road, and it is in the Belyando Shire. It is the centre for the mines at Peak Downs and Goonyella and also the nearest important town to the new mining town of Dysart.

Five or six years ago the area was open plains, trees and grass; today there stands on it a town of 4,500 people, most of them young

families. It is very interesting to note that the average age of people in the town of Moranbah is 12 years. That indicates that there are very many young children in this town compared with towns of similar size in other parts of Australia.

Mothers have unusual problems in towns such as Moranbah in that they have moved there from other areas and do not have nearby grandmothers, aunts and others on whom they can rely for help. In such a situation it is necessary that all possible help be given to young mothers by means of maternal and child welfare services, child guidance and various other services. At this point I must pay a tribute to Mrs. Dorene Schafferius, who has made it her business to obtain help for mothers and, indeed, anyone in the town who needs help.

The people of Moranbah contribute largely to the economy of this State. They are good people, and they do their best. They certainly let me know what they want, but they are prepared to get up and do things for themselves.

Moranbah has approximately 30 sporting clubs, and a new sporting complex is now being built. There are also 25 general clubs, which include cultural groups. Some of the achievements in the town to date include the building of a new police station, a civic centre to which a kindergarten is attached, a swimming pool, a post office, a fire brigade station and a State school attended by approximately 800 children. Stage 1 of the Moranbah State High School has almost been completed. I went through it and had a look at it only the other day. It is a beautiful building. An ambulance station is being built at the moment, as is a pre-school centre. There is also a new 14-bed hospital at Moranbah.

A lot of road-work is being carried out in the area, and it is very pleasing to see the Peak Downs Highway near the entrance to Moranbah being improved, because that road has created very many problems for people travelling between Moranbah and Clermont and Moranbah and Mackay. Not very long ago we saw the completion of the Grosvenor Creek bridge. That creek used to delay people for some time during wet weather.

There have been a number of visits to the electorate by Ministers, and the Premier has visited Moranbah. In fact, the Premier's wife and my wife will be meeting the people of Moranbah at a function to be held in the town this afternoon. The Premier's wife will be able to meet the people, find out their needs and pass them on to the Premier.

Mr. Aikens: All to your credit.

Mr. LESTER: I am pleased to hear the honourable member for Townsville, with his usual astuteness, helping me along and

giving me encouragement to stick up for country people, particularly the people of Moranbah. He has often spoken to me in the House about the wonderful people of Moranbah and this has been of great assistance to me.

Included in the town's needs is a courthouse. I suggest that the existing police station ought to be expanded. At present there is accommodation for two single men.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Miller): Order! There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr. LESTER: I hope it will not be too long before the police station is extended in order to provide an improved service to the people. An extension to the hospital will be needed in the not too distant future, as well a bridge over the Nebo Creek. The A.B.C. television service should be extended to Moranbah, and more industries should be established there to employ school-leavers.

The tax system should be changed to include Moranbah in tax zone B. It is incredible that the people of Moranbah do not now receive taxation benefits that are available to people who are included in tax zone B—for example, the people of Mackay, who actually reside on the coast. I hope that the Federal Government can do something to provide relief in that direction.

Something else which concerns the Federal Government is the telephone connection to Moranbah. I am pleased to say that the service is improving, but in the past problems with it have been a continuous pain in the neck.

A railway extension to Moranbah is needed to help business people to obtain their freight direct instead of having to go to Coppabella for it. The town's water supply must also be improved.

Looking to the future of Moranbah—there is a good deal of conjecture that the new Nebo mine project is not far off becoming a reality. Stage I of the project would be at Riverside, which will be an open-cut mine, at Wards Well, which will be an underground mine, and at Poitrel, which will be an open-cut mine. Two of these mines will produce prime coking coal, while the other will produce a minor blend. When stage I is in full operation 5,500,000 tonnes of coal per annum will be produced, and this will mean enormous development in the town of Moranbah. Stage II of the project will involve the development of South Walker, Kemmis-Walker and Bee Creek. So if everything goes ahead and orders continue to be received, Moranbah has an enormous future.

However, I point out that the Government—and in particular the Co-ordinator-General's Department—has a very important role to play in making sure that the mining companies that participate in this development pull

their weight in the provision of amenities. Never again do I want to be like a dog chasing its tail over the provision of amenities. The amenities must be provided before they are needed, not after there has been a population explosion in the area. I was involved in the development of both Blackwater and Moranbah. I was a member of the council when Moranbah was being developed, and I do not want to see a repetition of what happened during that time. I am sure the Government will have learnt from experience and will make sure that these mining companies pull their weight.

It is very important that the necessary facilities be provided. New swimming pools and a new civic centre are needed. They must not be forgotten when the town is being built, because the people will be inconvenienced if they are. The population will be happy if amenities are provided; there will be many unhappy people in the area if they are not.

Much can be done to improve the town of Moranbah; but orderly development is the main ingredient for success. By gee, if these companies do not pull their weight and provide the necessary amenities, they will certainly be hearing from me in no uncertain manner! I know I will be backed by the people of Moranbah.

I take this opportunity on the floor of the House to thank the people of Moranbah for the magnificent support they have given me since I became the member for Belyando. I have been doing all I can to help them. Most of the people who come to me with problems present them in such a way that usually I can deal with them. At all times the people of Moranbah have tried to be sensible in what they have asked for, and I assure the House that not nearly as much would have been achieved in Moranbah without the magnificent co-operation that I have received from the townspeople. When I go to the council chambers at Moranbah on the first Friday of every month between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., many people come to me to see whether I can help them.

Again I wish the people of Moranbah all the very best.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. LESTER: I am amazed that some members of the Labor Party interject and try to stop me putting forward the voice of the country people. They had better not come to Moranbah and try to say what they are doing for the people there, when they are not even listening to me now. I leave the honourable member for Port Curtis out of that. He has listened to me with the utmost respect. Of course, he comes from Central Queensland and knows what the people of Central Queensland want.

(Time expired.)

QUEENSLAND TEACHERS' UNION STRIKE

Mr. LANE (Merthyr) (12.51 p.m.): The matter of public interest I wish to raise this morning should be of deep concern to school-teachers and parents throughout the State. It is a matter that pertains to the current Queensland Teachers' Union strike. I should like to reveal one aspect of the dispute which so far has not been publicly aired.

I wish to comment on the marijuana lobby. It should be plain to every Queenslander and, I hope, in the first instance to every teacher, that it is the clear intention of Mr. Costello to take his union into the marijuana lobby, that is, the lobby which would advocate the legalisation of marijuana. From his actions over the last few weeks and from some of his public statements it is perfectly clear that this is what he is accomplishing. I should also like to place on record some good arguments why people should not join this lobby. I want to make it known to school-teachers in this State that they should not allow themselves to be used as tools by that lobby.

The marijuana lobby in this State has been on the scene for some years now. I can remember back in 1969 when an organisation known as the Legalisation of Marijuana Committee was started at the University of Queensland by a number of Left-wing radicals, including members of the University of Queensland Labor Club. That committee staged protests around the town, lobbied various politicians and distributed leaflets in an attempt to persuade people that the legislation which existed in this State should be changed to make the use of marijuana legal in Queensland. Of course, that was opposed by this Government at the time, just as it is now. But that did not daunt those people who wished to have the legislation changed.

Since then we have seen an erosion of the stance of Legislatures in the Labor States throughout Australia to this proposition. In South Australia there has been a relaxation in attitude towards the use of marijuana and other drugs. Marijuana has been portrayed as a soft drug which is harmless and which people could use with the same frequency and in the same way as they use tobacco or alcohol. In the Australian Capital Territory while Federal Labor was in power there was an erosion of the Government's stand on this. Indeed this was reflected in the appointments it made to the Magistrates Court Bench in that territory, so that decisions were made, rulings were given and precedents were created by those magistrates which have effectively removed any legal ban to possessing or using marijuana in the Australian Capital Territory. That was the result of the actions of the Australian Labor Party when in Federal Government.

In this State the president of the Queensland Teachers' Union last week-end on a Brisbane radio programme expressed reservations about the harm that marijuana actually does. He said that there was real need to review our attitude and perhaps make it use legal. He said that it was not very harmful anyway. So he has moved the teachers' union—a very responsible union of professional people, who, in the past, have adopted sensible and decent views towards the community and towards children—into that spectrum of political agitation which I describe here today as the marijuana lobby. It is very dangerous because the proposition that marijuana is harmless is quite a wrong one.

One has only to look at some of the recent authorities on the subject. I should like to quote in fairly great detail from a recent paper prepared through the General Practitioners' Association and printed in its journal. The author of this survey and consolidation of views is Dr. H. B. Jones, Professor of Medical Physics and Physiology at the University of California, Berkley, and Assistant Director of the Donner Laboratory. In this article he itemises the harmful effects of marijuana, and I invite honourable members and the general public to listen to them. Dr. Jones published the following findings—

“The average marijuana user, in between exposures, exhibits a wide range of brain changes:

1. He has shifted from a self-activating, interesting, and interested person to one who is withdrawn and given to disordered thinking.
2. Thought formation in the marijuana user tends to be less powerful: conclusions are relatively impetuous.
3. The marijuana user's attention span and ability to concentrate have been reduced. Memory, especially short-term memory, is shortened.
4. The facial circulation reflexes are impaired. The focusing of the eyes is less precise. The skin tends to be pallid and relatively lacking in blood.
5. The conditioned social responses, such as affection for parents and tolerance for their suggestions are impaired. There is a loss of other conditioned responses, for example, an unkempt appearance is common and a loss of inhibition about urination in inappropriate places. One mother recently complained that her son had urinated in the flour bin, which happened to be open; more often the story is urination on walls of rooms in the vicinity of the toilet. Concern for consequences is reduced, and concern for the rights and well-being of others may be largely absent.

6. The marijuana user does not want to be 'hassled'. Mild criticism or merely requesting that housekeeping chores be done may be interpreted as hassling. The conflict causes the marijuana user to feel actual pain. He may even threaten his parents or other adults opposing his life style.

7. Marijuana is a hypnotic drug, and the hypnotic spell is long lasting. Thus, the user is likely to be talked into many situations that he would otherwise avoid. He may even engage in work in which there is a follow-the-leader type of spirit. The hypnotic effects of marijuana are, in my opinion, largely responsible for the acceptance of the hazardous consequences of more powerful drugs, a yielding to homosexual advances, and overly generous compliance with unreasonable requests by friends.

8. The young marijuana user tends to remain thin and to be underdeveloped for his age. The trend is more pronounced with heavy use. The daily marijuana user of several years' duration is likely to appear emaciated.

9. The male is deficient in male hormone. The findings of Kolodny indicate a 5 per cent decline in male hormone production for each marijuana cigarette smoked per week. This is the relationship in mature males. It is likely that the effect is relatively larger in the adolescent.

10. He is likely to have a tendency toward paranoia or schizophrenia, or both.

11. He is likely to have an elevated number of broken chromosomes in cultures of his white blood cells.

12. His white blood cell immune response is lowered.

13. The cycle of sleep and waking is largely inverted. The marijuana user stays up at night.

14. Sexual functions are often stimulated early in marijuana use, but with regular use, sexuality is suppressed. This is dramatically the case with sexual dreaming, which is usually abolished with the beginning of regular marijuana use.”

Those are 14 of the effects of the use of marijuana and they have been embodied in an article distributed amongst G.P.s throughout Queensland. They have gained a first-hand knowledge of the effects of the use of marijuana, and I hope that school-teachers in Queensland, too, will take note of them.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Miller): Order! Under the provisions of the Sessional Order previously agreed to by the House, the time allotted to the debate on Matters of Public Interest has now expired.

The House adjourned at 1.1 p.m.