

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 29 AUGUST 1979**

---

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

**WEDNESDAY, 29 AUGUST 1979**

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. S. J. Muller, Fas-sifern) read prayers and took the chair at 11 a.m.

**DEATH OF EARL MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA**

**Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN** (Barambah—Premier) (11.1 a.m.): Mr. Speaker, I know that all members on both sides of this House would want to express, in a formal way, the deep sense of shock, sadness and sympathy that we all feel at the tragic death, in Ireland, of Lord Louis Mountbatten.

I think it is fair to say that the circumstances surrounding the death of Earl Mountbatten of Burma, at the age of 79 years, after a lifetime of outstanding public service to the people of Britain, and indeed the whole Commonwealth of nations (including Australia), have generated feelings of shame and revulsion throughout the civilised world.

I believe that most of us here—and in the wider general community—have the utmost respect for the institutions of the Monarchy and the Crown, and all that they stand for.

I think all honourable members would agree also that Earl Mountbatten was one of the most respected members of the Royal Family. His record is well known and documented, and I am sure it does not need to be retraced by me here. Suffice it to say that his unique contribution, as a member of the Royal Family, to public affairs throughout the Commonwealth (and, indeed, the world) and his own indomitable character endeared him to generations of Australians and other people throughout the Commonwealth and beyond it.

I am sure that all honourable members would want to join me in expressing disgust at the manner of his untimely death and our sympathy to his family as a mark of our respect for the gentleman himself—and what he stood for.

I would like to read the text of a message that I sent yesterday to the Queensland Agent-General in London (Sir Wallace Rae), to be forwarded to the family of the late Earl Mountbatten of Burma. The message reads as follows—

“On behalf of the Government and the people of Queensland I extend our sincere sympathy to you and yours in your sad and tragic loss.

“Lord Mountbatten was highly respected and admired by the people of the British Commonwealth and beyond it and he will be remembered with warm affection by all Queenslanders, particularly those who served under him as Supreme Allied Commander in South East Asia during 1943-1946.

“His untimely death, and that of his grandson, have undoubtedly shocked the world, and all men of conscience will hope that the perpetrators of this infamous act will be brought swiftly to justice.

“May the memories of his achievements and the quality of his life be a solace and comfort to you in the days that lie ahead.

“J. Bjelke-Petersen,  
“Premier of Queensland”

This tragedy was certainly the consequence of divisions within our society. No doubt there is a lesson in it for all of us. We must aim to heal the divisions and pull together in every area.

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (11.4 a.m.): I join with the Premier in expressing my sadness and profound regret at the tragic and senseless death of Earl Mountbatten and others in this incident. The cold-blooded murder of one of the greatest figures of the Twentieth Century has brought home to people around the world the dreadful consequences, as the Premier has indicated, of hatred and division.

The use of the bomb and the gun and the killing of innocent people in this conflict are abhorrent to every thinking Australian. Such acts can be neither justified nor condoned by people who claim to be civilised.

If there is a lesson to be learned from the assassination of Earl Mountbatten, it is that violence will not solve problems such as those that exist in Northern Ireland.

As Deputy Premier of Queensland, I would like to assure the people of Britain that we understand their feelings at this tragedy. We join with them in mourning the passing of a great man and in expressing our sympathies to his family. We can only support any attempts to bring peace to that troubled part of the world, and we look forward to that in the future.

I support the remarks made by the Premier and express my deepest sympathy to those who have suffered as a result of this tragic event.

**Mr. CASEY** (Mackay—Leader of the Opposition) (11.6 a.m.): I join Her Majesty's Opposition in this expression of sympathy on the death of Earl Mountbatten and members of his family. It is a tragedy that has shocked Queenslanders as well as people over the length and breadth of the world.

Earl Mountbatten of Burma, as he was so well known, was a man for whom Australians had much to thank in his work as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces in the South-west Pacific area during the 1939-1945 conflict. It can truthfully be said of him that he was one member of the Royal Family who well and truly served the people.

He was not only a national hero of the people of Great Britain; he was also an international hero, not only in time of war but also in time of peace. It will be recalled that he, as Viceroy of India, helped to set the Indian people on their feet during the extremely awkward period of the partition of India, when the separate countries of India and Pakistan were created. It is rather tragic that his death has occurred in a country that was partitioned by someone else 60 or 70 years previously and in which very serious problems are still occurring.

I believe that this tragedy shows that there is no place in the world for terrorism and extremism, and the Opposition joins with the Government and the people of Queensland generally in expressing sincere regret at the passing of Earl Mountbatten.

*At Mr. Speaker's invitation, honourable members stood in silence as a mark of respect.*

#### PAPERS

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

##### Reports—

James Cook University of North Queensland, for 1978.

Board of Trustees of the Twelfth Night Theatre Building Trust, for 1977-78.

National Parks and Wildlife Service, for 1977-78.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamation under the Forestry Act 1959-1979.

##### Orders in Council under—

Forestry Act 1959-1979.

The Rural Training Schools Act of 1965 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923-1979.

Land Act 1962-1978.

Regulations under the Films Review Act 1974.

Statute under the University of Queensland Act 1965-1973.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

##### REDCLIFFE RAIL LINK; HAYDN SARGENT TELEVISION PROGRAMME

**Hon. K. B. TOMKINS** (Roma—Minister for Transport) (11.9 a.m.): Having viewed the Haydn Sargent programme on Channel 7 last night, I wish to express my disappointment and dismay at the negative, knocking attitude taken in reporting on the proposed rail link with Redcliffe. I would also like to set the record straight, and correct some of the inaccuracies and misstatements included in the segment.

In November last year, in a statement distributed widely among the media, I announced the findings of the consultants, Cameron, McNamara and Partners, on a survey into alternative public transport connections to Redcliffe.

The findings stated that a design study should be undertaken by 1980 establishing a corridor for a proposed rail link, but that on economic and financial grounds it would not be possible to build a rail link before the year 2000. Unfortunately, certain elements of the media seem to think that this was a statement made on my own initiative. I stress that it was a statement in my name giving the findings of expert consultants, based on circumstances as they then existed.

The reason for expediting this link is the change in circumstances since that time, principally the shortage and ever-increasing cost of liquid fuel. There are other factors, too, such as the growth of Redcliffe and adjacent areas, the potential for future development, and the beneficial effect on the unemployment problem that such a project will have. None of these points was raised in the television segment.

Another grave inaccuracy was the estimate of cost, which the reporter said would be \$30,000,000. Our consultants last year gave an estimate of \$16,500,000. This included a figure of no more than \$1,000,000 for land resumption. Even allowing for inflation and increased costs the final figure would be nowhere near \$30,000,000.

The reporter also claimed that despite approaches to my department and the Premier's he was unable to get a detailed map. Of course he couldn't. The map doesn't exist yet, but it will be ready in a few weeks' time. However, the reporter did receive exactly the same photograph of the proposed route that was distributed to other media. At the moment, engineering consultants are preparing this detailed plan, which will include descriptions of land and other information. When it is completed—by about the end of September—it will be contained in a submission which I will take to Cabinet asking that a resolution go before Parliament that a railway to Redcliffe be built. This is the proper procedure. When approved by the House it will go back to Cabinet for implementation.

I also feel compelled to point out that the railway corridor to Petrie is the one area where development will take place in virtually undeveloped country. I am sure that the people in Redcliffe realise this and support the project.

Despite the knocking that Channel 7 gave to the railway project, I can tell the House that the proposed route has been welcomed by the Rails for Redcliffe Committee, which has been very vigorous in its attempts to have this link established.

I assure the people of Redcliffe that this line will receive every consideration once the resolution has passed the House. I am

very hopeful that a start can be made on the construction about the beginning of next year, with completion in time for the Commonwealth Games in 1982.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### FINANCING OF SUGAR STOCKPILING

**Mr. CASEY:** I wish to ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer a question without notice. As the financing of the stockpiling provisions of the International Sugar Agreement have not come into being because of the failure of the United States to sign the agreement and Queensland's 300 000 tonnes of sugar, which will be in stockpile by the end of the present crushing season, will now have to be financed by a loan of \$27,500,000, provision for which has been made in last week's Federal Budget, I ask: Will this be made available to the Queensland Government as the owner of the sugar at the Commonwealth bond rate of 10.5 per cent or in some other manner, and as this matter is of great importance to the Queensland sugar industry, what will be the terms of repayment to the Commonwealth?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** In view of the cost of the buffer stocks, this matter has been of some concern to the Government for some time. Many discussions have been held with the Commonwealth Government, and as recently as last Friday I had further discussions with that Government about the method of financing this particular programme. We have had close co-operation from the Minister for Primary Industry and the chairman of the Sugar Board, but at this stage negotiations on the terms and conditions of any finance have not been finalised.

### INCOME TAX REBATES BY STATE GOVERNMENT

**Mr. CASEY:** In directing a further question to the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, I point out that Table 114 of the Commonwealth 1979-80 Budget Paper No. 7 clearly indicates that under the personal income tax sharing entitlements Queensland will receive 12 per cent more this year than last year and that, in all, Queensland has received a total increase from the last four Federal Budgets of 76 per cent, or \$411,000,000, which is almost twice the inflationary figure during this period. I now ask: Does he support Federal Treasurer Howard's suggestion in answer to the Premier's call for tax cuts that the Queensland Government can make available to the people of Queensland by way of income tax rebates some of the extra \$100,000,000-odd that it will receive this year?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** The clear inference to be drawn from the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition is that the Fraser Government has fulfilled its obligation. This, of course, is different from what he said

yesterday, when he indicated that under Fraser federalism the States were far worse off. Now he indicates that under this financial arrangement we are in a most favourable position. So the Leader of the Opposition is contradicting the statement that he made yesterday.

Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition implied that he judged a submission on its length rather than on its contents. That indicates his confused state of mind over the importance of this programme.

The Queensland Government's funding from the personal tax pool has increased by approximately 12.8 per cent. However, there are other areas, such as special purpose grants and other programmes, in which there has been a decrease in funding. As well, there has been a cut in the loan programme. We understand the basis for this, namely, the effective way in which the Fraser Government's policies have been controlling inflation.

**An Opposition Member:** Who are you trying to kid?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** I note the pride taken by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and other people in identifying themselves with the Whitlam inflation rate, which ranged from 4 per cent when he came into power in 1972 to 18 per cent when he left. People have already forgotten those figures.

**Mr. Jones:** That was a world-wide trend.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** The member for Cairns says that it was a world-wide trend. Anyone who listened to Mr. Hayden over the past few days would realise that if the Labor Party ever came to power in Canberra we would have just as high an inflation rate.

**Mr. Hinze:** It would be worse.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** As my colleague says, it would be worse.

The money that we have received from the taxation pool is a reasonable share. We make no apology for that. However, neither the Whitlam Government nor the Fraser Government recognised the base on which the guarantee should be given. We have continually made representations on this matter, which, so far, has disadvantaged Queensland and will disadvantage Queensland further.

As I was saying when I was interrupted by members of the Opposition, the taxes imposed by this Government are the lowest in Australia. Despite the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition, a document that I tabled in Parliament some weeks ago showed that the taxation payments made by Queenslanders compare favourably with those made by people in all other States. I can assure the people of Queensland and the Leader of the Opposition that, much to his detriment, the Queensland Government will try to reduce taxation in this State.

We strongly believe that throughout Australia there should be a reduction in personal income tax and that as time passes the Federal Government will be able to implement its promise in this direction.

We are glad to see that the Leader of the Opposition recognises the fact that the Federal Government's policy is paying off. Other States are benefiting as well. No doubt the people of Redcliffe will recognise his support for the Fraser Government's policies when they cast their vote in the coming by-election.

#### AUTOMOTIVE FUEL TAX

**Mr. SCASSOLA:** I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Is he aware that the A.L.P. candidate for Redcliffe, Mr. Lugton, has been telling the people of Redcliffe that the State Government is planning to introduce a 75c a litre tax on motor spirit and a 1.5c a litre tax on automotive distillate in the coming Budget? Can he tell the House whether the A.L.P. candidate's claims have any foundation?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** I have had drawn to my attention the statement by the A.L.P.'s hopeful candidate in the Redcliffe by-election. I believe that the Leader of the Opposition has also associated himself with such a statement. On information available to me, the statement has been broadcast widely throughout the Redcliffe area, and I believe it has caused a great deal of concern in the minds of many people.

Let me make it clear that the Government of Queensland has no intention whatsoever of implementing such a proposal in this year's Budget. Whilst we never talk about forthcoming Budget proposals, I want to lay that rumour to rest. The Leader of the Opposition can wear his famous smile and giggle as much as he likes: I want to make it quite clear that, whilst it is not customary to detail information in the forthcoming Budget, there will be no imposition of such a tax in this Budget. I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to say where he got this information from. It is based on absolutely inaccurate statements. I make it quite clear that a Labor Government in South Australia and a Labor Government in Tasmania have already introduced legislation bringing in such an imposition. I also make it clear that this Government's proposal to remove road maintenance tax has caused the Government some problems so far as the transport departments are concerned, but at this stage we have made no decision, and certainly there will be nothing in the Budget regarding this imposition.

#### BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION TO BRISBANE AND AREA WATER BOARD

**Mr. SCASSOLA:** I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Did he see a report in "The Courier-Mail" of 27 July last in

which it was said that the Brisbane City Council had been asked to add an additional \$1,000,000 to its first annual contribution to the Brisbane and Area Water Board to pay for the Wivenhoe Dam? Did the State Government as alleged, give to the council a figure of \$6,200,000, which is the figure allowed for in the recent Brisbane City Council budget? Has the Government asked the Brisbane City Council to increase its financial contribution to the board? Have there been discussions between the Government and the water board concerning financing of the dam?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** I did see the statement that was attributed to the Lord Mayor of the Brisbane City Council about the additional cost. Of course, we know full well that the Brisbane City Council has always applied a profit margin in the imposition of water rates on the people of Brisbane. That profit was considerable, as the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads has said. What the people of Brisbane have been paying under a Labor administration has resulted in a profit from which the council funded other proposals. Following the recently introduced legislation creating the Brisbane and Area Water Board, the council has tried to lay the blame for this at the feet of the Government.

I would like to make it quite clear to the House that, in our opinion, there has been an unnecessary imposition of additional water rates on the people of Brisbane. After the establishment of the Brisbane and Area Water Board, discussions were held by me, and Cabinet has made a decision that the Government will subsidise the Wivenhoe Dam's cost of construction to the extent of 21 per cent. In addition, the State Electricity Commission will contribute 6 per cent of the cost because of its use of water for hydroelectricity. The Government's responsible attitude is indicated by its meeting something like 27 or 28 per cent of the total cost of the dam. The remaining 72 or 73 per cent will be shared by the Brisbane City Council and other users of water in the board area.

The costs to the ratepayers forecast by the Minister for Local Government are indeed correct. There will be no additional imposition unless the council wishes to create further profits for the council, which is Labor controlled. We believe that such a step would be unethical and irresponsible.

So my answer to the honourable member's question is that the matter of the imposition of water rates is one for local government, and in Brisbane the council has been quite irresponsible in imposing additional charges on its ratepayers. We believe that the implementation of the programme by the Brisbane and Area Water Board will result in the cost for water being within the amounts forecast by the Minister and by the Government.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN  
QUEENSLAND

**Mr. KAUS:** I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: In view of the Federal Treasurer's statement in the Budget that unemployment will continue to be an Australia-wide problem, can he assure the House that as Queensland's Treasurer he will do all he can in the State Budget to assist in the creation of more jobs for Queenslanders?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** I am aware of the position as far as the unemployment level in Queensland is concerned. It is significant that over the last few months the figures have dropped quite considerably. In fact, in the last month they decreased by approximately 2,600. It is also quite significant that over the past two years the number of jobs available to Queenslanders has increased by approximately 51,900. If there had not been this increase in job vacancies, there would have been hardly any decrease in unemployment in Queensland. I want to make it quite clear that over the last two years the Queensland Government has ploughed a large sum of money into capital works programmes to try to reduce unemployment. If I recall correctly, in that period we have spent about \$150,000,000 or \$160,000,000 on special employment programmes. So the Queensland Government has played its role extremely well in providing, through capital-works programmes, the opportunity for employment, and we will continue to do so because it is part of our policy. We will make certain that people who are unemployed are given the best opportunity to obtain employment.

In addition, the Premier and I were associated with an announcement last week concerning Gladstone. For many years the Opposition has criticised us and said that this project would never come to fruition. This activity at Gladstone will provide continuous employment, some time later this year, for about 2,000 people. After a 10-year period, an additional 1,900 people will be employed in these smelter activities. This is indicative of the Government's activity in the promotion of industry and employment opportunities.

ROBBERIES OF T.A.B. OFFICES

**Mr. KAUS:** I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Can he inform the House what security arrangements he intends to institute to overcome the escalation in the number of robberies in T.A.B. offices in the State?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** I am concerned about the increase in the number of hold-ups of T.A.B. offices in the last few months. It is a matter of concern to people who work in the T.A.B. offices and also to the management. Recently I took up this matter with the T.A.B., and I am hopeful that a report on it will come to me in the near future so that we can take some steps to try to

overcome this particular problem, which is causing great concern to the people involved in the industry.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IN QUEENSLAND; STATEMENT BY MEMBER FOR NUDGEES

**Mr. GUNN:** I preface a question to the Minister for Mines, Energy and Police by stating that in today's "Courier-Mail", Mr. Vaughan, the member for Nudgee, said that the State will be short of electricity in the near future because of an allocation of power to the aluminium smelters. I now ask: Is the statement made by the honourable member correct? If not, will the Minister explain to the Parliament what effect the supply of electricity to the smelters is likely to have on the State's electricity supplies?

**Mr. CAMM:** I did see the report in "The Courier-Mail" this morning. It is another indication of the lack of knowledge that this member has of the electricity industry in Queensland. It is also an indication from him that he has no faith whatsoever in the people who are responsible for the generation and distribution of electricity in this State.

**Mr. Vaughan** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will not debate the subject with the Minister.

**Mr. CAMM:** I also noticed in the Press this morning that the honourable member was corrected by the manager of the firm concerned, which was going to use such a lot of electricity in the aluminium smelter. I sometimes wonder what is the motive of this member in completely decrying the ability of the Queensland electricity industry to meet the needs of industry. What effect does he think this has on people from overseas who are coming here with the idea of establishing an industry that requires large blocks of electricity? We assure them that the electricity is here and available, yet we have a member of the Opposition knocking it every time and saying that there will not be electricity available for the particular industry. He seems to derive a great deal of satisfaction and glee when an industry goes to New South Wales. Is he deliberately trying to force these people to go to New South Wales to establish their industries? Is he trying to make them lose confidence in the State of Queensland, even though we have indicated to industry that we will meet our obligations?

I say to the honourable member and to this House that I have jotted down the output and capacity of our electricity industry for the next few years. We now have the four units at Gladstone generating 275 MW. They are going at full strength. All members here must remember how the member for Nudgee came into this House and decried the Gladstone Power Station as a white elephant. On every occasion when the authorities had to reduce the output of those

plants in order to commission or examine them further—this is before we took delivery of them—he would immediately say in the Press and in this House that there was something radically wrong with the plants. Yet that power-station is now generating at full capacity.

Only in the last session of Parliament the member for Nudgee got up in this Chamber and said that because the Gladstone Power Station is now generating at full capacity, there should be no need for an increase in the price of electricity. He cannot have it both ways.

The aluminium smelter will require 400 MW for the two potlines in 1989. As I indicated earlier, the Gladstone Power Station is now operating at full strength, and by 1989 the smelters will require 760 MW. By 1989 the Tarong Power Station, with four 350 MW units, will be in full operation, producing 1 400 MW. The two generators at Wivenhoe, each of 250 MW, will be generating to full capacity. There will also be two additional generating sets, each of 275 MW, generating to full capacity at Gladstone. There will be an increase of 2 000 MW in generating capacity, yet the honourable member for Nudgee is decrying the fact that the Government has entered into an obligation to supply an additional 360 MW by 1989.

Let me say to potential investors in this State, and to overseas companies that are desirous of coming here and taking advantage of the State's cheaper electricity, that the Government will meet its obligations and will be able to fulfil any commitment that it enters into, despite the fact that a member of the Opposition who classes himself as spokesman for the Labor Party on electricity matters in this State is trying to drive industry away from Queensland.

#### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR JULIUS DAM PROJECT

**Mr. BERTONI:** I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Is he aware of a recent meeting between Mr. Leo Hielscher and representatives of Mount Isa Mines and Mt. Isa City Council in regard to further financial assistance for the Julius Dam project? If so, will he advise the House of the outcome of the discussions?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** It is correct that Mount Isa Mines made an approach to the Under Treasurer at officer level and that its representatives were accompanied by representatives of the Mt. Isa City Council when discussions were held relative to the funding of the Julius Dam.

The outcome of the discussions was exactly in line with the Government's position, for which representations have been made continually by the honourable member for Mt. Isa. The honourable member has been very outspoken in support of this

project and also in ensuring that the best deal is made for the people of the Mt. Isa electorate.

**Mr. Scott:** He won't be re-elected.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** Well, that is a matter of opinion. I think that the honourable member for Mt. Isa has already proved his worth.

The Under Treasurer made it quite clear to the council and, indeed, to Mount Isa Mines Limited, that we are awaiting a proposal from it. That is where the responsibility lies. The Government has never shirked its responsibility towards the funding of the Julius Dam. The honourable member for Port Curtis can laugh, but we have contributed something like \$11,000,000 already. Mount Isa Mines Limited has given something like \$15,000,000. The Labor Mt. Isa City Council has to contribute only about \$4,000,000, and in the past has indeed shirked its responsibility as a council.

I want to make it quite clear that the honourable member for Mt. Isa has continually made representations on this matter. If any alternative proposal is accepted by the Government, it will be due to representations he made and negotiations he initiated. I am very hopeful that in the next few days we will receive a proposal from the Mt. Isa City Council that will allow the Government to consider the position for the future.

#### ACCOMMODATION FOR RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

**Mr. BERTONI:** I ask the Minister for Transport: Is he aware that in the forgotten land of the northern and central-western areas of Queensland large numbers of railway employees are still living in overcrowded and dilapidated houses, and that urgent financial assistance is needed to upgrade conditions to a decent, normal standard of living? How can he justify spending \$16,000,000 on a new rail link to Redcliffe, and further millions of dollars on the proposed Gold Coast rail link, after this Government has spent millions and millions of dollars on four-lane highways to these areas, including the almost completed Houghton Bridge?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I thank the honourable member for this question. The Railways Department looks at the State as a whole. Redcliffe is only one of the projects that we are working on. There is the rail link to the area of the honourable member for Redlands, and there will be others about from time to time. We do something everywhere.

As to the question of housing in the North-west—I inform the honourable member that during the financial year 1978-79 an expenditure of \$5,500,000 was incurred on the purchase of new houses, the upgrading and repair of existing houses and the provision of accommodation for members of migratory gangs. I think it would have to be agreed that that was fair enough. I

have handled representations by the honourable member about fly-screening and that sort of thing. Of the sum mentioned, approximately \$1,000,000 was expended on the Mt. Isa line, including the provision of seven new houses. A further sum of \$2,351,000 was outlayed on other capital works on the Mt. Isa line, as well as a sum of \$2,300,000 on track upgrading. The honourable member might say that that is not quite enough, but we are doing our best. When the Budget comes out, we might be able to do a little bit better.

#### REDCLIFFE RAIL LINK

**Mr. DAVIS:** I ask the Minister for Transport: Further to the statement that he made this morning concerning the rail link to Redcliffe, will he give an undertaking that the link will be completed on schedule, irrespective of the result in the Redcliffe by-election on Saturday?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I believe that I answered the question when I made my ministerial statement this morning. I will leave it at that.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I have a supplementary question. In view of the Minister's statement this morning and the one that he made in November 1978 to the effect that Redcliffe would not be given a rail link until the year 2000, I ask: Is he now denying responsibility for the latter statement and, if so, what statement of the Minister's can this House accept as being accurate and binding?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** The whole matter depends on the availability of fuel, which, in case the honourable member does not know, is in extremely short supply. Furthermore, the cost of fuel has risen tremendously, and this is a great worry to everybody.

I have been told by people in high places that this Government has to consider the construction of a powerhouse on the coal-fields so that it can use coal instead of diesel fuel. The honourable member should not forget that the Railway Department uses diesel fuel all the time and that it must slowly get away from its use. This is something we have to face up to. We are conducting a feasibility study into the electrification of the railway lines from Brisbane to Toowoomba and from Brisbane to Rockhampton.

**Mr. Davis:** I didn't ask you that.

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I know the honourable member didn't, but I am explaining it to him anyway. We are also looking at the line between Blackwater and Gladstone. I believe that when the report on the study comes out we will have to face up to the job.

My answer to the question is that the availability and cost of fuel is the only reason for the changed position.

#### INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD ACTIVITIES

**Mr. LESTER:** I ask the Minister for Welfare: In view of the very real and successful activities in this the International Year of the Child—and I commend the Minister on his efforts, particularly in promoting closeness of the family unit—what has he in mind to ensure that these activities will be ongoing, in view of their very great success this year?

**Mr. DOUMANY:** The activities and projects organised and supported by the State Planning Committee in Queensland have in the main been of a practical, bread-and-butter nature in the community. They have been designed in such a way that they will be directly beneficial and not extravagant and flamboyant projects to suit the whims of peripheral people and groups who want to see a lot of money wasted.

In Queensland, the State Planning Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Underhill, with his supporters in all the various major community organisations, has performed extremely well. One of the benefits achieved, and I think this will satisfy the honourable member, is that many of the projects are of an ongoing nature. The support that has been given to them this year will, in many instances, permit the communities concerned to continue those projects into the future.

One of the main objects and purposes of this particular year was the heightening of awareness. We all know that every year is the year of the child. Children are our most precious resource; they are more precious than any material resource we have. People throughout history have recognised that. It is a fact, too, that we have in our modern society an increasingly significant minority of parents and adults who have not been discharging their responsibilities. They have been neglecting children and, because of the trail of failure and destruction they have left behind them, they have given society, Governments and the community generally a really big headache. It is tragic for the children involved and a very costly exercise for the community.

One of the purposes of the International Year of the Child was the awakening of some of these people to their responsibilities, and I believe that we have done so. More particularly, I think we have made the general community aware of the obligation to help and to share the burden with government. Government has not a bottomless pit of money on which to draw for welfare. One of the ongoing benefits of the International Year of the Child is that many community organisations have now taken on new tasks and new responsibilities in sharing the burden with government. I believe that with more encouragement in the future we will see more competent people in community organisations. I am talking here

about bona fide community organisations that are established on good foundations and are made up of good people with good intent. I believe that those organisations will demonstrate more and more that welfare is very much part of the community's responsibility and is not always something to be thrust on the back of government.

#### PERSONAL INCOME TAX REDUCTION

**Mr. WARBURTON:** I wanted to direct this question to the Premier but, in his absence, I direct it to the Deputy Premier and Treasurer. With reference to the Income Tax (Arrangements with the States) Act 1978, which gives to the Queensland Government the power to reduce the personal income tax levied on residents of the State of Queensland and to authorise the Commonwealth, as its agent, to grant a rebate, and the Premier's public calls for a reduction in personal income tax, can we expect to see the Queensland Government take early action in its own right to give personal income tax relief to Queensland workers?

**Dr. EDWARDS:** As I said earlier, the honourable member knows full well the Queensland Government's position regarding the imposition of taxation charges in this State. We have the lowest charges in Australia. We have continually called for a review of personal taxation. I add, too, that the Leader of the Opposition in the Federal Parliament has committed the Labor Party to the imposition of more taxation. It follows that, if Labor ever came to power in Australia again, there would be a far greater imposition of taxation than ever before.

I make it quite clear that we will not support any suggestion that there be increased taxation by the Government of Queensland. Indeed, we hope that the Labor Party never holds the Treasury benches again in Canberra because, if it does, there will be far greater taxation of the people of Australia.

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

#### MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

##### AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY'S POLICY ON RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. SCASSOLA (Mt. Gravatt) (12 noon):** I desire today to draw the attention of the people of this State to the deception and hypocrisy of the Australian Labor Party's policy on resource development as it appears in that party's 1979 policy statement.

The Leader of the Opposition has, on a number of occasions, professed support for the development and for the role of private enterprise in that development—certainly by inference, at least. The Australian Labor Party's policy also contains a statement that "an efficient and prosperous private sector

is essential to maximise employment opportunities". When all the policy statements are read as a whole, it becomes patently clear that that statement and the professed support for development by the Leader of the Opposition are an exercise in fraud and deception. They are thinly veiled attempts to hoodwink the people of this State into believing that Labor supports personal initiative and enterprise when, in fact, it is implacably opposed to it.

The reality is that the Labor Party, whose policies are binding on the Leader of the Opposition and his fellows, is the enemy of private enterprise. The reality is that, if by some misfortune the Labor Party became the Government of this State, it would impose intolerable burdens upon the private sector and, indeed, the whole of the Queensland community. Under a Labor Government, private enterprise would be crushed by the sheer weight of Government interference and by legislative and administrative controls, which would choke the very life out of it. Mineral and other resource development in this State would grind to a halt.

Whilst the Labor policy on minerals and energy gives some insight into its position, its real thrust and direction is to be found in other sections of the policy statements. One of the many statutory authorities which the Labor Party proposes is one called the Natural Resource Utilisation Planning Commission. It is clear that that statutory authority would have very broad and very significant powers in determining whether any proposal for development would or would not proceed. It should be mentioned that there is no indication in the policy statement as to how the commission is to be constituted, how the people serving on it are to be appointed or what guide-lines it will be given in making its determinations.

It is very, very clear from the policy, however, that any applicant for mining development, in addition to having to comply with all the other requirements, would be obliged to receive a clearance from that commission, whose decision it appears will be absolute, before proceeding. Whereas in some other parts of the policy great pains are taken to state that there are certain rights of appeal, there are no such statements about this commission. It appears that there will be no right of appeal and that people who are the subject of a commission decision will have to grin and bear it.

The requirement that proposals for development are to receive a clearance from that body constitutes an abdication of the responsibility of government. It is the responsibility of an elected government to make decisions as to whether or not development should proceed. The Labor Party says, however, that if it were elected to Government it would shirk that responsibility and hand over its powers and responsibilities to a body which is to be accountable to no-one. It would hand over its powers and responsibilities to a body not elected but

appointed, and which would not be answerable to the Government, the public, or this Parliament.

Similar comments relating to the decision-making process and the lack of rights of appeal and objection can be made with respect to the proposal to establish a Queensland Heritage Commission, which would be another of the many statutory authorities and commissions of which we see such a proliferation in the policy statements of the A.L.P.

But of even greater concern to this House and, indeed, to this State, are the contents of three statements which show very clearly the real thrust and direction of Labor Party policy. The first is a statement that committees would be formed—

“To examine the social and economic advantages of forming statutory bodies—separate from the Public Service—to become involved in mining and secondary mining industries in Queensland”.

The second is a statement that—

“An A.L.P. Government in Queensland will take all steps necessary to protect and expand the public sector in this State, recognising that a thriving public sector, including State-owned enterprise, is a practical and responsible method of ensuring that the resources of Queensland are enjoyed equally by all Queenslanders”.

The third and most significant is a statement that—

“Where appropriate, the State Government will be a partner in resource development projects”.

Those statements embody and, indeed, are the key to, the Labor Party's approach to resource development in this State. They espouse a philosophy of State ownership; a philosophy which rejects private ownership and private endeavour, and which sees personal initiative as having no virtue. Those statements show the Labor Party to be the prisoners of an outdated and rejected philosophy which puts the State first and the people last. They espouse a philosophy which would impose on all Queenslanders the deadening hand of socialism.

The statements that I have quoted are totally inconsistent with the concern expressed by the Leader of the Opposition for the private sector. They embody an approach which is the very antithesis of the promotion of the private sector, or indeed of any concern for the private sector. They reveal the Leader of the Opposition and his cohorts as people who say one thing and who are bound to do otherwise. It reveals them as people not to be trusted by the people of this State.

Those statements also demonstrate the strange, cavalier attitude which the A.L.P. would have as trustees of public money should they, by some misfortune, ever become the Government of this State. Resource development projects are high-risk ventures that involve the investment of very large

sums of money. Indeed, the Leader of the Opposition himself has said that they are high-risk ventures. Yet the Labor Party in this place would be prepared to risk the hard-earned money of Queenslanders in such projects.

Finally, any political party that is prepared to endanger the public's hard-earned money on high-risk ventures can be described only as having a perverted attitude to Government.

#### GYMPIE AND REDCLIFFE BY-ELECTIONS

**Mr. HANSEN** (Maryborough) (12.10 p.m.): This Saturday, voters in the Gympie and Redcliffe electorates will have the opportunity to express their disapproval or otherwise of the coalition parties in both Queensland and Canberra. Even the traditional voter will have the opportunity to serve notice on the Nationals and the Liberals that they need to pull their socks up and that they had better honour some of their promises. They can do this if they are like the Premier, who says that he supports Mr. Fraser but that he does not support his policies. What better way is there for the people to show their disapproval than by voting for the Labor candidates?

There is every indication that the people of Gympie are being taken for granted. They are. Redcliffe is being offered a rail link which, on the say-so of the Minister for Transport this morning, will cost \$16,500,000. But Gympie is being disregarded. Perhaps the first indication of this action by the National and Liberal Parties—

**Mr. Powell** interjected.

**Mr. HANSEN:** Yes, they are taking it for granted that the National Party candidate will win.

**Mr. Moore** interjected.

**Mr. HANSEN:** What did they do? When the Nationals chose their candidate they bypassed the first citizen of Gympie. The Liberals had the offer of the services of the second citizen of Gympie, the Deputy Mayor, but they bypassed her, too, because they feel that there is nothing to worry about in the election. My personal opinion of both these persons—and I have had some dealings with them through local government—is that they would make excellent candidates. Gympie is being taken for granted.

I believe that the electors of both Redcliffe and Gympie should consider the Tasmanian situation. Following the absolute rejection of the Liberals in Tasmania at the State election that followed the Premiers' Conference in June, the Federal Treasurer announced in last week's Budget special programmes for Tasmania. These programmes will provide employment. That is one message that comes out very clearly in the Federal Budget.

In the early post-war period State Labor Governments established softwood forests,

and these forests have progressively grown to the stage where the Forestry Department is a major employer in the district.

**Mr. Powell:** Would you say that the Mayor of Gympie would be a better candidate than the Labor candidate for Gympie?

**Mr. HANSEN:** He is not a member of the Labor Party and he did not offer himself to the Labor Party.

As I was saying, State Labor Governments set up these forestry resources. Since 1967, Federal Governments, in anticipation of timber shortages, have provided loan funds for softwood forestry. This year, that amount in the Federal Budget has been reduced from \$1,485,000 to \$1,000,000. This is the same allocation that is being given to Tasmania and is \$985,000 below the allocation to New South Wales. This could result in reduced work opportunities in rural areas, particularly in places such as Gympie.

The establishment of a pulp mill in the Gympie district has been a hardy triennial election promise, but we have not heard much about it this time. The member for Lytton, in his capacity as the Labor Party spokesman on forestry matters, and I asked questions at the time a piece of land was taken from the Forestry Department at Beerwah in exchange for a piece of land closer to Bribie Island, which was held by Australian Paper Manufacturers. It was projected then that a joint Korean-Australian paper-mill would be established in this area, and that was the reason why the land was required. At that time we asked whether that was the actual project, and what effect it would have on a pulp mill in Gympie. We have not received any answer as yet. I believe that when the Premier goes to the Gympie area before election day he should announce whether a pulp mill, which would draw on the Gympie and Maryborough forestry resources, will be established in Gympie, and whether other forestry products would go to Beerwah for processing.

The local fruit and vegetable growers' co-operative, of which the former honourable member for Gympie (Mr. Hodges) was once secretary, has not had any success in its efforts to have a coldroom installed at Gympie. It would not cost anything like the \$6,500,000 that the Railway Department is talking of spending on a rail link to Redcliffe. The co-operative is looking at modern methods, and I think it is agreed that the cooling of produce before it is loaded into refrigerated cars for transport south is essential to ensure that it arrives at the market in good condition. The honourable member for Murrumba would agree with me that such facilities should be available to the fruit and vegetable growers of the Gympie area, and there are quite a number of them.

Tourism must rate highly amongst the newer industries in the Gympie electorate, and the growth of the coastal centres of Tin Can Bay and Rainbow Beach is nothing

short of amazing. The prices paid for residential land developed and released by the Lands Department in the past few years are an indication of the popularity of the areas. They are all serviced by one road, the Tin Can Bay Road, some 35 miles in length, which all candidates in the Gympie by-election appear to believe is in a shocking state. The road is used also by people engaged in the fishing industry operating from Tin Can Bay—in fact, it is one of the largest fishing ports on the Queensland coast—and to a slightly less extent by the Defence Department personnel at Camp Kerr, and there are a number of narrow bridges along the road.

I stress again that the fuel-pricing policies of the Fraser-Anthony Government have increased the cost of most items, and primary producers, particularly those in areas such as Gympie, have been affected adversely. The fishing industry certainly is one that has been affected adversely.

With the price of diesel fuel doubling in less than three years, there is a better incentive to store fuel than to store gold. One sees advertisements in the newspapers saying, "Invest in gold. It's a sure thing." On that basis, with the price doubling in less than three years, diesel fuel must be an even better investment than gold.

Members have been assured by the Queensland Minister for Industry and Administrative Services that there will not be any rationing of fuel in Queensland, and I believe that his statement is correct. However, fuel agents are being asked to ration fuel, and their costs are increased when they have to deliver half loads to farms or fishing boats instead of carrying a full load and disposing of it. They run the risk of losing a customer if they refuse to supply him because they believe that he holds adequate stocks, and this is placing a big strain on the relationship between agents and producers. If shortages occur, emergency stocks should be available when there is an urgent need for them.

The honourable member for Warrego, a member of the National Party, mentioned the problems facing primary producers in his electorate. An inspection of agents' books would indicate quite clearly who the hoarders are, and the Minister for Industry and Administrative Services has said that he knows of people who have two years' supply of fuel on hand. Those rationing fuel supplies—and I do not mean rationing by the use of tickets—should be able to ensure that the fuel is distributed to people who really need it and supplied in restricted quantities to people holding large stocks. In my opinion, that should be done by the inspectors of the Department of Labour Relations.

In the past few months, about 10 000 tonnes of diesel fuel have not been delivered along the Queensland coast. This has caused problems in the harvesting and transport of the current cane crop, and it has also caused

professional fishermen to tie up their trawlers. These fishermen live on their vessels and have very limited opportunity to store fuel.

Leaving the rationing of fuel to the oil companies is a far from satisfactory arrangement. It is not fair to either the consumers or the agents that companies should accept this responsibility. It is clearly the responsibility of government. I know that it is mostly the Federal Government's responsibility, but it is the responsibility of government to ensure that there is a fair distribution of fuel if shortages occur.

REDCLIFFE BY-ELECTION AND RAIL LINK;  
AUSTRALIAN PENSIONERS LEAGUE

**Mr. FRAWLEY** (Caboolture) (12.20 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, as you are aware I never rise in the debate on Matters of Public Interest unless there is a matter of importance to discuss, and today is no exception. Actually all I do is present the facts and allow the people to judge for themselves. As there is to be a by-election in Redcliffe on Saturday owing to the retirement of the former Speaker, Jim Houghton, member for Redcliffe—

**Mr. Moore:** A good fellow, too.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I agree.

Because of that by-election I feel that it is my duty to point out certain alarming facts to the people of Redcliffe, particularly the pensioners. When I saw a copy of the A.L.P. how-to-vote card for next Saturday, I realised that there was an attempt to hoodwink the pensioners into believing that the A.L.P. was supporting them, when in fact the A.L.P. has bludged on the pensioners for years. "Robbed" would be a better word to use, but in fact I would use even stronger words. However, in an attempt to improve the standard of the debate, I do not intend to do so.

There are seven candidates at the by-election. The name of the A.L.P. candidate, Mr. Lugton, appears third from the bottom. The A.L.P. how-to-vote card shows "1" for Lugton, "6" for McCallum the democrat, and "7" for White the Liberal. Then it shows "2" for Dobson the pensioners' candidate, and then the numbers go down "3", "4" and "5". The A.L.P. is trying to con the pensioners. As everybody knows, the pensioners are going to put out a how-to-vote card indicating no preferences whatsoever, just showing "1" for the pensioners' candidate. The A.L.P. is trying to con the pensioners into believing that it is giving the pensioners No. 2. In reality the Labor preferences will never be counted. It is reasonable to assume that the Labor candidate will be one of the last two candidates in the election. The A.L.P. is trying to suck the pensioners in.

Today I thought that I should refer specifically to the money that has been contributed to the A.L.P. by the people of Redcliffe, who were under the impression

that they were supporting pensioners when in fact they were contributing to Labor Party funds. I refer to something that was raised in the Chamber on 28 March by the honourable member for Stafford. He exposed a massive fraud.

**Mr. MACKENROTH:** I rise to a point of order. That matter is sub judice. It is before the courts. I don't think it should be raised in this Chamber.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I don't think it is sub judice at the present time. It has not gone before the courts to my knowledge.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! Has a date been set aside for the hearing?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** If he doesn't know—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Continue.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** If he has these facts at his disposal, he should give them to us.

The honourable member for Stafford exposed that matter in the House. I have seen those lucky number stalls operating in Redcliffe. Over the two years 1976 to 1978 the A.L.P. made about \$14,000 out of pensioners, whilst the Australian Pensioners League received \$3,358.

**A Government Member:** It's wrong!

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Of course it is. I went through this, and I decided to make my contribution. Over the years the Redcliffe-Scarborough Pensioners League paid a total of \$4,229.58 to Queensland Volunteer Fund Raisers from money raised by selling lucky numbers in Redcliffe. Queensland Volunteer Fund Raisers paid by a number of cheques to the Clontarf Branch of the A.L.P. \$1,105.63 and to the Redcliffe Branch of the A.L.P. \$1,161.65, a total of \$2,267.28. This was only over a two-year period, but the pensioners had been robbed by the A.L.P. from 1970 when an agreement was reached between the A.L.P. and the Australian Pensioners League for A.L.P. branches to conduct lucky number stalls under a banner identifying themselves as being for the Australian Pensioners League. The agreement was that 50 per cent of the proceeds would be spent in prizes, with 25 per cent going to the A.L.P. and 25 per cent to the pensioners.

Until 1975 the A.L.P. conducted these stalls and pocketed most of the profits. In late 1975 an organisation called Queensland Volunteer Fund Raisers was set up as a front for the A.L.P. Most of the cheques drawn by that organisation were signed by Gerry Jones, who is the secretary of the A.L.P., and Gordon O'Sullivan, the A.L.P.'s financial director. Many of the cheques were written for cash. It is a very alarming situation that a great many of the cheques were written for cash.

A cheque written on 22 June 1978 for \$500 was cashed through the Queensland Fish Board. Another cheque, dated 29 September,

was for \$1,000. The next one is very significant. It is a cheque written on 22 August 1978 for \$500 to the Breakfast Creek Hotel. Everybody knows that is where the members of the A.L.P. drink. That \$500 from the pensioners probably went to pay for some party down at that hotel.

**Mr. R. J. Gibbs:** That's a lie, and you know it.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Of course it did.

Who got all this money? Thousands of dollars were handed over by way of cash cheques. I have the whole list here.

**Mr. Lane:** The member for Wolston was on the Labor Party staff at the time.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I do not know that for sure, but I will take the honourable member's word for it. I haven't got his name on the list here.

These are alarming facts. All of these cheques were written for cash. Many were written in favour of professional footrunners—many of whom I know—who were given the cheques as prizes at places where they competed. There is nothing wrong with that. The cheques for cash are the trouble. It is reasonable to assume that a lot of this money was pocketed by some people in Queensland Volunteer Fund Raisers.

It has been estimated by reliable investigators that from 1970 to the end of 1978 a total of \$160,000 went into A.L.P. coffers, whereas the pensioners got about \$12,000. As I said, the original agreement was 25 per cent to the A.L.P., 25 per cent to the pensioners and 50 per cent in prizes. However, after Queensland Volunteer Fund Raisers came into it, that organisation made the pensioners pay for the prizes out of their 25 per cent. In other words, the pensioners paid for everything while the A.L.P. pocketed 75 per cent.

Based on the amount of money paid in to Queensland Volunteer Fund Raisers by the Redcliffe-Scarborough Pensioners League over two years, it is reasonable to assume that approximately \$17,000 was paid over the full term of the agreement from Redcliffe. So the people of Redcliffe contributed \$17,000 to Labor Party funds thinking they were contributing that money for the benefit of the pensioners in Redcliffe. I cannot find any details of money paid to the Redcliffe Branch of the Australian Pensioners League, but I will agree that perhaps its share was included in the sum of \$3,358 that was paid to the Australian Pensioners League for 1976-77-78.

**Mr. R. J. Gibbs:** You have false information.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** The information I have is correct. On Saturday, 1 September, the pensioners in Redcliffe will probably realise that they should not give their votes or preferences to the A.L.P.

Now that I have disposed of that matter, I want to talk about the Redcliffe rail link. All the seven candidates in the by-election have jumped on the bandwagon. However, not one of them—not one from any party—said a word about the rail to Redcliffe until he became a political candidate. The former Speaker (Jim Houghton) and I, together with members of the Rails for Redcliffe Committee, have worked over the years for this railway line. It is reasonable to assume that the successful candidate on Saturday will be cheeky enough to claim all the credit for it, whereas credit for a rail to Redcliffe should be given to the people I have mentioned.

I have a map here that shows the route of the railway line to Redcliffe. I am opposed to the one proposed by the Minister through Kallangur. I want a railway line from Deception Bay to Redcliffe. Why should the people of my electorate be neglected? A railway line to Redcliffe should come from the North Coast line.

I have a letter from a former Minister for Transport, the late Keith Hooper, concerning plans for a line from the North Coast line to the Narangba Industrial Estate. The plan shows it going through the industrial estate.

**An Opposition Member:** It's going through the freeway now?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Under the freeway. The honourable member does not even know that there is a tunnel under the freeway. The tunnel is 19 ft. high and 17 ft. 9 ins. wide. The minimum height required for an electric train is 16 ft. and the minimum width is 14 ft. That tunnel was placed under the Bruce Highway for a railway line to pass from the North Coast line to the Narangba Industrial Estate. This map also shows the future connection to Redcliffe and Deception Bay.

As I was saying, I have a letter from Mr. Hooper saying that a plan was submitted by Gutteridge, Haskins & Davey to the Railway Department, showing the proposed route of the line. It has been to the Railway Department for evaluation. I have received information that approval has been given by the Railway Department for the laying of the line to the Narangba Industrial Estate. The distance from the industrial estate to the Narangba station is only 6 km and the land is already owned by the Government. It is only 7 km from the Narangba Industrial Estate to the western part of Redcliffe at Rothwell, and that is where the railway line should go. That would be the cheapest place for it. It would entail only the cost of resumption of 7 km of land from the eastern border of the Narangba Industrial Estate to the western suburbs of Redcliffe at Rothwell.

**Mr. Kruger:** You own it.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I do not own even a fraction of it.

That 7 km of land could be purchased for a ridiculously low price because most of it is farmland and is not even being used. (Time expired.)

#### VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN QUEENSLAND

**Mr. LANE** (Merthyr) (12.30 p.m.): I make a plea today for some public compassion for the few thousand Vietnamese refugees who are living amongst us in Queensland. Personally I have been disgusted and ashamed at the racist attitude expressed in recent weeks by some people in our Australian community. I dissociate myself from it and I hope that every responsible member of this Parliament will do likewise.

In the past four years we have witnessed a significant increase in the number of Asian migrants arriving in Australia. I understand that 15,000 of them arrived during that time. At least another 9,000 refugees or migrants from South East Asia can be expected to arrive here before the end of this year. Of the 15,000, between 2,500 and 3,000 have settled in Queensland, with the vast majority living in Brisbane. At a rough estimate, 1,000 of these people live in the West End area, 800 in the western suburbs of Oxley, Darra, Inala and Goodna and about 700 still reside in the migrant hostel at Wacol.

I have taken the trouble to go to Wacol to meet some of these people, to have some experience of their company. I know that they are basically young married couples with large families. In many instances they are still suffering the trauma and distress of fleeing from the Communists who took over their country. However, they are looking forward to a bright future and to becoming part of Australia and good Australian citizens. I believe that most of them are prepared to work hard and diligently to better themselves in this country. They have a great love for their children and they hope to give them an even greater future than they themselves may enjoy.

Proportionately, the Vietnamese who have arrived here have a high standard of education, but they rarely find employment commensurate with their level of education. While many of them are lawyers, teachers and people with great technical expertise, they are prepared to work hard at labouring and other unskilled tasks to give their young families a start on the threshold of a new life. I should like Queenslanders to do something about extending support and friendship to them. They are indeed unfortunate people who deserve just that.

In recent weeks there have been signs of these Vietnamese families becoming political footballs of some opportunists and extremists in the community. A few nights ago I was shocked to hear the president of a very large branch of the Returned Services League refer to these refugee families as being something less than human.

I was frankly disgusted by his performance. He was not in any way deterred by the interviewer, who seemed to adopt a similar attitude. It was as if they were talking about cattle, sheep, pigs or other animals. It was quite disgusting that they should be referred to disparagingly, denigrated and called names that they did not deserve.

In recent times allegations have been made that they have been guilty of breaches of our fishing regulations. That has been found to be offensive by some Queenslanders. I have inquired into this and discovered that there have indeed been a few isolated instances of Indo-Chinese people encountering problems in understanding the quite stringent fishing regulations imposed in this country. In some cases, they have had to be warned by fishing inspectors.

The Queensland Fisheries Service has recently instituted a course to train master fishermen who have a language problem so that they will clearly understand the standards of fishing practice that they must attain. It is in the area of language that most problems arise. The department is arranging to have the fishing regulations printed in Vietnamese and other South-east Asian languages for distribution amongst migrants when they arrive. I hope that the department goes further and sends officers to the Wacol camp to give some sort of instruction and guidance to those people, many of whom are used to living by the water and deriving much of their food and sustenance from the sea.

Some unfortunate statements have been made in the last few days about the health of Vietnamese migrants. What was, I thought, a rather unfortunate statement emanated from the Minister for Health (Sir William Knox) earlier this week, which I have asked him to correct publicly at an early opportunity. I am not sure whether he or the sub-editors of the newspaper are to blame, but he was quoted as saying that illegal migrants—of course, that does not refer to Vietnamese refugees, but the inference is there—pose a major health threat to Australian people.

I intend to ask him tomorrow if he will confirm that all refugees, as distinct from illegal migrants, arriving from South-east Asia, which includes Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam, are subject to the most stringent screening and health checks before they leave the refugee camps in Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta, and whether, in the case of those coming under desperate circumstances by boat, he will confirm that within 48 hours of any of those people being brought to the Wacol migrant camp in Brisbane by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs they there undergo further detailed health checks by the State Department of Health, acting on behalf of the Commonwealth, where necessary, and are hospitalised or quarantined until any danger has passed. I hope that I will get

a responsible answer to that question so that some of the disquiet stirred up by his statement can be allayed.

I know that there is serious concern about this problem among the people most active in assisting refugees in Queensland. The St. Vincent de Paul Society of the Roman Catholic Church has been devoting quite a lot of its time to this programme. It arranges visits by families from various parishes in the Brisbane area to assist with integration, language, accommodation and employment—and, indeed, to give comfort and support to the people at the migrant hostel. There is a follow-up service whereby various parishes, through special migration committees at West End, Ayr, Rockhampton and other places throughout the State, have adopted Vietnamese families and are endeavouring to assist them in the problems they encounter in becoming integrated with the community.

I would like to make special mention of the effort by the St. Vincent de Paul Society in this programme. The Kenmore parish of the Roman Catholic Church is making similar efforts. Just recently the Mt. Gravatt parish of the Uniting Church entered the programme and is participating in assisting these families. The great work that has been done by many good Christian families is not assisted by blatantly racist attacks and the shocking statements that have been made by people who should be responsible in the community. Before closing I want to quote part of a statement issued by the Australian Episcopal Conference—in other words, the Catholic bishops—about these Vietnamese refugees. It said—

“But now, there is a growing, huge, horrifying dimension to the suffering of these refugees. Their cry is a summons to action by Christ himself. It challenges the humanity of the Australian people as a whole. It demands a response of Christian love, a sacrifice for Christian greatness.”

(Time expired.)

#### REDCLIFFE HOSPITAL

**Mr. KRUGER** (Murrumba) (12.40 p.m.): I rise today to talk about a matter of extreme importance to the people of Kallangur, Petrie, Lawnton, Redcliffe, Deception Bay and Caboolture. I have been forced to speak in this debate because of the vote-catching carrot that has been dangled before the people in these areas in the form of extensions to the Redcliffe Hospital announced just prior to the by-election to be held on Saturday. At the outset let me say that I am not taking anything away from the people running the hospital. The hospital itself is understaffed and has not been run correctly for some time under the control of the Minister for Health.

I want to refer to statements made in the local Press by the Minister for Welfare and Mr. White, the Liberal candidate. Of course, Mr. White is the homing pigeon of

Redcliffe politics. He flies into the area when an election is in the offing and flies out again as soon as it is over.

**Mr. R. J. Gibbs:** He's also a member of the National Civic Council.

**Mr. KRUGER:** I do not know much about his other connections.

Having made those few points, I shall now read a statement that appeared in the “Sunday Sun” under the heading, “Budget cuts will hit our hospitals”. The article stated—

“The Queensland Government's hospital building program has been slashed because of Federal Government mini-Budget cutbacks.

“Health Minister Sir William Knox said yesterday: ‘It seems that some of the hospitals that might have been considered in the next couple of years will just have to be postponed.’”

“In his Budget speech last September, Sir William, then State Treasurer, outlined building plans for hospitals at Cairns, Gold Coast, Ipswich, Mackay, Mareeba, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Townsville.

“He will release full details of hospital building cutbacks later this week.”

It continued—

“‘It may mean that one or two hospitals that I might have liked to have seen built won't be started.’”

While I continue my remarks about the situation in Redcliffe, members should keep that article in mind because it will really have an impact towards the conclusion of my speech. The Premier is now belting his chest and saying that he is going to speak to the Prime Minister about getting a cut-back in income tax because he believes we are overtaxed. He is talking about building hospitals and then whingeing and moaning because no money is available.

An article in “The Courier-Mail” of 13 June under the heading “Federal cuts hit hospital projects—Knox” stated—

“Federal health cuts had caused eight new Queensland hospital projects to be shelved, the Health Minister (Sir William Knox) said yesterday.

“Sir William said Queensland would not follow New South Wales' lead with hospital closures, but certainly faced the postponements of new hospital and expansion projects.

“He said the hospital projects to be postponed were at Ingham, Ipswich, Goondiwindi, Charleville, Mornington Island, Boulia, Townsville and Southport.

“Planned increases in bed numbers at Cairns and Redcliffe hospitals also would be postponed.”

That article referred to the new wing being built at the Redcliffe Hospital. Under arrangements made with the Federal Government, the provision of 144 bed spaces will have to be postponed.

At the time of that announcement I found it necessary to issue a Press release in the local paper to advise the local people as follows—

“Cutback in expenditure will stop the employment of a full complement of staff required for the new extensions to the Redcliffe hospital. This is a disgusting situation when we consider the obvious understaffing or inefficiency of the hospital at the present time with waits up to five hours being experienced. This Government had known of the likely cutbacks for several months but had not taken any real action to overcome the problems.

“The State and Federal Governments had been in collaboration on the future of hospitals for some time and yet Mr. Knox avoided answering questions about the possibility of the cutbacks. It seems to be grossly wrong to cut back on hospital beds in a place like Redcliffe when the people using the hospital live in one of the fastest-growing areas of the State. With present population plus growth the need is great.”

A “Courier-Mail” article on 27 June 1979 was headed, “Hospital spending gets \$130m. boost”. There is no need to elaborate on the article except to point out that here again we see the problem facing the Queensland Government with the Redcliffe Hospital because suddenly, with an election coming up, the Liberal Party decided it had to do something. National Party supporters were racing around talking about a rail link in an effort to win votes and the Liberal Party had to come up with something else. Then, in the local newspapers the Premier was reported to be talking about cut-backs in tax. Terry White, the Liberal candidate, was talking about a \$2,300,000 extension to the Redcliffe Hospital when the Government was trying to cut back on expenditure and the hospital could not get an increase in its number of beds or staff.

The “Record” of 27 June 1979, in an article headed “Hospital row continues”, deals with the big blue that the Queensland Minister for Health, Sir William Knox, was having with the Federal member for Petrie, Mr. John Hodges, who apparently does not know very much about the Redcliffe Hospital or does not show any interest in it. The article reads—

“State Health Minister, Sir William Knox today accused Federal Liberal Minister for Petrie, Mr. John Hodges of ‘State bashing’ over hospital costs.

‘Mr. Hodges should get off the State’s back and do something to improve existing levels of funding for our hospitals,’ Sir William said.

‘I challenge him to travel the State, as I have . . .’

‘He also suggests we cut hospital costs by declaring some hospitals nursing homes.

‘That proposal will not save a cent . . .’

Those are the sorts of arguments that have been going on in the local area recently.

An article in “The Courier-Mail” of 1 August 1979, under the heading, “A long wait likely for treatment at hospital”, states—

“The crunch will come in September when people start flocking here in their hundreds.

“Royal Children’s Hospital already had its medical staff at maximum workload . . .

“State Cabinet’s freeze on public service numbers would make the situation worse from September.”

I could go on and on with these sorts of problems that are facing us. It is a crazy, mixed-up issue all the way through. It shows how low the Government will stoop to try to gain a few votes at the appropriate time. With a Labor Government, the people would have an honest Government. They would know exactly what the Government intended to do at all times.

The big crunch came in an article in “The Courier-Mail” of 1 August 1979, under the heading “\$2.3m. hospital injection”. It includes a photograph of Mr. Doumany holding up a model of the redevelopment of the Redcliffe Hospital. For several months this Government had been saying that no money would be available for such projects and that there would be cut-backs, yet suddenly, just after the date of the by-election was announced, Mr. Doumany had a model of a big extension to the Redcliffe Hospital. Although the Government drew up this plan in a hurried way for election purposes, it cannot get the 144 beds that it requires for the extension that is almost complete. What a mockery to make that statement at that time!

The Redcliffe “Herald” of 1 August 1979 has an article headed “\$2.3m for new work at hospital”. It refers to a joint statement by the Acting Health Minister, Mr. Doumany, and the Liberal candidate for Redcliffe, Mr. Terry White. What a situation, with the Liberal candidate for Redcliffe and the Acting Minister making a joint statement on the Redcliffe Hospital at that time!

Let me pass now from the previous articles dealing with the 144-bed shortage to what the Government should be doing for the people of Redcliffe. Let the Government man the outpatients department and put on an additional couple of nursing sisters and another doctor who can look after children’s illnesses, and make the hospital in Redcliffe work.

I have received several letters and complaints about the Redcliffe Hospital. One lady wrote to me complaining that she went to the hospital at 8 p.m. with a child who had a very bad earache and left at 11.30 p.m. without being seen by a doctor.

In the letter she says—

“I must explain that being a sole supporter of my son with a take home pay of \$144 per week with expenses such as rent, childminding and general living expenses of food etc. . . .”

We all know the types of expenses that these women have to meet. The letter continues—

"I also must point out that I have been refused dental service by the Dental Hospital in Brisbane as they claim I earn too much money . . .

"I feel that I am making a contribution to this country by working and bringing up my son on my own and not relying on government pensions and therefore am very annoyed that when I do need assistance in these services find that we can get none and have to go without."

That is a common situation. When the Press release about the \$2,300,000 extension to the Redcliffe Hospital was made, I received at least 20 complaints about people having to sit at that hospital. One woman went there at 9 a.m. Her husband came to see me at 1.30 p.m. and informed me that in that time she had moved from 41 to 21 on the waiting-list and there was still no real indication of when she would see a doctor.

It is quite easy to promise the people something in this area. The people are worried about the outpatient service. Why should the Government dangle this carrot of a \$2,300,000 extension to the Redcliffe Hospital before the people of Redcliffe when it has no intention of carrying out the redevelopment? The extension is not needed until the other wing is operating. At that time the Government can start to look at the extensions that will be needed.

The coalition Government seems to worry only about keeping itself in power. I believe that the result in the Redcliffe by-election next Saturday will reflect the opposition of the people to the Government's attitude in the past. If the Government had approached the matter realistically and had the brains to say, "We will upgrade the outpatient section of the hospital", instead of dangling the \$2,300,000 in front of the people of Redcliffe, it would have earned more respect.

#### EMISSION CONTROLS ON MOTOR VEHICLES

**Mr. LESTER** (Peak Downs) (12.50 p.m.): The imposition of emission controls on motor vehicles used by Queenslanders is sheer madness when fuel costs are rising. One hears a great deal of talk these days about tax savings. Let me say that I believe that the imposition of emission controls on motor vehicles is one of the greatest tax scourges in this country.

It has not yet been proved conclusively that the imposition of emission controls on motor vehicles has reduced smog levels in Australian capital cities, and I believe that requiring their fitting is selfish, dishonest and deceitful. I would go further and say that motor vehicles fitted with emission controls use upwards of 10 per cent more fuel—and R.A.C.Q. figures bear that out—are less efficient, have a lower resale value, and last

a shorter time. Vehicles produced before full emission controls were required to be fitted by manufacturers are more readily saleable than cars produced a year later.

**Mr. Frawley:** They burn out spark plugs quicker and points have to be replaced more frequently, too.

**Mr. LESTER:** Those are the comments of an A-grade mechanic who is a member of this Parliament. He is backing up what I am saying.

In my opinion, the Queensland Government should put more pressure on the Federal authorities to make them realise that Queensland is a big, sparsely populated State and that regulations tailor-made for Sydney and Melbourne are completely unsuitable for Queensland and should not apply here. The whole exercise is a Federal Government hoax, and it is costing the Australian public about \$600,000,000 a year for additional fuel, etc., to meet the emission control requirements.

Let us look at the matter objectively. The Federal Government gains more sales tax on the sale of additional fuel and on the sale of valves that burn out and other parts that wear out. It is not really interested in the problem in States such as Queensland and Western Australia. The legislation certainly is not tailor-made for the consumer, the worker, the ordinary Australian; in fact, it is fair to say that the imposition of emission controls is very detrimental to the ordinary Australian. I could use much stronger language, but I believe that it is better to use moderate language in this Chamber.

I firmly believe that there is a cartel of fuel companies and car manufacturers, because, even though there is a shortage of fuel, they sell more fuel and more motor vehicles. Whereas once cars would last seven or eight years, they certainly do not last as long as that now. How many people have bought cars recently and had to have major engine jobs done in the first 12 months? Not long ago I had to purchase a new car because the car I had was worn out by the work I do in my electorate.

**An Opposition Member:** You probably drive badly.

**Mr. LESTER:** I have never had a breakdown. In the first week I had to have a new engine in that new car.

**Mr. Booth:** What kind of car was it?

**Mr. LESTER:** I will not go into that.

I believe that what is now happening in Australia is totally criminal. In Australia we are at the stage with pollution requirements that America was at in 1974. In 1974 in America motor vehicles were using 10 per cent more fuel. They were breaking down and were generally unreliable. However, American manufacturers and key people got to work on the problem. Today the American cars fitted with anti-pollution

equipment are as reliable as vehicles were in 1974, and engines of the same size use the same amount of fuel. I am not talking through my left ear-hole when I say that. I am referring to what was said by Mr. Barber, the president of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. He would not make statements without some degree of truth in them.

Very clearly we in Australia have not moved with the times. I firmly believe that the car manufacturers have not wanted to move with the times. We are back to the cartel of the motor vehicle manufacturers and the fuel agencies. It is fair comment that the car manufacturers in Australia have tried in every way to resist the move to build cleaner engines. They have plonked some wires on the outside of them so that they look a ghastly mess, but they have not endeavoured to make better engines in total. In my book, they stand condemned for not being more realistic.

**Mr. Frawley:** You can't blame them. A lot of their shares are held by oil companies.

**Mr. LESTER:** That is a good point.

It cannot be said that there is not the technology in Australia to build good motor cars. Three Commodores won the Repco Rally, beating vehicles of world-wide make. It has been proved conclusively that Australian manufacturers are not facing up to the problem of anti-pollution requirements, and do not want to do so. We must not go along with the idea that is being pushed in South Australia and New South Wales of further anti-pollution requirements. The people in those States are in the clutches of the big car manufacturers, and they have not enough brains to realise that they have to be resisted.

What is happening hurts the country person greatly. The average country person drives 40 000 km a year compared with approximately 10 000 km a year by his city counterpart. That means that 1,200 gallons of fuel are used by the country person as against 300 gallons by his city counterpart. The average person living in the country is therefore paying \$1,350 extra a year because he lives in that part of the State. That is the sort of problem people are facing in country areas as a result of this requirement that does not help country people in any way. We have clean air in country areas.

It has been suggested to me by car agents in country areas that a device could be fitted that would allow a motor vehicle engine to operate normally outside a city but which, once the vehicle came into a city, could be turned on so that the anti-pollution equipment operated. I believe that with present-day technology that could be done. A mechanic in Clermont whom I know is prepared to stake his reputation on it. As a motorist came close to a city he could go through an inspection station and have the

engine retuned for city running. That restriction would need to apply only to Brisbane, not other Queensland cities and towns. This would be one way of overcoming the problem. It is a fact of life that many people in country areas are fiddling with their engines and removing the anti-pollution equipment.

(Time expired.)

The House adjourned at 1 p.m.

---