

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 1976**

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## WEDNESDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 1976

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

### USE OF OFFICIAL AEROPLANE

#### RETURN TO ORDER

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Return to an Order made by the House on 26 August last, on the motion of Mr. Melloy, showing details of the operation of the official aeroplane during the fiscal year 1975-76.

### PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

#### Reports—

Golden Casket Art Union, for the year 1975-76.

Parole Board, for the year 1975-76.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

#### Regulations under—

Workers' Compensation Act 1916-1974.

Hospitals Act 1936-1976.

Medical Act 1939-1976.

The Nurses Act of 1964.

#### Statutes under—

Griffith University Act 1971-1973.

University of Queensland Act 1965-1973.

### QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

#### 1. REGIONAL PASTORAL PTY. LTD. AND MR. HARRY LONDY

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

(1) With reference to the report in "The Courier-Mail" of 28 September of the Premier welcoming a proposed \$35,000,000 land development project at Victoria Point and his statement that the developers, Regional Pastoral Pty. Ltd., had shown great confidence in Queensland, are the company and Harry Londy, named as its managing director, the same as those mentioned by him as Attorney-General in answers to questions in September 1974 in relation to dubious land dealings?

(2) Are they also the same person and company that he at that time referred to the Commissioner of Police for investigation on alleged false land advertisements in interstate newspapers?

Mr. KNOX: The Leader of the Opposition, of course, tries to be smart in asking a question of this nature. There is no way

in the world that he is going to drive a wedge between me and the Premier with such questions.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** It was done for us yesterday morning.

**Mr. KNOX:** You mind your own business.

**An Opposition Member:** Why don't you ask your police?

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** The knives are out.

**Mr. KNOX:** You look after your own affairs. You are the one who has to look after yourself in this system. You are the only one the long knives are after—and I include all the people on your own front bench. If you can hold your head up in this place, you are doing all right, but you can't.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order. I advise all honourable members, particularly those on my left, that when any Minister is on his feet he is to be heard in silence. If they disregard my warning, I will have to deal with them.

**Mr. Melloy:** The Liberal executive answered that question yesterday.

**Mr. KNOX:** I can deal with the Liberal executive a lot better than the honourable member can deal with his. We will see which Opposition members go at the next election. Make way for the bright young fellows that Tom Burns is getting into the party. Which Opposition member will stand aside?

I now read the prepared answer.

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) As the question relates to matters which come within the jurisdiction of another Minister, it should be addressed to that Minister.

## 2. NEW STATE MOVEMENT, NORTH QUEENSLAND

**Mr. Aikens,** pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) In view of the fact that another "New State" movement has started in North Queensland, will he inform the House, in simple terms, what procedures must be taken under the Commonwealth Constitution to have a new State established and the basis on which it can be established?

(2) Will all interest and redemption payments in respect of works carried out by the State Government in North Queensland become a responsibility of the new State and will the new State be required to accept responsibility for loans and other financial commitments raised by the State Government, where such guarantee was specified, as they apply to North Queensland, in addition to North Queensland's equity in other loans and financial transactions of that nature?

(3) Can he give the House an estimate of the debt, as covered by (2), which the new State will be required to accept?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) It is impossible to define the procedures involved in the creation of new Australian States in simple terms or, indeed, in any terms at the present juncture. The conflict of legal opinions over the years appears to demonstrate that implementation under the existing Chapter VI of the Commonwealth Constitution would be wellnigh impossible until the constitutional requirements and limitations were thoroughly clarified. The subject has been one of some examination by the Australian Constitutional Convention and some reference is made to it in a report of the Convention's Standing Committee B of August 1974. However, the Convention's present thrust in this particular area is towards the possible establishment of Territories as States and the method of creating new States within existing States requires expert and cautious examination.

## 3. TOWNSVILLE CITY BUILDINGS AND KERN BROS.

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

(1) Has he been informed that a big firm of developers named Kern Bros. has been approaching tenants of the City Buildings, Townsville, seeking information from them as to their prospects of becoming tenants in a new City Building to be erected by Kern Bros. after the demolition of the existing building and also requesting the amount of floor space and other facilities they will require?

(2) When was the job of demolishing the present City Buildings and the erection of a new one given to Kern Bros. by the Townsville City Council and under what terms and conditions?

(3) Does the Local Government Act still specify that tenders must be called or invited by a local authority before major work is given to anyone or substantial amounts of material bought and, if so, when were tenders called or invited openly by the Townsville City Council for the reconstruction of the present City Buildings?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) I have no knowledge of the alleged activities of Kern Bros. referred to by the honourable member.

The Local Government Act 1936–1976 presently provides that, except in cases of emergency, before any contract (other than a contract for the execution of any work or the furnishing of any goods or materials to the amount of \$6,000 or less) is

entered into by a local authority it must, three weeks at least before entering into such contract, call tenders by public notice published in such newspaper or newspapers and in such other manner and to such extent as will ensure that the local authority will receive the greatest number of tenders.

I am informed that it is the intention of the Townsville City Council, in the near future, to invite public tenders for the redevelopment of the lands on which the building referred to by the honourable member is presently located. The council will be bound by the relevant provisions of the Act when dealing with the matter.

#### 4. BIAS IN "TELEGRAPH" REPORT ON KILLER

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

Has his attention been drawn to a front page article in the "Telegraph" newspaper of 23 September wherein the killer and maimer of people in Brisbane on 22 September was paraded and depicted as a wonderful fellow, a model of all the manly virtues, a "Mummy's darling" and so on in a definite and calculated attempt to influence people and potential jurors in his favour when he is brought to trial? If so, does this not constitute grievous and blatant contempt of court and will action be taken against the newspaper concerned?

*Answer:—*

Yes, I have read the newspaper article referred to by the honourable member. However, as this matter clearly comes under the jurisdiction of my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, I suggest that the honourable member direct his question to him.

#### 5. TEACHING STAFF, KELVIN GROVE COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

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

(1) With reference to my question of 1 September concerning the teaching staff of the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education and the article in "The Courier-Mail" of 24 September headed "College Approves Homosexual Group", wherein it was stated that the council of the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education has approved the presence of a homosexual and lesbian group on campus, what is the name of each and every member of the Kelvin Grove council and what other positions do they hold in the community?

(2) Who on the college council voted for the presence of the homosexual and lesbian group and who voted against it?

(3) Will he give an assurance to me and the great majority of concerned parents whom I represent in this Parliament that no members of the homosexual and lesbian group at the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education will be posted to schools in the Everton electorate should the Education Department ever lower its standards to the stage where young men and women with such unfortunate and unnatural personal life-styles are ever admitted to the profession of teaching our children?

*Answers:—*

(1) The names of the members of the council of the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education are shown on page 1602 of the Queensland Government Gazette No. 98 of 17 July and on page 1988 of the Queensland Government Gazette No. 116 of 14 August.

Members of the council hold also the following positions within the community:—

Chartered accountant;  
Company manager;  
Executive Director of Nursing;  
Former newspaper editress;  
Medical doctor (2);  
Minister of religion and Director of Youth and Christian Education;  
Officer of college (5);  
Public accountant;  
Public servant (2);  
Quantity surveyor;  
Research scientist;  
Student of college (2); and  
University professor.

(2) I understand that while not endorsing the group's activities, the council, at a regular monthly meeting last week, decided unanimously not to attempt to suppress it. In reaching the decision the council took into account the adult status of the large majority of college students. It, therefore, did not accept that it should act as a censor of the activities of student groups.

The council takes the view that if any group offends against the law, that group is subject to the processes of the law. Appropriate actions are matters for the police and the courts. The council has indicated that it is willing to co-operate at all times with the police. It does not regard the college as enjoying any privilege under the law.

The council has noted that attempts to suppress a minority group often result in a status being accorded the group out of all proportion to its significance.

Members of councils of colleges of advanced education are citizens of high standing and bring to the management of the colleges wide experience in community affairs. I believe their balanced and mature judgment is invaluable in these times of rapidly changing community values and standards.

(3) A clear distinction needs to be drawn between the role of a college council which is responsible for the over-all management of the affairs of its college and the Department of Education as the employer of teachers after graduation from a college. Students who participate in the activities of homosexual and lesbian groups in college should not assume that, upon graduation from college, they will be employed by the Department of Education.

6. TEACHERS DISMISSED FOR DRUG OFFENCES

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

With regard to the four persons convicted of drug offences, whose expensive and habit-forming smoking habits Mr. Costello is so anxious to have subsidised by the Queensland tax-paying public, where were they born, where did they receive their teacher-training and where are they now?

Answer:—

Three of the teachers were Australian-born while the fourth was a citizen of the United States of America, where he received his teacher-training. Two of the Australians were trained at Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education and the third at the Queensland Institute of Technology and the University of Queensland. I understand that the American teacher left Australia shortly after his conviction. I do not know the whereabouts of the three Australians.

7. STUDENT UNION FEES, QUEENSLAND CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

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

(1) With regard to the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, is he aware that students are being advised that if they do not pay their compulsory union fees their examination results will be withheld?

(2) Are union fees compulsory and, if so, what are the reasons?

(3) Will he ensure that students' results are based on the excellence of performance and are not dependent upon union membership?

Answers:—

(1) No.

(2) Section 62AD of the Education Act states that all students of a college of advanced education shall be members of the student union for that college. The Act also provides that a college council may make by-laws relating to the student

union of the college including the powers, authorities and obligations of the student union, and membership fees. Clearly, in electing to attend a college an individual student accepts responsibility for complying with the rules of that college. Moreover, membership of student unions, which differ in nature from industrial unions, is one of the traditional responsibilities accepted by students of tertiary education institutions.

(3) College councils are responsible under the Education Act for the development, control and management of the affairs and activities of colleges of advanced education. Should a college decide to withhold a student's examination results for breach of college rules, this does not mean that criteria other than excellence of performance determine the result.

8. HORMONE SPRAYS, 2,4-D AND 2,4,5-T

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

(1) Can 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T be purchased by any member of the public without restriction?

(2) Is he aware of reports from Vietnam that 2,4,5-T used there as a defoliant was responsible for deformities in unborn children?

(3) What research has been carried out by his department into the effects of 2,4,5-T on humans and animals?

Answers:—

(1) There are no restrictions on the sale of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T in Queensland once they have been registered for particular purposes.

(2) Yes. I have read reports to this effect. I understood that 2,4,5-T itself was not responsible. The cause was an impurity—dioxin—which occurred during manufacture. I am advised that this problem has now been overcome.

(3) No such research has been carried out by my department.

9. KOALAS IN CAPTIVITY

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

How many organisations are licensed to keep koalas in captivity?

Answer:—

My inquiries reveal that there are eight organisations licensed to keep koalas in captivity in Queensland.

## 10. DRIVERS' LICENCE TESTING OFFICERS

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

(1) Is he aware of the discontent of drivers' licence testing officers as a result of their transfer to his department?

(2) When the Police Department controlled these offices was each office controlled by a sergeant 1/c and at some offices since his department has taken over have junior clerks with six months' service been authorised over the telephone to sign licences?

(3) Are senior testing officers with years of experience as testing officers and previously as police officers not allowed to sign the driving licences?

(4) What opportunities are provided for officers to serve in alternative locations on transfer from one testing office to another?

(5) Are existing staff notified when vacancies occur at the various centres?

(6) Is there a complete list of duties of testing officers and are they readily available, or does each new person in charge produce a new set of duties?

*Answers:—*

(1) No. I am not aware of discontent resulting from the transfer to the Transport Department. However, if the honourable member would care to apprise me of details I will have any such matters of concern looked into. I might add that as recently as 18 August the Commissioner for Transport had a useful exchange of views with representatives of the civilian testing officers and the State Service Union.

(2) It would be true that under Police Department control the stations were administered by a sergeant of police who in each case has been replaced by a classified permanent officer of the Public Service, grade 1—2. Any authority to sign licences is by virtue of a formal and proper delegation by the Commissioner for Transport. It is possible that as an isolated action in an emergency or temporary situation authorisation may have to be given to a junior officer, but this is not a recognised regular practice.

(3) It has never been the practice to my knowledge for civilian testing officers at these stations to sign licences.

(4) It is competent for any officer who wishes to apply for transfer from one testing office to another to submit an application for consideration.

(5) Vacancies are publicly advertised in the Press, the most recent advertisement being an insertion in "The Courier-Mail" on 11 September 1976, closing on 27 September 1976.

(6) There is a standard list of qualifications for driver licence testing officers which is in stencil form and readily available. The question of standardisation of procedures at testing stations is under consideration in conjunction with proposals for changes in the driver testing system.

## 11. DRIVERS' LICENCE TESTS

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

(1) Have Queensland driving-school owners and the Driver Training Association of Queensland suggested a new system of testing new drivers?

(2) Does this suggestion include the introduction of a test score-sheet, marked in much the same way as an examination paper, so that a constant standard can be maintained and there will be less chance of individual interpretation or personal bias from testing officers?

(3) What percentage of drivers tested by departmental officers fail the driving tests?

(4) Are there any major reasons for these failures?

(5) Has any investigation been carried out by his department into any other method of providing tests and, if so, with what result?

*Answers:—*

(1) Since assuming responsibility for the registration of driving schools and the licensing of instructors and more recently the progressive taking over by the Transport Department of driver licensing, both the Commissioner for Transport and I have had many discussions with representatives of what is now the Driver Training Association of Queensland on improvements to the over-all driver training and testing situation.

In June this year when opening two new driver licence issuing centres I referred to them as being a major step by the State Transport Department to upgrade all facets of the issue of drivers' licences.

(2) In a recent discussion with the Commissioner for Transport, details of a Victorian system involving a road test score sheet were supplied by the association and this system is being evaluated by the department in conjunction with other similar systems of which details were already known to the department following investigations by departmental officers in this country and overseas.

As in the past the views of the Driver Training Association will be taken into consideration.

(3) The average failure rate of the three metropolitan testing stations controlled by the Department of Transport was 41 per cent over the last six months.

(4) The licence test is a multi-facet test prescribed under the Traffic Regulations as—

- (a) sight and hearing;
- (b) knowledge of traffic law; and
- (c) practical driving

which endeavours to ascertain the over-all standard of an aspiring driver.

Although the reasons for failure are noted in each particular case no over-all statistics have been kept under the present system on categories of reasons for failure.

(5) See answer to (2).

12. CEMENT INDUSTRY

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the report that Queensland's cement industry is run by 11 men who, because of overlapping directorships, fill all 18 seats in the State's only three cement-producing companies and, if so, is this a fact?

(2) Do the three companies, Queensland Cement & Lime Co. Ltd., North Australia Cement Co. Ltd. and Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd., as stated in the report, have a high degree of market power over prices because of the lack of effective competition between the three firms and because considerable scope exists for profits to be shunted from one firm to another through internal pricing of purchases from one another?

(3) Is the price structure for cement for Queensland as a whole co-operatively determined by the three companies?

(4) As cement products, if overpriced through collusion on monopoly control, would have a tremendously adverse effect on home-building, major construction projects, hospitals, office blocks, factories, schools, bridges, roads, etc., what investigations has he ordered into these matters, and what steps has he taken to implement his parties' lip-service to a policy that says "competition will keep prices down"?

(5) Does the only competition that can challenge this monopoly group have to be mounted from outside our State?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 5) The honourable member seems determined to denigrate local industry.

**Honourable Members** interjected.

**Mr. CAMPBELL:** I presume from that applause that other honourable members agree with me.

*Answer (contd.):—*

The honourable member also conveniently overlooks the fact that the cement industry in Queensland is highly

decentralised. Furthermore, the honourable member because of his interest in public affairs should be aware of the general shortage of cement that occurred in recent times. In this connection I would expect him to have regard to the tremendous efforts made by this essentially Queensland group of companies to bring cement into the State from other parts of Australia to keep faith with the demands of industry.

The Brisbane price for cement is the second lowest in Australia. While the prices charged by North Australian Cement Co. Limited and Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd. are somewhat higher than Brisbane, these reflect the economics of small units.

The price of cement determined by Queensland Cement and Lime Co. Limited and Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd. is under the control of the Prices Justification Tribunal. It is therefore highly improper for the honourable member to suggest that there is collusion between the three companies in establishing their price structure.

There is of course no restriction on anyone establishing a cement works in Queensland in competition with existing producers.

For the information of the honourable member I might add that the estimated cost of a plant of 500,000 tonne capacity per annum is between \$80,000,000 and \$90,000,000.

13 and 14. ALLOCATION OF COMMONWEALTH FUNDS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

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

(1) With reference to the disbursement of funds to local authorities from Commonwealth sources which previously was arranged by the Federal Local Authorities Grants Commission, who are the present members of the recommending committee?

(2) How was element B in the formula determined?

(3) How much did (a) the Landsborough Shire and (b) the Stanthorpe Shire receive for A and B?

(4) How is it that the Landsborough Shire Council is again the "poor relation", receiving substantially less than its counterparts in the area compared with, for example, the Noosa Shire?

(5) Has the Grants Committee merely picked up the old formula with its elements of political attrition and political patronage?

(6) Is the die now cast and is the Landsborough Shire Council permanently below its peers in this scheme?

(7) Will he move to correct this situation?

(8) Are there any more moneys coming from our Government, as was the case last year?

*Answers:—*

(1) The Under Treasurer, the Director of Local Government and the President of the Local Government Association of Queensland.

(2) The division of the grant into two elements A and B was required by the Commonwealth Government, with element A to account in total for at least 30 per cent of the total of \$24,222,000 available to Queensland local authorities in 1976-77. Element A was required by the Commonwealth to be mainly a per capita distribution, though Queensland did obtain approval to use an area weighting. Element B was required by the Commonwealth to be distributed on an equalisation basis.

(3) (a) Total grant \$85,000—Element A entitlement \$44,850; (b) Total grant \$243,000—Element A entitlement \$27,152.

(4) Landsborough received no grant from the Commonwealth Grants Commission in 1974-75 and \$30,000 in 1975-76. Noosa received \$67,000 in 1975-76, compared with a grant this year of \$113,000. Thus Landsborough received a 183 per cent increase compared with 69 per cent for Noosa.

(5) In recommending grants for 1976-77, the interim committee took into account the desirability of allocating grants as early as possible so as to assist local authorities with their fundings. The Committee considered that there was insufficient time this year to ask local authorities for submissions and to process such submissions. This would have entailed a great deal of work and would have meant that allocations of grants to local authorities would have been considerably delayed. Accordingly, the interim committee when recommending grants for the current year took into account, amongst other things, grants allocated by the Commonwealth Grants Commission in previous years. At the same time, officers representing Queensland at Commonwealth Grants Commission hearings have argued before the commission the case for the coastal local authorities over the past two years, and the interim committee did not feel obliged to have regard to any decisions of the Commonwealth commission which would result in low or nil grants to these local authorities.

(6 and 7) The Government proposes to establish a statutory local authority grants commission for the purpose of assessing grants to local authorities in future years. The statutory commission will have more time to devote to the task than the interim committee and will in no way be bound by decisions made by the interim committee when recommending grant allocations.

(8) An answer to this question would be a matter for the Honourable the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, and no doubt the matter is one that he will consider when formulating his forthcoming Budget.

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

How much money did each of the State's local authorities receive from the disbursement of Commonwealth funds through the State's grants committee under elements A and B?

*Answer:—*

I table a schedule of grants proposed to be made to local authorities in Queensland under the new tax-sharing scheme in 1976-77.

15. PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE AT MARYBOROUGH CENTRAL STATE SCHOOL

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

(1) What progress has been made in the construction of the pre-school centre at the Maryborough Central State School?

(2) When will the centre be completed and how many children may attend at the one time?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) To date the earthworks for the building platform have been completed. Difficulties are being experienced in having the contract progress satisfactorily and no indication can be given at this juncture as to the completion date. However, this position will not be allowed to obtain for too long and it is being watched closely by my department, having in mind an opening of the pre-school early in the new school year.

The centre, when completed, will cater for 100 children daily in two sessions, 50 in the morning and 50 in the afternoon.

16. WIDENING OF GRANVILLE BRIDGE OVER MARY RIVER

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

With reference to my previous representations regarding the urgent necessity to widen the Granville Bridge over the Mary River and, in particular, the proposal to relocate Hyne and Son's timber jetty and cable railway line at a site on the downstream side of the bridge so that it would not be necessary for the timber punts to go under the bridge, which would thus avoid the necessity to raise the middle span of the bridge, what progress has been made on the costing of this proposal and



what would be the saving in widening the bridge if it were not necessary to raise the middle span to allow passage of timber punts?

*Answer:—*

Preliminary estimates for the widening of the bridge have been completed but the matter of the relocation of Hyne and Son's jetty and cable rail line is still under investigation. The Main Roads Department recently wrote to Hyne and Son on this matter.

17. **SOFTWOODS RECOMMENDED FOR ELLIOTT RIVER-BOONOROO POINT AREA**

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

With reference to the Coastal Lowlands Land Use Study report dealing with the area between Elliott River and Boonooroo Point, what species of softwoods would be most suited for the 37 600 ha of vacant Crown land recommended for forestry?

*Answer:—*

It so happens that the committee responsible for the Coastal Lowlands Land Use Study is currently in the Maryborough and Bundaberg areas discussing the report with local authorities.

Under these circumstances, the answer to the honourable member's question cannot be provided in precise terms. Advice from the Forestry Department is to the effect that the general recommendations for planting in the area indicated are Caribbean pine (*Pinus caribaea*) and slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*). These are both introduced, rather than native, species.

18. **INSURANCE COVER FOR SCHOOL-CHILDREN ON EXCURSIONS**

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

In view of the requirement often placed on parents to indemnify the person or persons in charge of their children, the respective school attended and his department against all claims, actions or suits which may arise from any act which might occur during the time when their children are participating in an educational excursion away from the school, will he investigate the possibility of his department's taking out State-wide insurance to cover students during all such excursions?

*Answer:—*

It is not the policy of the Government to insure school children, and I am not aware of any reason to change this policy, particularly in view of the fact that all children will be covered by Medibank or private health insurance after this week.

19. **ADULT EDUCATION**

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

In view of the growing concern being expressed by adult education officers that the Board of Education will be squeezed out of operation if taken over by the Technical Education Branch, will he clarify the proposed restructuring of adult education and technical education in Queensland and advise how the adult education will be affected, especially in country and provincial areas?

*Answer:—*

I cannot agree that there is a growing concern among adult education officers in regard to a possible integration of adult and technical education. I say this because the possibility of integration has been discussed widely by members of the Board of Adult Education with adult education officers and it has been agreed that if there is to be integration neither adult education officers nor technical education officers are to be disadvantaged. The effect of integration would be an improvement and an expansion of adult education throughout Queensland.

20. **DECLINE IN SECOND-LANGUAGE STUDY IN SCHOOLS**

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

(1) Further to my previous question regarding the decline in second-language learning in Queensland schools and in view of his stated concern for the role of our education system in the "pluralist society", and bearing in mind that Italian and Greek migrants represent a large percentage of this society, when does the Government, in the interest of cultural understanding, intend to introduce the teaching of Italian and Greek in our schools?

(2) What is his attitude towards high-school principals who are actively discouraging the study of second languages in their schools?

*Answers:—*

(1) Italian is taught in four State high schools in areas where there is a preponderance of people of Italian descent. There are no plans at present to introduce modern Greek as a language in State secondary schools.

(2) I would not favour the discouragement of the teaching of a second language in State high schools.

21. ALLOCATION OF COMMONWEALTH FUNDS TO HINCHINBROOK SHIRE COUNCIL

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

(1) Why did the Hinchinbrook Shire Council receive only \$152,000 when a comparable shire like Johnstone received \$297,000 from the fund of \$24.22 million which the Commonwealth Government made available for distribution to local authorities in Queensland during the current financial year?

(2) What criteria did the interim committee, consisting of the Under Treasurer, the Director of Local Government and the President of the Local Government Association, use in determining that part of the grant to the Hinchinbrook Shire Council which was based on needs?

(3) Will he have the Hinchinbrook Shire Council's submission for Commonwealth grant funds re-examined with a view to its receiving further and more favourable consideration?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) It is not appropriate that the question-time of the House should become a substitute for a Grants Commission forum, dealing with whatever comparisons honourable members may wish to draw between one local authority and another. Without dealing with a specific comparison of the two local authorities referred to by the honourable member, it will be sufficient to answer his question if I provide a brief outline of the committee's approach to the distribution of the available funds.

Because it was desirable that local authorities should be advised as early as possible of these allocations so as to enable them to make the best use of the funds during the current financial year, it was not practicable for the committee to make the type of investigation previously made by the Commonwealth Grants Commission. Rather, the committee decided to relate the figures which it recommended to the grants previously determined by the Commonwealth Grants Commission, with adjustments in respect of authorities which had received no Commonwealth grant or a very low per-capita grant. As a general rule, therefore, those authorities which were able to satisfy the Commonwealth Grants Commission that they had relatively high financial needs will receive a relatively high figure this year.

I would stress that the arrangements made for the distribution this year are of an interim nature, and that steps will be taken to appoint a State Grants Commission which will be able to make a more thorough examination of the needs of

individual authorities as a basis for future distributions. The total sum available to the State this year has been allocated, and it is therefore not proposed to entertain any adjustments to the grants already determined.

22. INCREASED RAIL FREIGHTS

**Dr. Scott-Young**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Has he seen the report in "The Courier-Mail" of 7 September indicating the proposed increase of 13 per cent in rail freights?

(2) Is he aware that at the present time the rate from Townsville to Brisbane is \$38.75 per tonne and any increase in this will be most detrimental to all vegetable growers in the North?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes. I have seen the report in "The Courier-Mail" of 7 September 1976.

(2) I accept that I have a responsibility to the people in primary industries to ensure where possible that any costs are contained, and I have drawn the attention of Cabinet to their problems. However, for a specific answer to this question I would suggest that the honourable member discuss the matter with the Honourable the Deputy Premier and Treasurer.

23. DISPOSAL OF CONFISCATED MEAT

**Dr. Scott-Young**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

What is the fate and method of disposal of meat confiscated from the public abattoir boards and, in particular, the board in Townsville?

*Answer:—*

The disposal of confiscated meat is a matter for decision by the Queensland Meat Industry Authority. The authority may allow the confiscated meat to be returned to the owner in certain circumstances; otherwise it is disposed of by dry rendering into meat-meal or other inedible product. This is the method adopted in regard to meat confiscated by the Townsville Public Abattoir Board.

24. RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS, TOWNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING

**Dr. Scott-Young**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads—

As I recently asked him about the legality of obtaining a transcript of the proceedings of a Townsville City Council meeting and he indicated that this is available to me under existing legislation, as I have since applied for a copy of the transcript and the

Acting City Administrator has informed my secretary that I have no legal right to obtain a copy as the transcript contained a threat of mass action against me because of my attempts to show the electors of Townsville that certain welfare schemes were being manipulated by extreme radical groups for their own ends, and as I consider that I am entitled to a copy, which I wish to hand over to the Privileges Committee of the House, will he direct the City Administrator to make this transcript available to me and to the House?

*Answer:—*

In my answer on 15 September 1976 to a question directed to me by the honourable member, I indicated that it was the practice of the Townsville City Council to tape-record proceedings at meetings of the council. I also informed the honourable member of the provisions of the Local Government Act 1936-1976, which require the minute book of a local authority to be open to inspection.

I did not indicate that a transcript of the proceedings of Townsville City Council meetings as recorded on tape were open to inspection under the Act, and accordingly I consider that I would have no authority to direct an officer of that council to make the transcript available to any person. In my answer to the honourable member's previous question, I did, however, suggest that he discuss the matter with the Honourable the Speaker or the Privileges Committee.

## 25. AGREEMENT ON COAL FOR ELECTRICITY GENERATION

**Mr. Casey**, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) Is he aware of a recent agreement between Britain's Central Electricity Generating Board and the National Coal Board, the result of which is that the Central Electricity Generating Board has already instructed its major Australian supplier to cut back on its Australian purchases?

(2) In view of his announcement following his recent return from Great Britain that there would be a huge increase in the export of Queensland coal to that country, what effect will the recent British agreement have on the current and future sales of Queensland coal to Britain?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes. Once again the honourable member for Mackay displays his lack of knowledge associated with the coal-mining industry. The matters covered in the first part of his question refer to the supply of steaming coal for the generation of electricity.

(2) The honourable member confuses coking coal and steaming coal. My recent statement referred to coking coal where there is a potential for increasing exports. I made no comment about steaming coal.

## 26. RELEASE OF PRISONERS TO ATTEND FUNERALS

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

(1) Under what circumstances and on whose authority may prisoners be released from Queensland gaols to attend the funerals of close relatives?

(2) Who meets the cost of transport and escort fees when such a concession is granted?

(3) Is this concession limited only to persons imprisoned in the Brisbane metropolitan area, Townsville and Rockhampton and funerals conducted in those three cities and, if so, is not this another example of discrimination against persons from smaller cities and towns?

*Answers:—*

(1) Each case is considered on its merits and authority is vested in the Comptroller-General of Prisons under section 20 (a) of the Prisons Act 1958-1969 to grant leave of absence to a prisoner to be in attendance upon his family on an occasion of family bereavement.

(2) Families are normally required to meet the cost of transport of the prisoner, but escort fees are met by the department.

(3) No. The concession includes prisoners at State farms.

## 27. SAND-FLY PROBLEM

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

(1) What assistance was given by the Queensland Government both financially and in other ways in each of the last five years to the research campaign into the biting midge (otherwise known as the sand-fly) problem which is experienced particularly in tropical Queensland?

(2) Has a decision been made by the Government to cease giving support to this research?

(3) If so, can the people of tropical Queensland, the tourists visiting the area and those from southern States and other lands who have come to live in Queensland, and who are very sensitive to bites from midges, presume that the Government is not interested in a problem that causes severe discomfort, irritation, sickness and infection to so many people each year?

*Answers:—*

(1) Since 1968 the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, in association with the C.S.I.R.O., has been active in a programme of research on biting midges. Since 1971 a 15 per cent subsidy has been available through the Treasury Department to local authorities for approved permanent capital works for the eradication of the biting midge. I am also advised that research has been undertaken at the University of Queensland.

(2 and 3) There is no proposal to vary the present level of commitment.

## 28. METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

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

(1) What action has been taken to set up the Metropolitan Transit Authority and have members been selected and/or appointments confirmed?

(2) What steps has the Government taken in the selection of the person who is to represent the interests of the general public on that board under the Metropolitan Transit Authority Act of 1976?

(3) Has the Government kept interested community groups informed on the authority and will he consider establishing a commuter council, along the lines of the one being formed in New South Wales, to channel information and grievances from the public to the Transit Authority?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) The notice announcing that the Metropolitan Transit Authority will come into operation on 1 October 1976 was published in the Government Gazette on Saturday, 25 September, together with the names of the members including reference to a member representing the interests of the general public.

I have made a number of Press statements from time to time informing the public of progress on the setting up of the authority. With regard to the suggestion of forming a commuter council, such a council could be formed in the future if found desirable, but its duties would have to be carefully considered in relation to those of the Metropolitan Transit Authority.

## 29. USE OF LAND NEAR DEFENCE AREAS BY ALIENS

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

(1) What is the present position in relation to applications, negotiations and propositions made by or applying to the proposals of the Japanese magnate Iwasaki in regard to the Crown land north of

Yeppoon, which adjoins the southern boundary of the Shoalwater Bay defence manoeuvre area?

(2) In view of the fact that on 2 October 1976 operation "Kangaroo II" will begin at Shoalwater Bay, involving the Defence Forces of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States, certain United Kingdom personnel detached to Australian units and more than 40 ships, including the American nuclear-powered carrier "Enterprise", will he assure the House that no Queensland soil will be alienated to any foreign country or subject for any purpose, particularly any area adjacent to any installation which is critical to the security of our nation? If not, can he inform the House of the conditions which will be imposed on any leases granted in respect of the above conditions?

*Answers:—*

(1) The honourable member will recall that last Thursday the Honourable the Premier advised the House, in answer to a question from the honourable member for Callide, that following the public inquiry in 1974, Mr. Iwasaki was requested to supply additional detailed information on the proposed project. To date this has not been supplied and until it is supplied and analysed no further action can be taken in respect of his proposal. On that same day I also informed the honourable member for Cairns of the position in regard to the acquisition of land in Queensland by an alien.

(2) So far as I am concerned, the honourable member may rest assured that I will have no part in sabotaging the exercises of the Australian or any Allied Defence Forces, particularly in respect of the leasing or alienation of lands adjacent to defence areas.

## 30. QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT TOURIST BUREAU SEMINAR

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

(1) Is it a fact that managers of the fourteen branches of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau have not been invited to attend the Seventh Queensland Tourist Industry Seminar, which is being sponsored and financed by the Queensland Government and is to be held in Cairns from 26 to 28 October 1976 during our centenary year?

(2) Is he aware that one of the most valuable aspects of previous seminars has been the interchange of views, ideas and opinions among guests, speakers, industry delegates and the staff of the Government Tourist Bureau?

(3) If the Government does not set an example by sending its own staff to its own seminar, how can it be expected that

delegates from the tourist industry will undertake the expense of travelling to Far North Queensland from other centres?

(4) Was the occasion of the Cairns centenary celebrations a factor in the decision on venue and, if so, how can this be reconciled with the appearance that once again North Queensland is being less favourably treated because it happens to be a long way from Brisbane?

(5) Will he review the matter of invitations to his own Tourist Bureau branch managers to ensure the success of the Cairns Tourist Industry Seminar, in view of the aforementioned and the expense already incurred in convening and running the seminar?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) The matter of the attendance of delegates is one for their own decision, over which I have no control.

(4) The choice of Cairns as the venue of the seminar very much favours the region and most certainly is no indication that North Queensland is being unfavourably treated.

(5) The attendance of branch managers of the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau at the next seminar in 1978 will be considered in the light of economic circumstances at the time.

### 31. UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND UNION FINANCES

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

(1) With reference to my previous questions regarding the University of Queensland Union finances, did the union reduce its overdraft by \$40,000 in two days?

(2) Is this another example of the incompetence of the union in financial matters, in that its officers cannot be more accurate than to within \$40,000 in assessing their overdraft and advising their own Vice-Chancellor?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) In my answer to the question of 21 September, I advised that with the need to provide for kitchen extensions and improvements the union was granted an overdraft limit of \$550,000. I am told that, for a brief period at the end of 1975, the overdraft limit reached \$554,000. There was an obligation on the union from 1975 to reduce the overdraft by \$35,000 a year.

That obligation has been met for 1976 and the present overdraft ceiling is \$515,000, as I advised in answer to the further question of 23 September.

### 32. WORKERS' COMPENSATION PREMIUMS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

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

(1) Does he recall a recent question asked of him by me concerning increased charges under workers' compensation in regard to a certain section of the small-business community?

(2) Has he completed investigations into the matter in accordance with his answer to the question?

(3) Because of the concern of those businesses affected by the charges under workers' compensation if his investigations have been completed, can he state what relief can be expected by this section of our business community?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) Investigations are complete and the anomalies caused by grouping various categories as retail establishments have been rectified. New rates were published in the Government Gazette of last Saturday and premiums paid by chemists, news-agents, clothing shops, jewellers, barbers, shoe retailers and florists are reduced from \$1.60 per cent to 38c per cent. Premiums paid by cafes, milk bars, restaurants, delicatessens, booksellers, grocers, general stores and furniture retailers are reduced from \$1.60 per cent to \$1.05 per cent.

### 33. GUARD-RAILS ON ROADS

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

(1) Is he aware that timber guard-rails on certain sections of our roads provide little protection to motorists and are a hazard in the event of an accident, and that, as a result of accidents, death has been caused by the rails spearing the occupants in vehicles involved?

(2) Will he investigate the possibility of having the hazards replaced with corrugated metal guard-rail buffers, particularly in accident-prone areas?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) The honourable member would appreciate that new bridges do not have this type of guard-rail, and on many old bridges timber guard-rails have been replaced. I have been assured that it is policy to replace timber rails with metal guard-rails wherever possible and priority

is given to accident-prone areas. However, there are many of these bridges in existence and it will take some time to replace all the timber guard-rails.

#### 34. UNIVERSITY STAFF ASSOCIATION

**Dr. Crawford**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

(1) Is he aware of the recent special meeting of the University Staff Association whereat it was agreed that the staff support students in their 30 September strike over the T.E.A.S. allowance issue?

(2) Of the total staff number of approximately 800 how many staff were present at the meeting?

(3) Has there been any change in the quorum for meetings of the Staff Association, which I have been informed was 50, and, if so, how was the quorum change organised?

(4) Will the university authorities arrange to deduct salary from striking staff members, as has been the custom with teachers and public servants?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) There were slightly more than 50 persons present at this meeting of the staff association.

(3) The quorum is 30 and has been this number for some years.

(4) The university deducts relevant pay from the salary or wage of any striking employee.

#### 35. TEACHERS' BALLOT ON STRIKE ACTION

**Dr. Crawford**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

As the teachers' rolling strikes now appear to have ceased owing to lack of interest concerning what is really a non-issue and as most schools did conduct ballots of staff under the urging of union organisers, can he ascertain what percentage of primary and secondary schools voted not to strike but to maintain traditional standards of professional behaviour?

*Answer:—*

Complete information regarding ballots held in schools is not available. To the best of my knowledge, the following schools held one-day strikes:

Secondary schools—39 out of 120, or 32 per cent;

Primary schools—31 out of 1 031, or 3 per cent; and

Opportunity schools—2 out of 34, or 5½ per cent.

When considering the number of teachers who endeavoured to maintain traditional standards of professional behaviour, it should be remembered that a high proportion of ballots in favour of striking were carried with slim majorities, and that many teachers attended schools normally on the days of the so-called rolling strikes.

#### 36. MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF PREMIERS' CONFERENCES

**Dr. Crawford**, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) What precautions are taken to ensure that minutes of proceedings of Premiers' Conferences are kept confidential?

(2) Is it possible that security could be breached at such a conference and minutes be forwarded to any outside organisation?

(3) Could any Queensland official act in such a way?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) No minutes are kept of Premiers' Conferences, and the official transcript is regarded as a record of the proceedings. Supplementary documents may be circulated.

The Prime Minister's Department is responsible for the security of the actual meeting when such are held in camera—that is, without the admission of the Press. However, transcript drafts are circulated to all participating Premiers as soon as possible after the conference and subsequently printed. As was evident from newspaper coverage of one of the 1976 conferences, there are obvious leaks from participating individuals according to their personal standards of integrity and political philosophy.

(3) As I have indicated, it would be possible but it would be so highly improbable as to be almost inconceivable. My colleagues and I have the utmost trust and confidence in those of our senior officers who attend Premiers' Conferences.

#### 37. VEHICLES FOR TRAINING MOTOR TRADE APPRENTICES

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

(1) Further to my question of 2 September concerning apprentices doing practical work at college, what is the position with regard to an apprentice who is a Crown employee and could it not be said that as a Crown employee he receives some financial benefit from this training activity?

(2) Would it not be more sensible and practicable to revert to the previously established practice for all trades, but to penalise any Crown employee who did in fact overindulge in the supply of equipment for apprenticeship training?

*Answers:—*

(1) It is the practice in technical colleges to treat all students in the same way, and implicit in this is the fact that the same privileges apply to each one, including apprentices employed by the Crown. My answer to the previous question on this matter related to Crown employees other than students.

(2) I cannot agree that the previously established practice should be restored.

38. REDRESS AGAINST T.A.B. FOR  
WRONG INFORMATION

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

With regard to rule 22 of the Totalisator Administration Board of Queensland headed "Information as to Races"—

(1) What redress has an investor (punter) when he is given wrong information either by notice on the notice board of the T.A.B. agency or by an employee at the agency, for example, if a punter's intention is to back a particular horse in a particular race and on endeavouring to do so he is informed that that horse has been scratched and he then changes his investment to another horse in the same race only to hear some time later that not only did his original selection start but that it had won the race?

(2) What system of counter-checking is adopted to ensure that a rule such as 22 should never need to be applied?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) The T.A.B. in the course of its business prepares and displays a very large volume of information, yet very rarely has this been found to be incorrect in any particular detail. It also has a large number of employees and the possibility of occasional error in the giving of advice to investors unavoidably exists.

The honourable member will appreciate the reason for the inclusion of rule 22. Without such a rule, the T.A.B. could be open to claims from persons in circumstances where it would be impossible to verify whether or not the claimant actually suffered loss through the actions of the T.A.B. or one of its staff members. The T.A.B. is nevertheless willing, despite the existence of rule 22, to look into the circumstances surrounding any such alleged loss and to meet claims where it is satisfied that the investor has genuinely been disadvantaged. I would repeat, however, that grounds for any such claims have been few in number.

39. MEDICAL BENEFITS FUND  
DEDUCTIONS, WORKS DEPARTMENT

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

Why are some tradesmen in the State Works Department being treated differently from all other public servants in that they cannot have their Medical Benefits Fund payments deducted from their wages as other public servants do?

*Answer:—*

It has been a long-standing policy of this Government that any group scheme for the deduction of contributions from the salaries and wages of Crown employees should apply only in respect of permanent officers and employees. This policy has applied to all approved hospital and medical societies since 1958 and it is not intended to vary it in the foreseeable future.

40. IDENTIFICATION OF SNAKE SPECIES

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to David Fleay's account in "The Courier-Mail" of the need for a police highway dash over 14 kilometres to have him identify a snake?

(2) Will he consider the printing of charts which would facilitate prompt identification of local species of snakes likely to be involved in snakebite cases and arrange for their distribution to all hospitals, clinics and ambulance centres throughout the State?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) There is already adequate information available for the identification of snakes. In particular the Commonwealth Serum Laboratory, in its handbook and also with snakebite antivenene, provides expert information.

However, I would point out that identification by the inexperienced person is notoriously unreliable.

I understand in the case of ambulance officers, first-aid treatment is given and the patient taken for further medical attention. Hospital medical officers would not rely on their own ability to identify a snake and would certainly institute treatment if there were any doubt, at the same time attempting to obtain identification by an expert.

41. T.A.B. BUILDING; MORVEN AGENCY

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

(1) As this Government has made it illegal for S.P. bookmakers to operate in Queensland, why is the T.A.B. agency in Morven closed to mid-week operations?

(2) Is he aware that no T.A.B. money is returned to any race club in Morven, as horseracing is not conducted in that area?

(3) Will consideration be given to returning the mid-week T.A.B. operations in Morven as a service to punters living in that area, even though the financial experts in the T.A.B. may claim that the decision to close the agency is financially justifiable?

(4) What was the cost of constructing the new multi-storey T.A.B. complex at Albion?

*Answers:—*

(1) Following recent representations by the honourable member, the decision to restrict the Morven agency to Saturdays only was re-examined.

That action simply confirmed the extremely low volume of business done at Morven on mid-week fixtures and in view of the consequent loss on these operations I could do no more than agree that the decision was fully justified.

I pointed out in my reply to the representations that the T.A.B. is presently facing a very heavy cost structure which inevitably shows its effects in the amount available for distribution to racing clubs and that in the climate now prevailing it is imperative that endeavours be made to shave off high loss activities.

(2) Yes. Morven is but one of a number of such instances.

(3) The agency is not closed. It is restricted to Saturdays only and must remain at that level of operation in the foreseeable future.

(4) \$5,900,000.

#### 42. PROPERTY RESUMPTIONS FOR NORTHERN AND CENTRAL FREEWAY

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

Since the Fraser Government came to power in Canberra, has he made any submission to that Government to persuade it to relax the hardship criteria for purchase imposed on persons whose properties are affected by proposed work on the Northern and Central Freeway and who apply to have such property acquired by the Main Roads Department?

*Answer:—*

I will be continuing to press for substantially increased Commonwealth funding for urban arterial roads in the new Act to apply after June 1977. If additional funds can be obtained I certainly will request a relaxation of hardship criteria especially on the Northern and Central Freeway corridors. In the meantime the Main Roads Department is continuing to

acquire properties in the most urgent hardship cases. I hope this can be accelerated when the new Act comes into operation next year.

#### 43. STATE MENTAL HEALTH PLANNING COMMISSION

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

What was the result of his study of the reports or submissions by eight bodies, including the Queensland Mental Health Association and the Royal Australian Nursing Federation, seeking consideration of their proposals for a State Mental Health Planning Commission?

*Answer:—*

I have had this proposal studied and I hope to make a submission to Cabinet in the near future.

#### 44. TRIBUNAL TO HANDLE COMPLAINTS AGAINST POLICE

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

(1) With reference to an address by the eminent jurist Mr. Justice Kirby, Chairman of the Australian Law Reform Commission, given at the Sydney Criminology Institute in Sydney on 22 September wherein he said that the only assurance of real justice in resolving complaints against police was an independent tribunal to deal with them, will he consider acting on Mr. Justice Kirby's esteemed advice and legislate for such an independent tribunal to handle complaints against police in Queensland?

(2) Will he undertake to repeal section 12 (4) of the Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1974–1976, otherwise known as the Ombudsman Act, which unlike any other Ombudsman Act in the world excludes the investigation of police from his jurisdiction?

*Answers:—*

(1) I am not in possession of the address referred to and am therefore unable to give considered comment on this subject.

(2) I believe that the honourable member has misinformed himself on this subject. The Queensland Act states that it does not apply to or in relation to any member of the Police Force in his capacity as such a member but does apply to him at other times.

Information available to me indicates that during 1975 an Ombudsman Act was introduced in the State of New South Wales and that Act excluded from the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman a member of the Police Force acting as a constable.



Perhaps an examination of other similar legislation throughout the world by the honourable member would indicate that this limitation is not restricted to Queensland and New South Wales.

As the Parliamentary Commissioner Act comes under the jurisdiction of the Honourable the Premier, it is suggested that the honourable member direct any further question on the subject to him.

45. CRITERIA FOR TYPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDIES

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

(1) Has he seen the report in the "Financial Review" of 16 September referring to a document that quotes Mr. P. Ellis, Director of the Environmental Control Department of the Co-ordinator-General's Department, as advising that Mary Kathleen Uranium need not make a detailed or in-depth environmental impact statement?

(2) What criteria are used by the Government to determine whether a particular enterprise or activity requires, firstly, an environmental impact statement and what criteria or consideration is then used to determine the type of statement required, for example, in-depth or otherwise?

(3) Who makes these decisions or sets the criteria?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) The criteria are set out in the Procedural Manual for Environmental Impact Studies in Queensland issued by the Environmental Control Council and I suggest to the honourable member that he makes himself familiar with the document. In the case of Mary Kathleen no study was commissioned by the Department of Mines because the operations at Mary Kathleen were to be on mining leases already granted; however, a copy of an environmental impact study furnished by the company to the Co-ordinator-General's Department was submitted to the Department of Mines for comment.

(3) This is set out in the procedural manual.

46. ESTABLISHMENT OF RURAL BANK

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

(1) Following his recent Press statement that the Agricultural Bank had no available money for new borrowings, in view of this serious situation, what action has he taken to make submissions to Cabinet that a Rural Bank be established in Queensland?

(2) Is the Rural Bank of New South Wales very active in assisting primary producers by making moneys available at between 5 and 5½ per cent interest?

*Answers:—*

(1) A senior officer of the Agricultural Bank—namely Mr. Dellit, the assistant general manager—recently visited the Rural Bank of New South Wales and the Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia to inquire as to the major difficulties likely to be encountered in an extension of the bank's activities. A report on the matter is in the course of preparation.

(2) The Rural Bank of New South Wales does not make funds available for normal rural lending at rates of 5 to 5.5 per cent per annum. From time to time, under special schemes approved by the Government and with funds provided by it, the bank makes advances to primary producers at concessional rates of interest (generally from 3 to 6 per cent per annum) in respect of disaster assistance—for example, flood, drought and bush fire. Similar schemes are introduced in this State as the occasion demands.

47. COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN'S ORGANISATION LEVY

**Mr. Hartwig**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement and Fisheries—

(1) Is there evidence that the Queensland Commercial Fishermen's Organisation is presently summoning fishermen for not paying levies imposed by the organisation?

(2) Can an interstate fisherman operating in Queensland waters who refuses to pay the organisation's levy be prosecuted?

(3) Did over 500 commercial fishermen in Queensland refuse to pay the levy last year?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) The Queensland Commercial Fishermen's Organisation is a legally constituted body and has appropriate authority to make and collect membership levies. There are constitutional issues involved relative to interstate fishermen but legal processes may issue. I understand no summonses have as yet been issued.

(3) I am advised this is not an accurate assessment.

48. OVERHEAD SIGNS FOR JUNCTION OF YEPPOON ROAD WITH BRUCE HIGHWAY

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

Will he consider approval for overhead illuminated signs, similar to those at Buderim and Maroochydore, to be placed at the Yeppoon Road junction with the Bruce Highway?

*Answer:—*

This intersection is to be reconstructed and it will be channelised and illuminated. It will be readily identifiable for some distance before the motorist reaches it. The direction signs scheduled for the job will give adequate information for the motorist and clearly show the Yeppoon turnoff.

49. WORKING DAYS LOST THROUGH INDUSTRIAL ACTION

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

(1) What are the quarterly figures for Queensland of working days lost through industrial action for the years 1973, 1974 and 1975 and for the first two quarters of 1976?

(2) Do current trends indicate an improvement or a deterioration in good industrial relations in Queensland this year?

*Answers:—*

(1) Industrial Disputes—Working Days Lost (000's) (By Quarters)

1973—

March	39.6
June	150.0
September	85.0
December	45.7

1974—

March	65.4
June	118.8
September	289.1
December	56.3

1975—

March	63.7
June	113.5
September	203.6
December	92.7

1976—

March	36.0
June	57.8

(2) A quarter-by-quarter comparison of these figures is essential because of their seasonal nature. However, such a comparison does indicate that the level of working days lost in the first two quarters of 1976 are below those in the same quarters for the years 1973, 1974 and 1975. In the case of the June quarter they are substantially lower.

It is not easy to demonstrate a correlation between the quality of a concept as wide ranging as industrial relations and working days lost. However, there are obviously grounds on which to believe that the industrial scene in Queensland is becoming more tranquil and accordingly we have the basis for the productivity growth that will be the core of economic recovery.

The favourable 1976 figures would indicate a general recognition of the grave economic consequences to the community of strikes. This highlights the fact that whilst strikes will never be eliminated from the industrial scene—indeed, in some cases they have justification—the events of the last few years have shown that strikes on non-industrial or political issues are a luxury that this country can ill afford.

50. HOUSING COMMISSION ACTIVITIES, COUNTY OF WARD, PARISH OF BOYD

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

Is the Housing Commission acquiring, negotiating for or considering any of portions 74, 75, 76, 84, 89, 92, 93, 94 and 95 or parts thereof in the county of Ward, parish of Boyd for the purpose of erecting commission houses?

*Answer:—*

No. Since 1973 the commission has rejected offers of portions 89, 93 and 94 as not suitable for commission purposes at the time of offer. Any offer now will be considered on its merits in the light of present needs.

51 and 52. UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND UNION SHOP

**Mr. Ahern** for **Mr. Gygar**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

(1) With regard to the finances of the University of Queensland Student Union, how much money has been spent to date by the union in equipping, stocking and operating the union calculator and stereo shop in Adelaide Street, including amounts for which accounts have been received but no payments made?

(2) What have been the gross receipts of this operation since it commenced?

(3) What was the source of funds used by the union to settle accounts arising out of the operation before any income was generated?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) Inquiries are being made to gather the information sought by the honourable member.

(3) The funds available to the union include moneys made available by the senate, overdraft moneys and moneys in hand from various trading operations of the union. It is not possible to identify the source of funds more precisely than this.

**Mr. Ahern** for **Mr. Gygar**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

(1) With regard to the provisions of section 30 of the University of Queensland

Act and the strange attitude of the university senate thereto, has the senate been procrastinating for over a year in its deliberations on the legality of the operations of the university union's calculator and stereo shop in Adelaide Street?

(2) Has the senate been given legal advice that this operation is unlawful under section 30?

(3) Has his attention been drawn to a report in the latest edition of "University News" which states that the university senate meeting of 1 September considered that, because this operation had an excess of receipts over expenditure in one particular month, the senate could conveniently ignore the provisions of the Act?

(4) In view of this extraordinary piece of legal nonsense and the obvious intention of the senate to ignore its responsibilities in this matter, what action does he propose to take to ensure that the university senate complies with section 30?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) On the basis of legal advice tendered to it, the university senate directed an inquiry into the question of whether section 30 of the University Act was breached in respect of the use of funds for the operation of the calculator and stereo shop. A small committee of the senate examined the accounts and transactions relating to the shop and advised the senate that there was no question of university funds being used for trading purposes of the union other than for refectory services.

### 53. RADIO STATION 4ZZZ

**Mr. Ahern** for **Mr. Gygar**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

(1) What is the corporate structure of radio station 4ZZZ, which operates from the University of Queensland, what form of incorporated or unincorporated association does it take and who would be liable for its debts if it were to collapse financially?

(2) Who owns the equipment and machinery used at 4ZZZ?

(3) How much money has 4ZZZ received from the University of Queensland Union since its inception?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) The licence for 4ZZZ was granted by the Commonwealth Government without any reference to the senate or to officers of the university. Inquiries are being made to provide answers to the honourable member's questions.

### 54. AGRICULTURAL BANK FARM LOANS

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

(1) Has the Agricultural Bank deferred for six to nine months hence any loans for the purchase of farms which have not already been approved?

(2) If not, what is the latest situation with regard to loans from the bank?

**Mr. SULLIVAN:** On Monday of last week I reluctantly had to advise Cabinet of the situation in relation to the Agricultural Bank, and then on Wednesday of last week I advised National Party members of it. I then felt that a Press statement should be made so that the people of Queensland should know the situation, and I take it that it is from that Press statement that the honourable member's question emanates. I now read the prepared answer.

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) Owing to the shortage of available loan funds and a heavy commitment in respect of loans already approved and not paid, it has been necessary for the Agricultural Bank to decline applications from other than existing clients except in those cases where the property is already mortgaged to the bank and the advance sought will not involve a substantial increase in the debt to the bank. This will allow the bank to devote its available funds to assisting its existing clients.

The position will, of course, be kept under close scrutiny and should it improve following the mid-year review of the State's loan programme, that is in the first week of January, the restrictions will be relaxed as early as possible. I want the honourable member to bear in mind that this situation has not been brought about by the State Government itself. It has been caused by a cutback in our loan borrowings for other instrumentalities and the bank just does not have the money to take on any new business.

### 55. SOFTWOOD FORESTRY

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

(1) Will the Government utilise former farmland available from rural reconstruction for softwood plantations?

(2) As Commonwealth advances for softwood forestry have decreased from \$2,250,000 in 1975-76 to an estimated \$1,525,000 in 1976-77, (a) what projects will be funded by the 1976-77 allocation, (b) what projects have been affected by the cut and what is the effect of the cut on each project and (c) for each financial year from 30 June 1972 to 30 June 1976 what projects have been funded by the scheme and how many hectares of softwood have been planted under each project?

*Answers:—*

(1) As far as the Forestry Department is concerned, in the present economic situation the proposition could be considered only where the land was made available to the department at little or no cost and in sufficiently large compact areas with suitable soil and climatic conditions to enable the proposal to proceed on a sound economic and managerial basis.

(2) (a) The 1976-77 allocation will be used to fund maintenance of planted areas which were established since 1-7-1967 with financial assistance under the first two softwood agreements, and also to finance some new plantings.

(b) New plantings to be assisted under the scheme are to be reduced from 1 643 hectares to approximately 650 hectares.

(c) For each of the five years 30 June 1972 to 30 June 1976 assistance has been provided for the planting of 1 643 hectares plus the maintenance of those areas previously planted with assistance under the scheme.

The assistance provided is calculated by a formula in the Act which is related to total plantation costs rather than specific projects.

#### 56. SUPERVISION OF SCHOOL CROSSINGS

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

(1) Is he aware that the Police Department in Victoria is to employ people part-time to supervise school crossings in busy areas?

(2) In view of the present uncertainty of the teachers' legal rights in the matter, will he seriously consider instituting a similar system in Queensland?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) I would invite the honourable member's attention to my answer to a similar question from the honourable member for Mansfield on 15 April 1975, when I indicated that this question had already been carefully examined by the Government and that it had been decided that, as this is a matter which, apart from the physical control of school crossings, must have regard to the enforcement of the law, it would require examination by my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Police.

At the present time a special subcommittee of the Queensland Road Safety Council is actively examining measures whereby crossing and general school-access arrangements may be improved.

#### 57. S.G.I.O. FIRE INSURANCE

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

(1) What stamp duty is charged to fire insurance policyholders by the S.G.I.O.?

(2) Did the fire policy office pay this stamp duty prior to 1973?

(3) Was the policyholder charged 2½ per cent stamp duty after 1973 and 5 per cent as from this year?

(4) Does the Insurance Office pay 75 per cent of the levy to fire brigades, with 12½ per cent being paid by the Government and 12½ per cent by the local authority?

(5) Does the policyholder pay 25 per cent of the 75 per cent?

(6) As the Premier has suggested that there should be a reduction in indirect and hidden taxes, will the Treasurer take steps in his Budget to remove these slugs on insurance policyholders?

*Answers:—*

(1) The State Government Insurance Office pays the stamp duty on new business and policyholders are charged on renewals. The rate at present is 5c per \$100 or part thereof of the sum insured.

(2) The same conditions applied although the rate of duty was lower.

(3) Stamp duty was increased from 2½c to 5c per \$100 or part thereof of the sum insured from 1 January 1976.

(4) Insurers contribute 75 per cent of the cost of maintaining the fire services through the State and the Government and local authorities each contribute 12½ per cent.

(5) Insurers obviously have to pass the cost of this contribution on to their policyholders.

(6) The Budget will be introduced later this week and I do not propose to indicate at this stage what it contains.

#### 58. WORKERS' COMPENSATION DEPARTMENT

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

(1) What was the profit or loss from the Workers' Compensation Department of the S.G.I.O. in each year from 1971 to 1976?

(2) What stamp duty was paid in the period 1971 to 1975 on workers' compensation policies?

(3) As the Premier has suggested in his speeches in the Lockyer by-election that he is against hidden indirect taxes and as many businessmen are complaining about the high cost of workers compensation insurance, will he remove the stamp duty on workers compensation policies?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) The information up to 1974-75 is available to the honourable member from the annual reports of the State Government Insurance Office, which have been tabled in this House. Figures for 1975-76 are not yet available.

(3) The Budget will be introduced on Thursday and I do not intend at this stage to indicate its contents.

59. METROPOLITAN TRANSIT BODIES

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

(1) Has the Metropolitan Transport Board been succeeded by the Metropolitan Transit Authority?

(2) What is the number of staff employed by both bodies?

*Answers:—*

(1) The notice announcing that the Metropolitan Transit Authority will come into operation on 1 October 1976 was published in the Government Gazette on Saturday, 25 September.

(2) The number of persons employed by the Metropolitan Transit Project Board in permanent and temporary capacity is 28. Until it comes into operation, the authority will not be able to make any decisions concerning its staff.

60. REGIONAL PASTORAL COMPANY AND  
MR. HARRY LONDY

**Mr. K. J. Hooper**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the statement by the Premier in "The Courier-Mail" of 28 September welcoming the announcement of a \$35 million housing and commercial project at Victoria Point?

(2) Where is the registered office of the Regional Pastoral Company located?

(3) What is the paid-up capital of the company?

(4) What are the names and addresses of the directors and shareholders?

(5) Is the spokesman for the company, Mr. Harry Londy, the same Mr. Londy with a record of previous company failures in Queensland and, if so, will he table the Corporate Affairs Department's report and the liquidator's statement of affairs and advise the House of the cost to the investors of Queensland of Mr. Londy's previous commercial ventures?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) The company is a recognised company having its registered office in Sydney at 22 Macleay Street, Potts Point. Its principal place in Brisbane is at the office of Messrs. King and Company, Solicitors, 12th Floor, Commonwealth Bank Building, King George Square, Brisbane.

(3 and 4) According to information received by telephone from the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs in New South Wales, the nominal capital is \$10,000. As no annual returns had been lodged with

the commissioner in New South Wales, he was unable to supply any information regarding the paid-up capital or present shareholders. The commissioner also advised that the present directors are Harry Londy and Wendy Londy, both of 23 Elizabeth Bay Road, Elizabeth Bay, Sydney; and Christopher Allan Clarke of 20 Lawson Parade, St. Ives, New South Wales.

(5) I am unable to say whether or not the spokesman for the company who the honourable member says is Harry Londy is in any way associated with previous company failures in Queensland. However, I refer the honourable member to replies given in this House by my predecessor on 4 and 10 September 1974, wherein details of complaints relating to a real estate salesman named Harry Londy were detailed to this House.

61. BUILDING SOCIETY DEPOSITORS'  
PROTECTION

**Mr. K. J. Hooper**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

With reference to the recent amendment to the Building Societies Act to allow building societies to negotiate depositors' investments at flexible interest rates for a fixed period if the societies run into an unfinancial liquidity situation, will the depositors' investments be protected by the contingency fund?

*Answer:—*

Yes, to the extent prescribed by the Building Societies Act 1886-1976. What also needs to be realised is that permanent societies are now subject to some of the most stringent controls in the conduct of their affairs. Whilst they may in future have the flexibility to negotiate a balanced portfolio of shareholders' and depositors' funds at reasonable and competitive rates of interest, they must at all times act responsibly.

62. GOVERNMENT STIMULUS TO BUILDING  
CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

**Mr. K. J. Hooper**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

What steps has he taken as a result of the report he released on 10 September, which recommended an urgent increase of Government and Government-assisted work to prevent a further deterioration of what is called an already grave situation in the building construction industry?

*Answer:—*

As usual the honourable member has his facts wrong. I did not release this report.

## QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

## PROBLEMS OF COUNTRY PEOPLE

**Mr. GLASSON:** In directing a question to the Premier, I assume that his attention has been drawn to statements by a Mrs. Florence Bjelke-Petersen, with whom he is no doubt acquainted, about the problems of people living in inland and Northern Queensland. I now ask:

- (1) Is he aware of these problems?
- (2) What action has his Government taken on these problems?
- (3) Will he give serious consideration to setting up a committee, as recommended by Mrs. Bjelke-Petersen?

**Mr. Marginson:** When did he give you that one?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** For the information of the honourable member for Wolston, I did not know that the honourable member was going to ask the question, although it is logical that he would.

Yes, I do know Florence Bjelke-Petersen. I saw the article in the newspaper this morning. I agree with my wife that there are very serious problems in the inland part of our State. I am afraid that people generally are not aware of what is happening to those people. It is unbelievable that in this age an important section of the people are living under conditions of extreme hardship. As a Government we have taken various measures to assist, such as the elimination of road taxes. The abolition of probate and succession duties will be a further means of assisting them. Like the honourable member, I am very much aware of their problems, as I travel the State continually.

I do feel, as my wife said, that there must be equalisation of fuel prices, which prevailed from wartime, but which the Australian Labor Party Government removed. And many other concessions must be granted to them. I cannot emphasise that too much. I am sure that my colleagues and I will look into the matter of a committee to investigate what we can do and that we will put pressure on Canberra to do something effective about their problems.

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

## MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

## MEDIBANK

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (12.6 p.m.): It is not very often that I rise to participate in this debate.

**Mr. Jensen:** It must be important.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** It is important. I want to draw to the attention of this House and of the general public something that is about to happen in this State and in this nation.

Throughout history, man has had to cope with many disasters. Firstly, there was the Biblical flood and later the eruption of Vesuvius and the destruction of Pompeii, the sinking of the "Titanic", and so on. As from Friday another monumental disaster can be added to the list, one that will affect every household in Queensland and in Australia—Medibank.

For that reason, I propose that Friday, 1 October 1976, be designated Bill Hayden Day. On this date each year from now on, as Queenslanders sit down to fill out their tax forms they will look back and shudder. They will remember that on "Bleak Friday", like a Frankenstein monster, "Hayden's Horror" was officially born. Its pedigree was by socialism out of mismanagement; its sponsors were Scotton and Deeble; and its fodder was your tax funds and mine.

True to tradition, Mr. Hayden built his pet from the cast-offs, rejects and leftovers from everyone else's health schemes. With national health schemes from Britain, West Germany and Canada—from everywhere—he pored long into the night in his Canberra ivory tower seeking out the worst features to incorporate into his own. He worked hard as Hayden's Horror took gruesome form—an insatiable appetite for tax money, an iron grip on health care, a ruthless standover of the medical profession and the ultimate aim of crushing all private hospitals and hospital beds that stood in its way.

**Mr. Alison:** To hell with the patients!

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** To hell with the patients!

To those who recoiled in horror from the Medibank monster, Mr. Hayden issued this ultimatum: "Join it or starve." The faint-hearted fell for it, thus Hayden's Horror was ready to walk the nation. But that was not to be, as the Whitlam Government fell with a resounding crash.

Many people believed that that was the end of it; but the cheering was too soon. Hayden's Horror is reborn as the Medibank mess.

I think the greatest mistake made by the new Government was its lack of courage to consign Medibank to oblivion. Right here in Queensland we had a system that had functioned well for many years. Any Queenslander as of right could either accept free hospital treatment or join a private medical and hospital benefits fund. This was pointed out to Mr. Hayden while he was assembling his handiwork, but the points fell on deaf ears.

The new Federal Government inherited the Medibank mess from Bill Hayden and the A.L.P. It is now too late, of course, to put the monster back into the box. All that remains is to try somehow to make it work.

In my view, the worst feature of the current scheme is that no-one has a choice. It should be modified so that anyone willing to provide for his and his family's health

needs should be able to do so outside of Medibank. But never let us forget who designed, built and launched the monster—Bill Hayden.

Every Queenslander will have reason to remember October 1 as Bill Hayden Day. On this day Queenslanders, who had enjoyed the best health system in Australia, were dragged down, in typical A.L.P. fashion, to the common mess.

There is no such thing as a free service from Governments—it all has to be paid for from taxes. But as from Bill Hayden Day, Queenslanders will not only pay the tax they always paid for their hospital and health care but they will now pay a tax levy as well. And remember that Hayden's Horror stood four-square on a tax levy. On top of that, Queenslanders who decided to stay with private insurance will now find that this costs them twice as much as it did before Bill Hayden's Medibank monster saw the light of day.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I repeat what I said on the day some people sold out Queensland for a mess of Medibank potage: "Queenslanders will rue the day". Now that Hayden's Horror is loose in the land, I remind the Opposition Leader and his comrades or mates—

**Mr. Alison:** Comrades!

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Yes, comrades—of how they fought tooth and nail to get Queenslanders into Medibank, because that is what they did. I remind the leader writers of "The Courier-Mail" and other papers of how they thundered that Queensland would suffer unless we joined Medibank. To Mr. Burns and his mates and to the leader writers of the various papers, let me say this: "Friday is Medibank Day. It's your day. Share it with the headaches you helped to create."

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

#### MEDIBANK PROMISES BY COALITION PARTIES

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (12.12 p.m.): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had intended to speak for 10 minutes in this debate on the Premier's mate Harry Londy; but, before I speak about him, I thought I ought to refer to the statements of the Premier this morning. Do you remember this advertisement, Mr. Premier? It exclaims "You lie, Mr. Whitlam!" Under the name of the National Party is the statement "Medibank will be maintained intact". Who lied, Mr. Premier? Who lied in the last election campaign to the people of Queensland when they were told that they would not be taxed? You flew at the people's expense all over this State. You flew right around this nation saying to the people, "Vote for Fraser. There'll be no tax on your free hospitals."

In the last State election campaign, Mr. Premier, the Liberal Leader (Sir Gordon Chalk) on your behalf said that, if a levy was placed on Medibank, you would demand of the Federal Government that the money that was paid by Queenslanders by way of tax would be returned to the people of Queensland. You have made no such demands of your own Federal colleagues since, Mr. Premier. In addition, Mr. Premier, Mr. Fraser said, "Medibank, pensions, education and social welfare will all be strengthened by honest, responsible government." Might I say to you, Mr. Premier, you were neither honest nor responsible in this regard.

Let me quote another one from your own campaign director, the secretary of the National Party, the white-haired boy of the National Party—a fellow by the name of Mike Evans. He is reported in "The Courier-Mail" of 3 December, under the heading "Nationals in a counter move". I am quoting Mr. Evans, your campaign director, your friend and colleague on the executive—

"Medibank will be maintained, and not scrapped, down-graded or prostituted; and Queenslanders do not face a double tax."

Mr. Premier, Medibank has been down-graded. It has not been maintained. It has been prostituted, and you will go down in history as the man who prostituted the Queensland free hospital scheme, the man who destroyed it, the man who walked out on our free hospital scheme, the man who did not have the courage to stand up for his fellow Queenslanders. Irrespective of what you say, Mr. Premier, it is a fact of life that you walked away from the people of Queensland; you walked away from the people in the provision of hospital services here.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition, of course, has just run wild.

**Mr. Burns:** What is the point of order?

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order!

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** The Leader of the Opposition said that I ran away from Queensland and from Queenslanders. That is the last thing—

**Mr. Burns:** State your point of order. He is wasting my time, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Make him state his point of order.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable gentleman is wasting his own time by constant interjection. I ask the Honourable the Premier to state his point of order.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I want to say to the Leader of the Opposition that the last thing I or any of my colleagues will do is run away from Queenslanders or Queensland. Right throughout history we have stood by Queensland while he has supported Canberra Labor.

**Mr. BURNS:** I have not heard the Premier once, on behalf of the people of Queensland whom he purports to represent, say what will happen to the average person who lives in a country town where there is no hospital or no doctor but is being forced to pay the Medibank levy imposed by the Premier's friends Mr. Fraser and Mr. Anthony—a levy introduced by his party. Not once have I heard him go to the people of Queensland living in country areas and say, "I am going to stand up for you."

In fact according to "The Courier-Mail" this morning, the Premier's wife claimed that he had promised a hospital I think in Anakie 12 months ago and had forgotten about it.

**A Government Member** interjected.

**Mr. BURNS:** Well, whatever the name of the town is. But he had forgotten the hospital that he promised the people there. He has forgotten the people of the West and the remainder of the people of Queensland. He has walked away on this particular issue. None of the promises he has made has he stuck to.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition is completely untruthful. The Minister for Health can explain clearly what is happening in relation to that hospital. It is going to be built. What the Leader of the Opposition said is completely untrue.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to accept that denial.

**Mr. BURNS:** Oh, I accept. I do not know what his denial is. He stumbled around for a couple of minutes but out of deference to you, Mr. Hewitt, and not out of deference to him, I will accept anything he has denied.

He is the man who is going to make me and every other Queensland pay money from 1 October—for a health service that we did not have to pay for before; it was free. Thirty years ago we started a free hospital scheme and the National and Liberal Parties in this State have always been interested in closing it down. They have always run away from trying to protect the free hospital scheme because it was a Labor scheme and because some doctors have been able to manipulate them in some way. They have been more interested in closing the scheme down or in providing poor services than they have been in expanding it and improving it.

I can remember the fights in this Parliament with Sir Douglas Tooth. He ran away from the question of even starting a new hospital at Mt. Gravatt. He refused or delayed and backed and filled on Commonwealth Government assistance for a free hospital there. What has this Government—the defender of Medibank done? The Premier himself brought a fizzer into this Parliament today. He is now trying to weasel out from under because,

whether we like it or not, from 1 October a levy will have to be paid by the people who he promised in December last year would have to pay no money at all under Fraser federalism. The people who he promised would have to pay no money at all will now have to pay 2½ per cent of their salaries by way of levy. They include the people in North Queensland and the Far West who are living in towns where there is no doctor and no hospital. They will be forced to contribute to a scheme to subsidise southern doctors and southern hospitals in Fraser territory.

The Premier promised the people of Queensland that he would try to get all of that money back from Fraser. He did not try. He ran away. He scabbed on the people of Queensland. Those are facts of life. He made a promise at election-time and has refused to front up since.

**Dr. Edwards:** You'll keep.

**Mr. BURNS:** Of course I'll keep. The Minister for Health is well known as "swinging doors". He is either opening or shutting something. Usually he is opening new facilities in Brisbane and closing hospitals in the bush. He should talk to the people of Herberton and Quilpie about their problems. He should talk to all of the people throughout Queensland who are writing to me and complaining about his activities as Minister for Health. The Minister took over in the soft period when the Australian Labor Government was giving him money to spend and he could not even handle that efficiently.

Tomorrow he will get up and make a ministerial statement to protect himself. That is the chicken-hearted way, the Liberal way. It will be the same as what the Deputy Premier did this morning. I have a book entitled, "Justice on the Rocks" by Bill Knox. Part of the story became evident this morning. He got a hiding from his executive yesterday. He came along here this morning and refused to answer my question on a particular matter. Then the Premier took 10 minutes of the time of this House trying to blame somebody else for the Government's problems.

Let me deal with some of the statements made by his people. Mr. Evans said, "Medibank will be maintained, and not scrapped, down-graded or prostituted." Every National Party member in this Chamber endorses that proposal. They stood by it during the last election campaign. When Mr. Evans snaps his fingers, every one of them jumps through the hoop. When Mr. Evans made that promise in December last year, doubtless they would have passed it on to all their friends. But that did not happen.

When Malcolm Fraser snaps his fingers, all the Liberals jump through the hoop. He said—

"Medibank, pensions, education and social welfare will all be strengthened by honest, responsible government."



Who has strengthened it? Can Government members honestly say that Medibank has been strengthened by activities of the Fraser Government?

Then the National Party inserted a large advertisement in the Press. There are 39 National Party members here and they are all tied to that advertisement. It read—

“You lie, Mr. Whitlam. Medibank will be maintained intact. Vote National Party. Get trust back into Government.”

Doug Anthony, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, Mike Evans and their friends were all part and parcel of the lies that were then told to the people. The people were deliberately misled.

In the 1974 election campaign National Party members went on the stump and said, “We will oppose the levy. We are against Hayden’s plan to introduce a 1.35 per cent levy.” They said in December last year that they would not make any increases in fees and charges. But this year all of a sudden they have changed their tune; they all now accept a levy of 2.5 per cent. They all now accept a scheme under which people are compelled to have this amount taken out of their wages and be slugged time and time again. And all because of the misleading statements made by the National Party and its members in this House.

If I had time to go back through “Hansard” I could refer to passages in last year’s Budget debate and Address-in-Reply debate where honourable members opposite said that they were against the levy and suggested one after another that Fraser should be Prime Minister because he was a decent, honest, responsible leader of the Liberal and National Parties. According to them, when he took office everything would be improved out of sight; everything was to be wonderful. But what has happened since he became Prime Minister? Not only has there been the Medibank slug; look at what has happened to pensioners.

(Time expired.)

#### MEDIBANK

**Dr. CRAWFORD** (Wavell) (12.22 p.m.): In the last few minutes we have heard the greatest possible distortion of the facts concerning Medibank and its introduction.

**Mr. Moore:** From the Leader of the Opposition.

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** Yes. The facts are very straightforward. An integral part of the original Hayden scheme was a levy of 1.35 per cent on taxable income, plus an additional 1.35 per cent from Consolidated Revenue. That represents a total tax of 2.7 per cent in terms of 1972 dollars. As a result of inflation, the relative value of the dollar now as against 1972 is 50c. The total tax slug would therefore represent twice 2.7 per cent, which is 5.4 per cent. That was the initial rate of taxation to be introduced when the Labor Party was in control in Canberra.

There is no doubt whatever about who is to blame for taxing people to pay for health care. This country was so close to national bankruptcy last year after a very short period of Federal Labor administration that most Australians were horrified. By responsible community arrangements, it has now been possible to so reduce the gross deficit that it can be controlled, and as from this weekend to produce a situation in which, whilst taxes are still heavy, the over-all economy is under control.

I point out to the House that under the new national health cover pensioners will have nothing to pay. Those covered by repatriation benefits will have nothing to pay; nor will members of the armed services. Health care for those who will not be paying a levy, namely, pensioners, will be subsidised and for those who do pay the levy it will be subsidised to the extent of 70 per cent of its cost, the remaining 30 per cent being provided by the levy. I tackled Bill Hayden on this matter during 1973-74. I said to him, “Pensioners are being badly treated in this country. What about producing a scheme to look after them while you are arranging for your changes?” There was no way in the world we could persuade him that this was an important and integral part of any health service.

**Mr. Hartwig:** He and his mates didn’t care about the pensioners at all.

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** That is right. All they cared about was introducing socialistic control of health services, and the so-called agreement between Hayden and our own Health Department last year was a fait accompli before negotiations started. It was a take-it-or-leave-it package deal. Hayden said, “Take it or leave it on the basis that this has been legislated for; therefore we will give you \$50,000,000 as long as you sign on the dotted line.” There was no possibility of negotiation. That was the legislation as it was passed through the Federal Parliament and there was no way in the world that it could be changed. So there can be no doubt whatsoever as to where the blame lies for escalating health costs, just as there can be no doubt as to where the blame lies for the escalating inflationary problem that his country has faced since 1973.

**Mr. Hartwig:** They are on record as wrecking this nation.

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** That’s right. As I said, we were so close to national bankruptcy last year that most Australians were horrified.

The Medibank philosophy was an integral part of the cause of that national bankruptcy and we now have to face the problem that we see confronting other countries. One has only to look at Sweden, where no private care is available. The socialists had been in power in Sweden for 44 years prior to last Saturday week when they were removed. Under the Swedish health system

no private care is available and taxes are so high that people are being further disadvantaged all the time. When a person goes to a public hospital in Sweden for health care, he has to pay a large fee for public hospital services.

Our over-all position is now very clear and it is obvious that we need responsible government. I remind the Leader of the Opposition that the levy which is now being imposed is less than half the one Bill Hayden wished to impose last year. There can be no doubt whatsoever as to where the blame lies. It has been sheeted home to one man.

**Mr. Hartwig:** Hayden.

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** Hayden is the man responsible for the present situation. He was in no way interested in health care as such; he was interested only in political philosophy.

#### ALLOCATION OF COMMONWEALTH FUNDS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

**Mr. AHERN** (Landsborough) (12.28 p.m.): I, too, am very disappointed in the way the Medibank dispute has been handled, and I think the majority of Australians wish that this monster had not been born. It will cost this nation very dearly in the long term, just as a similar system has virtually snuffed the life out of the economy of the United Kingdom. Virtually the same applies in Canada. The fact that we have had such a system thrust upon us here in Australia greatly concerns the majority of Australians.

But my purpose in rising today is to talk about the local authority grants system. This is of considerable importance to my electorate—

**Mr. Marginson** interjected.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! The honourable member for Wolston will cease constantly interjecting.

**Mr. AHERN:** This system has had a considerable effect on my electorate and I feel I have a responsibility to the ratepayers in that area to talk publicly about it—how it came into being and why it remains in its present form. The history of local authority grants goes back to the days of the Whitlam administration when they had a grand ideal of making money directly available to local authorities.

**Mr. Houston:** Do you agree with that?

**Mr. AHERN:** The proposal was good in principle, but the way they went about it was to appoint their own members to the Local Authorities Grants Commission—a couple of public servants from Canberra who were dispatched into the small towns of the 900 or so local authorities throughout Australia to ascertain their needs and to determine the disbursement of these funds. Of course, it did not work; predictably, they made dreadful mistakes. My area did not receive any grants. They did not state their reasons;

they simply said, "That is the decision." No criteria were given; no formulae were spelt out. In the brief couple of weeks that they took to get a suntan in Queensland's winter climate, they determined that areas such as my electorate were not worthy of any assistance and that the ratepayers in my area, even taking into account the very high cost of providing tourist amenities and the large pensioner population, should receive absolutely no consideration. I said in this Chamber at the time that the Local Authorities Grants Commission had made a dreadful botch of its task, and indeed it had.

There was, of course, a great deal of political sympathy in the grants. Political sympathy was shown in those areas in which it was considered that it would assist the Labor Party electorally, and the Ipswich City Council, some local authorities in the North and the Brisbane City Council received inordinately large grants from the Federal Local Authorities Grants Commission. We accepted it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because it was typical of the Whitlam administration, right from top to bottom.

When Fraser came to office, it seemed to us that a breath of fresh air blew across the Australian nation. He began talking about co-operative federalism, and we liked what we heard. We thought that at least the money would be handed to the States to be given, at their discretion, to local authorities on a fair basis and that ratepayers in Queensland would not be discriminated against because they chose to live in a particular local authority area. We thought that local authorities would be given an adequate opportunity to participate in allocations from the income tax pool. It was a very welcome move. I told the ratepayers in my electorate that the old political discrimination against them because they lived in my area would be gone. I thought it was reasonable to expect that the State Department of Local Government, when given the task, would attack it with fairness, look at the real needs of local authorities and endeavour to disburse fairly the funds available.

However, imposed on the situation was a statement by the Treasurer of this State that nobody would be worse off under the new arrangement, that no local authority would receive less under the new system of grants than it had received under the old system. Thereby hangs a tale. Apparently the die is now cast in the disbursement of Grants Commission money. If a local authority was not lucky in the draw or its politics were not right in the situation prevailing under the Whitlam Government, it will wear the same coat forever. That is not what I thought the situation would be; it is not the way it ought to be, in fairness.

Let us look, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the inequities now existing. The grants that were announced recently are in character with those that were laid down originally by the Grants Commission. The Treasurer of the day said

that nobody would be worse off. Therefore, areas such as mine, which had received virtually nothing in the past, received only a marginal increase—an increase that did not bring them into anything like a position of equity with other local authorities in Queensland.

Let me give the House a few examples from the figures that were tabled this morning by the Minister for Local Government. Under the old scheme, the Gold Coast City Council did not get anything; under the new scheme it is to get \$468,000. I am not saying that there is any ulterior motive in that; I am saying only that it has received a substantial allocation. The Ipswich City Council is to get \$759,000. The Albert Shire is in many respects almost identical with the Maroochy Shire—and I remind honourable members that the Maroochy Shire is the biggest in Queensland. The Albert Shire is to get \$422,000, whereas the Maroochy Shire is to get \$186,000. The Kingaroy shire is to get \$177,000, the Kolan shire \$110,000 and the Landsborough shire \$85,000. Where is the justice in that? The Murgon Shire gets \$128,000; Widgee gets \$123,000; Woongara—I have to confess to not knowing where that is—gets \$110,000, which is much more than the Landsborough Shire Council gets.

**Mr. Jensen** interjected.

**Mr. AHERN:** The honourable member doesn't know where it is either.

The Inglewood Shire Council gets \$145,000; the Stanthorpe Shire Council (with the chairman of the Grants Commission) gets \$243,000, and there is a lot of resentment amongst my local authorities because of that; the Balonne Shire Council gets \$239,000. How can that be justified in reasonable terms as against the Maroochy Shire, the biggest in Queensland, getting \$186,000? It's not on! The Murweh Shire gets \$225,000, Emerald \$216,000, Townsville \$523,000, Ayr \$233,000, Johnstone \$297,000.

**Mr. Akers** interjected.

**Mr. AHERN:** The shires of the honourable member for Pine Rivers have been well treated; he is happy. The situation is not reasonable; there is not a measure of equity between those participating. There are those who say, "You will never get it right. It is a difficult exercise." But I don't think that is good enough. In the past we have developed formulae for the disbursement of Commonwealth aid moneys, and there has been no great dispute about them. There has been an obvious reasonable degree of equity between those participating. Where is the equity in this disbursement? There is none. Other States have quickly developed a simple formula, but our Minister says that he has not had the time. The other States have had the same time and they have developed formulae that have been accepted by their local authorities.

We are told that we have to look to the future, so it will take four or five years for the inequities and political patronage embedded in the old scheme to work their way out. I honestly cannot justify the treatment of local authorities in my area. It seemed to me that under the Fraser federalism we were going to get a fair deal, but the statement of the Treasurer of the State that local authorities were not to receive less than they had received in the past, bound the local authorities grants committee and we were then committed to several years of inequity under the system. It isn't fair. It is not reasonable that we have to face a five-year catching up period. The committee should not have been bound by the rule that the Treasurer put across it.

I feel I have to say that I believe the grants that have been circulated to local authorities can only be described as a botch-up. Local authorities in my area are only marginally better off than they were before. For the Minister to announce percentage increases is not reasonable when one looks at the grants that other local authorities received. If a local authority receives a small base amount, its percentage increase is likely to look spectacular. The local authorities in my area have been badly treated. I ask the Minister and the Government to give expeditious consideration to better treatment for ratepayers in that area. I am disappointed that this system has been finally developed and presented to us. It leaves us in a very poor position.

#### REGISTRATION OF SWIMMING-POOL CONSTRUCTORS

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER** (Archerfield) (12.39 p.m.): The matter of public interest I desire to raise today concerns the urgent need for control or registration of swimming-pool constructors. As I said yesterday, there is definitely a case for the registration of swimming-pool builders under the Builders' Registration Act.

Since my remarks in this House on 7 September I have been deluged by complaints about shoddy workmanship, deceit and plain default on contracts. I point out that the New South Wales Builders' Licences Act was recently amended to provide for the licensing of swimming-pool constructors in that State. I might add that that was done by a Tory Government. It was done before the advent of the Wran Labor Government. If the Tory Government of New South Wales could do it, surely this Government could take similar action. I ask the Minister for Works and Housing, who has now come into the Chamber, to take a leaf out of the book of his former colleagues in New South Wales and introduce legislation covering the registration of swimming-pool constructors.

Over the past two years the swimming-pool-building industry has really blossomed and, as in all types of mushroom growth, it has attracted more than its fair share of

crooks. Unfortunately it is an industry over which there is virtually no control. A pool buyer must virtually take the builder at face value. There is no trades association as such that can guarantee the bona fides of the builder.

The swimming-pool industry is very big business indeed. Most pools seem to cost something in the \$4,000 to \$7,000 range, and added to that are the costs of all the extras, such as pool equipment and chemicals. This sort of money naturally attracts the fly-by-night criminals.

The Swimming Pools Association, by its own admission, is not a consumer-protection body. It can only make recommendations to its members on contracts and on how to run their business. It has no legal right to enforce those recommendations, so, as I have said previously in this Chamber, it is a toothless tiger.

Swimming-pool builders have created the impression in the media and with the public at large that membership of the Queensland Swimming Pools Association is a measure of integrity. This is just a farce. In the "Sunday Sun" of 12 September Permanent Pools Pty. Ltd. blatantly advertised that it is a member of the Queensland Swimming Pools Association "for your protection". That advertisement is nothing more than a load of codswallop. It is misleading advertising at its worst. The Queensland Swimming Pools Association has been remiss in not advertising its true role in the industry. If it did that, the reputable companies would have nothing to lose and the crooked firms would be exposed for what they are—white-collar crooks and con-men of the worst order.

**Mr. Lee:** You put one in at your place.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** No, I didn't. The Minister put in one at his place, and last week he rang me complaining about Stewart Patton. I told him to read my speech.

Registration of the swimming-pool business is long overdue. Firms and individuals engaged in it have the ability to move in to it and out of it at will. For example, Firm A closes its doors this afternoon and tomorrow morning Firm B commences business at the same location, with the same directors and staff. When a client comes to complain about Firm A he is told that it has gone out of business and Firm B has no connection with it. Is it any wonder that the general public have become very confused by what is happening in the industry?

Another lurk is for the pool firm to advertise that it is only a consultant. For a fee, usually \$38, it draws up plans and will usually recommend subcontractors. In quite a number of cases the consultant also arranges for the installation of filtration equipment—for a fee, of course—and for another subsidiary to provide the chemicals. All this sounds very simple, and it probably is. However, if one of the firms involved

falls down on its undertaking, the pool buyer faces a nightmare in trying to sort out the whole situation.

I have no doubt that the legal eagles in this Chamber—there are two of them with law degrees, but I suppose there would not be a legal brain between them—will tell me that a pool buyer who is dissatisfied with the builder has the normal recourse at law.

To show how wrong that is, I outline a case that was recently drawn to my attention. A pool buyer at Sunnybank was dissatisfied with the performance of the builder, a Mr. D. Parkinson of Beenleigh. The buyer took Mr. Parkinson to the Small Claims Tribunal, which awarded the buyer damages totalling \$650. That was when his troubles really started. The Small Claims Tribunal has no power to collect moneys awarded by it as damages, so it was necessary for the pool buyer to take out an order in the Magistrates Court, at a cost of an additional \$38, and for the bailiff to enforce that order.

The bailiff came back to the buyer with the startling story that, although Mr. Parkinson lived in a magnificent home at Beenleigh, one complete with swimming-pool, bar and barbecue, he had no possessions that were unencumbered and could be sold to obtain the \$650 that was owing. The house was owned by a finance company; the furniture was owned by another company and, to complicate matters even further, most of the possessions were in the joint names of husband and wife.

The poor old pool buyer then consulted a solicitor, at additional expense, and was told by the solicitor that he would look at the prospect of declaring Mr. Parkinson bankrupt. But, lo and behold, last week the buyer was told that a judge would probably be reluctant to declare the wife, too, bankrupt to satisfy a debt of her husband's.

Here we have the situation of a man being awarded \$650 damages and not being able to collect that sum simply because the pool builder was too smart for the current law. No wonder many young people regard the law as being designed for the protection of a dishonest few.

The case for registration has been overwhelmingly proved. The Queensland Swimming Pools Association says that it wants the industry registered. The reputable pool firms, if there are any, say that they want it, too. I am sure that the public would welcome it wholeheartedly. It would have the support of the building group of unions also.

Make no mistake about it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are still a few smarties in the industry. Mark Beatty, formerly of Durack and Beatty and Mark Pools, is now, I understand, of Arcline Leisure and Pool Centres. He is a very personable young man indeed—a chip off the old baton. I point out to the House that he is the son of Inspector Mark Dougall Beatty of "Dong a demonstrator" fame.

Another gentleman well known in the industry is a Mr. Rick Poppleston of Independent Pool Consultants, formerly of Her Majesty's Prison, where he served six months for defrauding the Bank of New South Wales, and now of Sunstate Pool Consultants of 608 Sherwood Road, Sherwood. Poppleston has a very poor record in the industry, to say the least. At the present time he has undertaken to complete a number of unfinished Stewart Patton pools. I think the Minister and all other honourable members who were in the House when I spoke in the Address-in-Reply debate know what a crook Stewart Patton is. Rick Poppleston's price was considerably lower than that quoted by Tranquility Pools, the firm suggested by the Queensland Swimming Pools Association. It could be that Mr. Poppleston has seen the error of his ways. I know that the Fraud Squad of the Queensland Police Force sincerely hopes so.

I feel I have made a very strong case for the registration of the swimming-pool industry in this State. I am sure the Minister would agree. Through you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say to the Minister for Works and Housing that it took me six months to get through his thick skull the rorts and rackets that went on in the building society industry. Do I now have to spend another six months getting through the same thick skull the rorts and rackets that are associated with the swimming-pool industry? There is definitely a case for the registration of the swimming-pool industry in this State.

**Mr. Lee:** It seems as though you are always associated with crooks.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** The Minister has been protecting them ever since he was appointed to Cabinet. Honourable members have only to read in chronological order the 25 questions I asked the Minister last year about the building society industry to realise that. If ever there was a case of evasion and shady dealing, that was it. So the Minister cannot claim to have clean hands.

**Mr. Moore:** No wonder they call you the hired mouth.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** No wonder they call the honourable member the wax weevil. We can see the blood running out of the ears of his colleagues. That is why he will lose his endorsement at the coming Liberal Party pre-selection. As I said previously, the honourable member for Windsor is the Liberal Party's instant expert on nothing.

In conclusion, I repeat—I have to say it three or four times so that the Minister will get the message—it is time he did something about the registration or control of the builders of swimming-pools in this State.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH

**Mrs. KYBURZ** (Salisbury) (12.47 p.m.): I rise today to bring to the attention of the

House and the public the matter of unemployment among youth. I must admit that this problem in my electorate is of vital concern to me, and I would imagine it is of vital concern in the electorates of most other members. Unemployment can have tragic consequences, particularly among young people. The Fraser Government Budget, of course, gave stimulus to the private sector. I hope that eventually it will have a helpful effect for our youth by providing more employment opportunities.

There has been a lot of emotive screaming on this issue. I bring to the notice of the House an article that appeared last week in "The Courier-Mail", headed "Youth on the Dole. It's no fun". It tells a sad little story of woe about a woman who was bemoaning the plight of her 16-year-old daughter. Some of the statements in the article made me think more deeply about the subject, and I will mention it again later.

Along with inflation, unemployment is now one of the major issues concerning the people. Another problem is the prohibitive cost of housing. Unfortunately the unemployment figures have already outstripped recent predictions, and the Employment and Industrial Relations Department has estimated that 40 per cent of the unemployed are under the age of 20. For persons so young, the consequences, without doubt, are tragic.

Various schemes have been tried in other countries. Britain instituted its Community Industry Programme, which has provided jobs for 6,000 young people who work on community welfare projects. They are employed by the Government and receive a full wage, but they get no holidays and very few other benefits. America has had its Civilian Conservation Corps, which was part of Roosevelt's "New Deal". That corps also worked well on welfare projects. It was attacked as a "make work" scheme because the people employed under it actually learned nothing to improve their future and gained no skills at all. Canada has the Opportunities for Youth Programme. Over a period of six years, the Canadian Government has spent \$27,000,000 on providing jobs for 20,000 young people. That is a lot of money for very few jobs. Sweden has a programme called the Five Crowns Policy under which the Government subsidises employers to provide work for young people. Last week precisely the same thing was introduced into Australia. It seems to me to be a direct copy of the Swedish scheme.

Because young people are the last taken on, unfortunately they tend to be the first victims of retrenchment. I admit to having a great deal of sympathy for middle-aged people who have become unemployed. I have had occasion to meet many middle-aged men who have become unemployed and certainly not by their own decision. They suffer as much as the young people do.

I notice a small amount of panic building up in the community as we get to the end of the school year. It is quite frightening to see. Now more than ever, young people must look towards training. I took umbrage at the article I referred to earlier because that girl was a totally untrained and unskilled worker. She had even left school before obtaining her Junior certificate, but she expected to walk into some cosy little job. Things like that just don't happen.

Of all the criticisms that I could make, I would level one at the Commonwealth Employment Service. In my opinion it is not functioning correctly and it certainly has come under a lot of fire recently. There should be an officer in each office of the Commonwealth Employment Service dealing specifically with the unemployment problem confronting young people. He should be an understanding person—perhaps with training in social work—who realises the societal implications of unemployment on young people and appreciates that the way a person looks has nothing to do with how he works. If a person wears jeans, has long hair or has ingrowing toe-nails, it does not follow that he is not capable of performing certain work. I am concerned particularly that people are being discriminated against for one reason or another. The funniest one I have heard came from a 19-year-old girl who said to me that she had been told she would never get a job because she did not wear a bra. I told her that there were probably quite a few jobs for which she would be rushed, such as those at the Treasury Hotel.

Regrettably, the report of the Henderson Poverty Commission entitled "Survey of Youth Workers" was equally trenchant in its criticism of the Commonwealth Employment Service. There needs to be much more active liaison between that service and the various retraining schemes.

However, my deepest criticism is reserved for the education system. I certainly believe that the schools are failing badly in their responsibility in that they are counselling young people on the employment opportunities and what jobs they should train for. The career advisers in high schools often are simply subject masters who are given that job and do not even want it. But they are still telling girls that they should be typists, teachers and nurses, and boys that they should go into the male-oriented careers. They are telling children that they should stay at school when obviously they do not have the intelligence to warrant it. And they are telling 14 or 15-year-old children that they should be leaving school because their grades are not high enough. That could be what happened to the girl I was speaking about. I do not know if the article is true, but it reads—

"Her daughter Linda left school before completing the 10th grade and didn't gain her Junior Certificate.

"Linda worked as a shop assistant for eight months and then left because she was unhappy at the job."

If she was unhappy at the job, she should have made sure before she resigned that she had another job to go to. Obviously many middle-aged people are unhappy in their jobs, but they know they are damned lucky to have them and they stay there.

The article goes on—

"She decided to look for office work as she had done typing at school and could type, although her speed was low."

What does she expect—that some Godlike employer will say, "My, my, dear. You have done this for eight months. Now try this and we will keep you employed." I become very angry when I read articles like that, because there are so many middle-aged people who are literally slogging it out for the sake of their families. But she didn't like that job, so she left!

I also found in newspaper cuttings a reference to the jobless youth subsidy scheme. Under that scheme employers will be paid \$58 for each person hired between the ages of 15 and 19 who left school in the previous 12 months and who has been unemployed for the last six months. That is a staggering length of time for people to be looking for a job. My only reservation about that scheme is that even in these days of high unemployment people do not seem to be prepared to do just anything. I remember my father talking about the days of the depression. He said, "People were prepared to do just anything. If it was only four hours a day cleaning gutters or shovelling sludge from back-street sewers, you would do it just to get money." That is not necessary now under the great welfare system of the hand-out society.

I hope that the Federal Government will not be panicked into introducing rash schemes that amount to nothing more than further hand-outs in a society in which there are already so many hand-outs. We see the attitude of young people changing. Students are going to march tomorrow for increased allowances. I hope that they are not increased. I should like any extra money to be put into larger training schemes or schemes that would embrace more young people and make them realise that before they place themselves on the job market they have to be trained. They must be trained for something. Employers cannot be expected constantly to be training the 6,000,000 to 7,000,000 young people who will be born before the year 2000 just to have a pool of skilled workers from which to choose. Young people have to realise that they need to be trained. I am sure it can be said of all of us here that we knew when we were young that we had to be trained. Parents cannot be absolved from this responsibility, either.

Once again I state that the Federal Government should not be panicked into introducing new schemes to cope with unemployment, and we must look very carefully at the problem of unemployed youth.

The House adjourned at 12.58 p.m.