

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 20 AUGUST 1980

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

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1)**ASSENT**

Mr SPEAKER: I have to report that on 20 August 1980 I presented to the Deputy Governor Appropriation Bill 1980-1981 (No. 1) for the Royal Assent and that the Deputy Governor was pleased, in my presence, to subscribe his Assent thereto in the name and on behalf of Her Majesty.

PAPERS

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Report of The James Cook University of North Queensland for 1979.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

Metropolitan Transit Authority Act 1976-1979 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923-1979.

Industry and Commerce Training Act 1979-1980.

Inspection of Machinery Act 1951-1974.

Workers' Compensation Act 1916-1980.

Grammar Schools Act 1975 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923-1979.

Griffith University Act 1971-1977 and the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923-1979.

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

Regulations under—

Construction Safety Act 1971-1975

Factories and Shops Act 1960-1975.

- Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1961–1980.
 Industry and Commerce Training Act 1979–1980.
 Inspection of Machinery Act 1951–1974.
 Weights and Measures Act 1951–1978.
 Workers' Compensation Act 1916–1980.
 Student Education (Work Experience) Act 1978.
 By-law No. 1 of the Board of Teacher Education.
 By-law No. 1 of the Board of Secondary School Studies.
 Rules under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1961–1980.
 Statute under the University of Queensland Act 1965–1973.
 Particulars relating to the borrowing of money on the security of the Duchesne College land.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

ZONING PLAN FOR THE CAPRICORNIA SECTION OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (11.4 a.m.): Yesterday in the Commonwealth Parliament, the Honourable David Thomson, Minister for Science and the Environment, tabled the zoning plan for the Capricornia Section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Under the relevant Commonwealth legislation, the zoning plan has to be laid before both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament for 20 sitting days and, if not disallowed in that time, it then comes into effect on a date to be specified in a public notice issued by the Minister for Science and the Environment.

There is no requirement for the zoning plan to be tabled in the Queensland Parliament, but I propose to do so in order to ensure that it is readily available to interested members.

The zoning plan was prepared by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority in consultation with State Government officials and was finally endorsed by the Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Council at its meeting on 1 August 1980. Queensland is represented on this council by the Honourable the Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism and the Honourable the Minister for Culture, National Parks and Recreation. I pay a sincere tribute to these two Ministers for their work in ensuring that Queensland's interests were recognised and fully protected in the development of the zoning plan. My Government is satisfied that the final document meets the State's requirements.

The views of the various interested groups, particularly the tourist and fishing industries, and the community generally were also sought and taken into account in the preparation of the zoning plan.

The Capricornia section, based on Heron Island, was chosen as the first section of the marine park because it is the area most accessible to visitors. Most honourable members will be aware that a State marine park was declared around Heron Island in 1974. This was, of course, prior to the enactment in 1975 of the Commonwealth's Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act, and is yet another example of the enlightened policies of my Government.

Under the zoning plan, the Capricornia section is divided into six zones, namely—

- (a) General use "A" zone;
- (b) General use "B" zone;
- (c) Marine national park "A" zone;
- (d) Marine national park "B" zone;
- (e) Scientific research zone;
- (f) Preservation zone.

The zoning plan contains full details of the various zones and the activities permitted within them. Within certain of these zones, areas of periodic restricted activity are proposed for management and conservation purposes. These areas are—

- (a) Replenishment areas;
- (b) Seasonal closure areas;
- (c) Reef appreciation areas;
- (d) Reef-walking areas.

The provisions of the zoning plan will be implemented by regulations made under the relevant legislation. State officers have been involved in the preparation of the proposed regulations which will be introduced into the Commonwealth Parliament after the zoning plan finally comes into effect.

Articles appeared in the Press some months ago suggesting that a charge would be imposed on visitors to the marine park. The Marine Park Authority had never contemplated such a charge and I am happy to reassure honourable members that no such charge is included in the regulations.

The day-to-day management of the marine park will be carried out by Queensland Government officers in accordance with arrangements made between the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments.

I table a copy of the zoning plan for the Capricornia section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the plan on the table.

Mr CASEY: If I may, Mr Speaker, I should like to seek some information on a point of procedure. It is obvious that this material has been tabled in the Federal Parliament to allow Federal members to peruse it and, if they think it is necessary, to object to some of the provisions. I appreciate the Premier's doing likewise in the Queensland Parliament so that State members can peruse this very important document. I should like the Premier to

inform me if any opportunity will be given at a later stage for State members to raise objection through this Parliament.

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: I do not think that this was thought desirable or necessary. The honourable gentleman will have other avenues—for instance, during the Budget debate—to express his views. He will have opportunities other than one created simply for this purpose.

INCIDENTS INVOLVING POLICE OFFICERS

Hon. R. J. HINZE (South Coast—Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police) (11.10 a.m.): During the period Parliament has been in recess three police matters arose and I believe the House should be advised as to the present position concerning them:—

(1) Death of Phillipe Michale Haynes at Kuranda on 30 June 1980. The investigation into the death of Phillipe Michale Haynes who died as a result of a gunshot wound allegedly fired by an undercover police officer during a drug raid at Kuranda on 30 June 1980 was carried out by Detective Superintendent E. G. Griffiths, Chief of Police Internal Investigations, and Detective Inspector Ron Redmond, Chief of the State Homicide Squad.

Their report has been delivered to the coroner at Cairns who will be conducting an inquest into the death of Haynes. No date has been set by the coroner for the inquest but it is expected it will be held in approximately one month's time.

Representations have been made to the Solicitor-General for the services of a senior legal officer from the Crown Law Office to be made available to assist the coroner and the Solicitor-General is presently making arrangements for a legal officer to carry out this function.

(2) Allegations against Constable Ashley Paul Anderson working in undercover capacity on drug investigations. Allegations were made in the Supreme Court, Brisbane, by Margaret Ann Barnett that she and Constable Anderson had an intimate relationship whilst he was working in an undercover capacity in drug investigations. The female concerned was charged with drug offences. She alleged that Constable Anderson had sexual intercourse with her on occasions. In evidence the female concerned swore that the constable did have sexual intercourse with her. The constable denied having done so.

The matter is a question of credibility. The presiding Judge, Mr Justice Kelly, found on the balance of probability that the female would not have obtained drugs for Anderson but for the fact that he requested her to do so and that there

was an intimate relationship between them. The Crown did not proceed against Margaret Ann Barnett and she was discharged. The matter has been referred to the Solicitor-General who has expressed the view that there was insufficient evidence of any criminal offences having been committed by Constable Anderson.

In view of the fact that Constable Anderson has now no value as an undercover agent instructions have been issued for him to be reverted to uniform duties.

(3) Death of John William Mankey, 20 years, at Eight Mile Plains, at 2.15 a.m. on 17 August 1980. At 2.15 a.m. on Sunday, 17 August 1980, John William Mankey, 20 years, of Arosa Street, Jamboree Heights, was walking along the inbound stretch of roadway of Logan Road, Eight Mile Plains, near the Glen Hotel, with three other males and his sister Dianne when he was struck by a motor vehicle. A constable of police who was off duty at the time has been questioned in connection with this fatal accident. Investigations are being carried out by the Traffic Accident Squad together with an inspector from Police Internal Investigations. At this stage it would not be appropriate for me to make any further statement other than to say that the circumstances of the matter will be fully and thoroughly investigated by the Police Department.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr D'ARCY (Woodridge) (11.15 a.m.), by leave: Last night in this House the member for Salisbury suggested that the appointment to my staff of a research officer by the Government somehow involved a sweetheart deal on preferences with the National Party. Let me make it clear that the Labor Party has continually indicated that it will not be involved in any deals on preferences. The Liberal Party should be better informed, as it is rare that Labor Party preferences are ever distributed in an election. I find this statement by the member particularly mischievous because the Opposition in Queensland has been harshly treated by way of a lack of staff facilities, more so than any other Opposition in Australia.

On assuming the Opposition deputy leadership on 19 February 1980 I wrote to the Government requesting a research assistant. In the ensuing months several letters were exchanged requesting further information. I obtained this information from every Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Australia. It showed that in Queensland we were the worst off in Australia. Even the Deputy Leaders of the Opposition in Tasmania and the Northern Territory had better conditions. I think this statement by the Liberal member for Salisbury smacks of desperation at her party's poor performance in Parliament yesterday and its failure to stand up on matters

of principle and policy, particularly those associated with jobs for the boys and the miners' housing taxation issue.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

ORDER FOR RETURN

Mr SCOTT (Cook): I move—

"That there be laid upon the table of the House a return, in the usual form, showing the number of Government employees as at 30 June 1980 (all departments) paid from Consolidated Revenue, Trust Funds and the Loan Fund respectively."

Motion agreed to.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. WESTERN AIR SERVICES

Mr Casey asked the Premier—

With reference to the failure of the Government after 19 months to resolve the western air controversy and the very real fears that the issue is being conveniently "hushed up" until after the coming State elections—

(1) Have two reports (a majority report and a minority dissenting one) been received on this issue as a result of an inquiry in early 1979 by a Government-appointed committee headed by Sir Sidney Roberts?

(2) Did a co-author of the minority report complain at the time this inquiry was proceeding that he believed the exercise was a "political whitewash" and was he, in fact, only persuaded to continue on the committee on the condition he could submit a minority report?

(3) In view of the fact that these reports have been before Cabinet for 18 months without any announcement of Cabinet's findings, will he give an undertaking that these two reports and any others that exist on the issue will be tabled in this Parliament during the course of the present sitting, printed and released for general circulation in Western Queensland?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) As has happened so often in the past, the Leader of the Opposition is wrong in his assumption and statement relating to Government policy on air services to western areas. The schedules and services agreed upon by TAA are being maintained.

As a matter of fact, as late as yesterday my colleague the Minister for Transport met with airline representatives and was assured that services would continue to be maintained at past levels.

2. CHARITY GARDEN SEED SUPPLIES; COMBINED CHARITY SALES PROMOTION

Mr W. D. Hewitt asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) Was the registration of the business names Charity Garden Seed Supplies and Combined Charity Sales Promotion recently cancelled by the Justice Department?

(2) If so, why were they cancelled?

(3) Is there evidence to suggest that a person or persons associated with those firms were purporting to be raising funds for charitable organisations without the authority of those organisations?

(4) Is there provision under any existing statute to prevent these practices?

(5) If not, what steps are being taken to correct the situation?

Answer:—

(1) The registration of the business names, Charity Garden Seed Supplies and Combined Charities Sales Promotions, was cancelled by the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs on 11 June 1980.

(2) The business names were cancelled on the grounds that they were registered through inadvertence in that they were misleading as to their nature, objects or purposes.

(3) Complaints received would suggest that persons associated with the firms were purporting to raise funds for charitable organisations without the authority of those organisations. However, investigations by inspectors appointed under the Collections Act failed to obtain sufficient evidence to prosecute the persons involved. The matter was referred to the Commissioner of Police for investigation.

It is understood that as a result of adverse publicity and investigations conducted by the police and my department the proprietors of the firms in question have ceased to operate in this State.

(4 & 5) The Solicitor-General has recommended that the Business Names Act should be tightened and there should be a direct prohibition on the use of any business name having a title related to charity unless that organisation is registered under the Collections Act. The Commissioner for Corporate Affairs has been directed to raise this matter with his interstate counterparts.

Amendments to the Collections Act were also suggested and a Bill is presently being prepared to amend that Act.

3. SOUTH EAST FREEWAY

Mr W. D. Hewitt asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

(1) Are counts available of cars using the exit ramp at Marshall Road from the South East Freeway in peak hour periods?

- (2) If so, what are they?
- (3) Are there any estimates of the extent to which the volume of this exit traffic will be reduced when the next section of the freeway is open?
- (4) If so, what are those estimates?
- (5) Will he give an assurance that the members for Greenslopes and Mt. Gravatt whose electorates are serviced by that freeway, will be kept fully informed on its completion date and other detail, and that the proper courtesies that are their due entitlement will be extended to them?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) In May this year the average traffic volume exiting from the South East Freeway at Marshall Road in the afternoon peak period was 3 100 vehicles. It is estimated that this volume will fall to about 1 200-1 300 vehicles when the freeway extension is opened later this year.

(5) I am not sure what the member means when he asks that members be "fully informed on its completion date and other detail, and that the proper courtesies that are their due entitlement will be extended to them". After the period that he has been in this House he should understand that since I have been a Minister those courtesies have been extended to all members of this Parliament by me.

4. SHORTAGE OF SKILLED LABOUR

Mr W. D. Hewitt asked the Minister for Labour Relations—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an address by the Under Treasurer to the Urban Development Institute of Australia Seminar on 18 July 1980 wherein he made reference to employment aspects for new aluminium smelters, new mines and a selection of major other new undertakings, and said that there may be shortages of labour, especially in particular skilled categories?

(2) As this Government has committed itself to manpower planning, will he advise what action is being taken to train or obtain tradesmen in the areas referred to by the Under Treasurer?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) I am aware of the many large proposed projects for Queensland and of the unprecedented demands which they will certainly place upon our labour force and particularly upon the skilled section of that labour force. I am also aware that in other States of the Commonwealth projects are also proposed and that consequently we will not be able to obtain from those States skilled labour to the extent that we would otherwise expect.

I informed the House at the time of the second reading of the Bill which subsequently became the Industry and Commerce Training Act, 1979 that provision

had been made therein for the establishment of a Manpower Planning Branch in the Office of the Industry and Commerce Training Commission, for which I am the responsible Minister. I am happy to be able to now report that a manpower planning officer and two assistant research officers have been appointed and that the sole function of these officers is to attempt to assess the future needs of industry and commerce for skilled workers. Since their appointments, these officers have been constantly engaged in obtaining information from all companies engaged directly and indirectly in preparations for proposed undertakings such as the aluminium smelters, new mines, additional power-stations and the shale-oil project.

Considerable progress has been made and a great deal of data is now available. However, much of this is rough data which require refinement and validation. The manpower planning section reports to the Industry and Commerce Training Commission all progress being made and measures are being considered by the commission towards meeting the otherwise anticipated shortfall of tradesmen and other skilled workers.

It will undoubtedly be of interest to honourable members that other States have followed or are giving consideration to following our lead by establishing their own manpower planning sections. When all States are functioning in this area, a more comprehensive picture will be available with benefit to the States and to the Commonwealth.

I regard the establishment of the manpower planning section in the Industry and Commerce Training Commission as representing one of the major forward steps in the field of labour relations. Furthermore, I fully appreciate that it will be of enormous benefit to the State's future industrial and commercial expansion.

5. COMMENCING AGE OF GRADE 1 CHILDREN

Mr Bourke asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Is he aware of an apparent trend for parents of children whose birthday falls late in the year to keep their children out of school for an extra year so as to avoid the prospect of their children being among the youngest in grade 1?

(2) Does he have any figures on the average starting age of grade 1 children in the State school system?

(3) Does he have any information on the number of children in the State school system who repeat a grade in the first three years of school and on the age of such children relative to their class average?

(4) Have any investigations been undertaken into the advantages of allowing grade 1 children to start in the middle of the year by dividing the year into two groups dependent on the date of birthday?

Answer:—

(1) No. An opposite trend has been noted whereby some parents request that their child be admitted to Year 1 though the child is below the required entry age.

(2) The last school census for which information is available, that is, 1 August 1979, indicates that the average starting age of Year 1 children was 5 years 7 months.

(3) At the August 1979 census, the following numbers of pupils were recorded as repeating the first three year levels in State schools:—

Year Level	Number Repeating
Year 1	2,165
Year 2	1,142
Year 3	432

Information as to the age of such children relative to their class average is not collected by my department.

(4) The question of staging entry to Year 1 at various times throughout the school year has been the subject of ongoing consideration by officers of my department. While no firm conclusion has been reached, the matter is still under review.

6. COMMONWEALTH/STATE/LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL ENROLMENT

Mr Bourke asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) What progress has been made in negotiations with the Commonwealth Electoral Office on the use of a common electoral roll for Federal, State and local government purposes?

(2) What other States in the Commonwealth persist in maintaining separate rolls and what is the purported advantage to Queensland in so doing?

(3) What is the estimated annual cost of maintaining a separate roll?

(4) Is he in possession of an estimate of the number of people who are confused by the separate roll system and who are enrolled on the Federal rolls but not the State rolls?

Answer:—

(1) Approval has been given for officers of the State to prepare in conjunction with officers of the Commonwealth a draft arrangement for the purpose of implementing a system of joint Commonwealth/State enrolments, using Commonwealth computer files of enrolments and deletions.

It is proposed that a State roll be prepared from this information by the State Electoral Office. A project team is in the process of developing a new computer application. When the arrangement has been entered into, a Bill to amend the Elections Act 1915–1976 to give effect to the system will be prepared.

(2) Western Australia. I am informed that although that State entered into an arrangement with the Commonwealth, the arrangement has not yet been implemented. Separate rolls have been maintained so that this State can maintain control over the preparation of its own rolls. The Queensland proposal to use the Commonwealth computer files of enrolments and deletions will still enable the State to maintain control over the printing of its rolls. It will be possible to maintain the present three-month residential qualification for enrolment even though the Commonwealth residential qualification for enrolment is one month.

(3) \$700,000.

(4) No statistics are available as to what confusion exists. The use of one enrolment card as proposed by Queensland will remove any such confusion.

7. EDUCATION NEEDS OF INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED CHILDREN

Mr Bourke asked the Minister for Education—

(1) In view of the Department of Education's claim that gifted children are catered for in the present education system, has the department done any formal work at all in identifying such gifted children (as recommended by the Ahern committee) and evaluating their progress in the present system so as to validate the Department's claim?

(2) Is he aware of a feeling in education circles that gifted children are discriminated against by the present system in that such children are not given the opportunity of fully developing their God-given talents in contrast, for example, to children talented at sport, leaving the impression that the Queensland education system is designed for average children only with barely grudging allowance for children in need of remedial teaching or with special disabilities and no allowance at all for talented children?

(3) Does his department keep in touch with other States' and countries' developments in this field?

(4) Is he aware of United States figures that show that some 20 per cent of intellectually gifted children underachieved at school and failed to progress to tertiary education though eminently qualified by nature to do so, and the feeling in Queensland educational circles is that our figures are even worse?

(5) Is his department fully aware of the real danger of gifted children persistently underachieving under the current method of instruction?

(6) Has any action been taken to implement a further recommendation of the Ahern committee that the Minister appoint a special advisory committee on the education needs of gifted and talented children?

Answer:—

(1) The policy of my department for gifted and talented children is to achieve maximum academic and all-round social-emotional development in a normal school environment. Educational provisions are therefore undertaken wherever possible in their own school and are not given on a continuous segregated basis. Special provision may be made on a temporary withdrawal basis, but the formation of long-term segregated classes is not normally encouraged. This policy is most compatible with the recommendations of the Ahern committee.

My department carries out Statewide assessment programs in years 7, 11 and 12. Assessment for students in other years is available from guidance officers of the Guidance and Special Education Branch. These assessments contribute to the identification of gifted children.

(2) Most teachers profess a commitment to developing children to the maximum of their various physical and mental potentials and accept the obligation to recognise and foster the special abilities of the gifted and talented child. Gifted children are provided with programs through flexible class-room management procedures made possible by modern class-room design and through ability groupings in subject or skill areas.

(3) Officers of all service and school divisions of my department monitor overseas and interstate developments in most educational fields, including the area of the gifted child. Departmental officers recently contributed to writing a report on gifted and talented children in Australia being prepared for the Schools Commission.

(4) The problem of the underachieving child, whether gifted or not, has always been a major educational problem. The effects of the loss to society of the maximum possible measure of expertise and intellectual capacity of all underachieving students justifies the current departmental policy towards gifted children.

(5) The department recognised the need to identify gifted children and to develop systematically resources and services which will enable the class-room teacher to provide appropriate educational programs. The planning of individualized class-room programs minimises the likelihood of long-term underachievement.

(6) The Department of Education has organised a number of working parties to consider the recommendations of the Ahern report, their implications and possible implementation strategies. One of these working parties is considering the recommendations concerning gifted and talented children.

8. QUEENSLAND'S FINANCIAL RETURN FROM MINING

Mr Wright asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

In view of his public statements on his return from overseas recently—

(1) Does he consider Queensland is receiving a fair return in royalties from the exploitation of the State's rich mineral resources?

(2) If not, what action does he intend to take, if any, to ensure that the people of Queensland receive a fair return from the mining of the State's minerals?

(3) Does he now agree with the repeated claims over many years by Opposition members that the royalty arrangements with those involved in the major extractive industries, especially coal mining, have been to the disadvantage of this State?

(4) Is he prepared to table in this House special details outlining the total financial benefit being derived by Queensland in terms of royalties, rail freight, indirect taxation and other ancillary areas?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) Honourable members will recall that a comprehensive review of mining royalties was undertaken in 1974. At that time the Government adopted a new system with respect to our major minerals in which royalties were related to the value of the mineral.

The basic policy was that royalty was set at 10 per centum of the value of those. Certain variations to this are prescribed. For example—

(a) A rate of 5 per cent of the value of any mineral may be prescribed if the State is in receipt of an adequate rail-freight profit on the carriage of the particular mineral;

(b) A rate of 5 per cent of the value of any such mineral may be prescribed if the particular mineral is used to supply a major industry specifically sponsored by the State for the purpose of development;

(c) A deduction of 20 per cent may be allowed against the royalty payable if the owner is in market competition with open-cut mines and the particular mineral is extracted by underground mining methods.

The new scheme was deliberately based on value. This system means that the State and its citizens benefit fully as the value of our minerals increases, because the set percentage still applies fully to the higher value figure.

The basic rate of 10 per cent of value, when set in 1974, was then adopted because it was considered to be realistic as the determiner of the price the State received for seeking its valuable mineral resources. Because the royalty is basically a percentage of value, it must be just as valid today as it was in 1974.

Total royalties collected in 1979-80 amounted to \$72.829 million. This means a saving of \$72.829 million to Queensland taxpayers in funds that do not have to be paid in tax by them to provide Government services. As we can win more markets and our mineral royalty collections grow, we can achieve an even better position in this respect.

Again, the actual royalties themselves are but a portion of the story. The mineral industry provides many benefits to the other sectors of the Queensland economy and, through the multiplier effects, provides jobs and wages and business activity for many Queenslanders from one end of the State to the other. There are also benefits for the State other than royalties and rail freights by way of pay-roll tax, other taxes, fees and charges, and so on. Obviously the total benefit of the industry in all those facets is immense, and it would be impossible to list all the aspects and put a value on each one.

9. PETROL PRICES, COUNTRY AREAS

Mr Wright asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) Has the Federal Government allocated funds to State Governments to subsidise the cost of transporting petroleum products from city to country areas?

(2) Is it correct that the object of this was to ensure that country people paid no more than .5c litre more than city people?

(3) What funds has the Queensland Government received for this?

(4) How have these moneys been spent?

(5) In view of the alleged allocated Federal funds, why are country people having to pay in excess of 9c a litre more than city people?

Answer:—

(1 to 5) As the honourable member knows well, I am sure, the Federal Government does provide funds to the States for subsidisation of the transport of petroleum products. This scheme was established in 1978 and its object is to ensure that the

price of motor spirits, power kerosene, aviation gasoline and automotive distillate in country areas includes no more than .5c per litre of freight differential costs.

Funds paid out by the Queensland Government on behalf of the Commonwealth were \$14.7m in 1978-79 and \$23.6m in 1979-80. Payments are made to registered distributors of the fuels in accordance with a formula drawn up by the Commonwealth Government, for whom the State acts as an agent.

The principle in this scheme that must be recognised is that all it purports to do is limit the additional cost which arises from freight cost differences. It has no effect on price differentials arising from other factors such as differing wholesale prices and differing retail margins. Thus if there is a 9c a litre differential as the honourable member states, this must be attributable to the effect of these factors.

10. FLYING SURGEON SERVICES, GOONDIWINDI AREA

Mr McKechnie asked the Minister for Health—

(1) When will the flying surgeon begin visits to Goondiwindi on a regular basis?

(2) How often will he attend to his duties in Goondiwindi?

(3) What services will he provide for the people of the Goondiwindi district?

Answer:—

(1) Arrangements are in hand for the provision of accommodation at Roma, the leasing of a suitable aircraft, purchase of equipment, etc. and the advertising of the position. As soon as these matters are finalised, the service will commence.

(2) It is envisaged that visits will be made to Goondiwindi possibly twice per month, but final itineraries have not yet been completed.

(3) The flying surgeon will provide a consultant surgical service to the people of the Goondiwindi district.

11. AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Mr McKechnie asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

With reference to a possible trade deal between the Commonwealth Government and New Zealand, which was reported in the "National Farmer" on 7 August, will he make representations to the Commonwealth to ensure that Queensland farmers are not disadvantaged by any proposed deal?

Answer:—

My department is maintaining a close watch on developments in the area of Australia/New Zealand trade. Representations have already been made to the Commonwealth Government expressing Queensland's concern that any new agreement must take cognisance of the economic position of Queensland's primary producers. The Right Honourable the Prime Minister has given an assurance that there will be full consultation with the States before any new agreement is finalised.

12. PAYMENT FOR WORK AND EMPLOYMENT BY WORKS DEPARTMENT

Mr Davis asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) Have 61 workmen, including labourers, plumbers, plasterers and carpenters, been laid off by the Works Department since January?

(2) If so, why has this been found necessary, and what plans has the Government in mind to create employment in this department, rather than add to the already severe problem of unemployment?

(3) Is the department aware that it is gaining a reputation as a slow payer among the subcontractors it is seeking to engage?

(4) What is the reason for this slow payment for work that has been completed to the satisfaction of the relevant inspectors?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) I feel that the honourable member should get his alleged facts into the right perspective. My Department of Works was able to provide employment for at least 61 tradesmen and labourers over the past seven months, owing to the provision of additional funds by the Government for labour-intensive works.

At the time of their employment, it was made clear to these men that they could be employed only on a temporary basis and unions concerned were also fully informed of this. The effect of this move was to provide additional—I repeat “additional”—employment for people in the State's building industry.

(3 & 4) My department processes thousands of claims from subcontractors and suppliers each week and payments are made as expeditiously as possible in relation to the volume handled.

13. RESTORATION OF PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Mr Davis asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) What was the estimated cost of the restoration of the old Parliament House?

(2) How much money has now been spent on restoring the old building?

(3) What is now the total estimated cost for the restoration work?

Answer:—

(1) The estimated cost of the restoration of the old Parliament House is \$7.6m at December 1979 prices for all work, excluding external stonework repairs, landscaping and furniture.

(2) Expenditure to 31 July 1980 was \$1,814,981, including professional fees.

(3) The project is on target in both cost and time and has provided considerable employment for both contractors and departmental work-force.

14. MINERAL PRODUCTION, MOUNT ISA MINES

Mr Davis asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) What was the total value of minerals produced by Mount Isa Mines from 1974 to 1979 inclusive and in 1979?

(2) What was the total of royalties received by the Government from such minerals from 1974 to 1979 and in 1979?

Answer:—

(1) The total value of minerals produced by Mount Isa Mines from 1974 to 1979 inclusive was \$2,355,700,833 and in 1979 it was \$617,243,558.

(2) The total royalty received by the Government from such minerals from 1974 to 1979 was \$86,523,065 and in 1979 \$23,595,373 was received.

15. MISUSE OF COIN-OPERATED MACHINES

Mr Gygar asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

(1) Is he aware that operators of laundromats and other facilities which depend upon coin-operated machines are having considerable difficulties with criminals who damage machines while attempting to manipulate them so that they may be used without paying?

(2) Will he ask the Police Department to review their present practice of only charging such persons with wilful damage and ensure that they are charged with some more serious offence such as fraud, which more correctly reflects the nature of these offences?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) Where offences involving damage to coin-operated machines are reported to the Police Department, it is the policy of that department to prefer charges against offenders in accordance with the evidence and facts available.

16. STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE

Mr Gygar asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

In view of continuing controversy about supposed advantages which the SGIO enjoys over private insurance companies, will he advise the House, in detail—

(1) What amounts and in what categories has the SGIO paid to the State or Commonwealth Treasuries in each of the last three financial years in lieu of pay-roll tax, sales tax and other Government charges normally paid by private insurance companies?

(2) On what basis are these amounts calculated and who is responsible for for such calculations and assessments?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) Under the Income Tax Assessment Act, the SGIO is exempt from payment of income tax to the Commonwealth Government. However, to ensure that the SGIO gains no advantage from this, State Treasury officers calculate an assessment strictly in accordance with that Act and payment of a contribution in lieu of taxation is made to the State Treasury for credit to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The amounts paid for the past three years were—

1977-78	\$10,203,824
1978-79	\$12,986,896
1979-80	\$6,711,724

The SGIO also paid stamp duties in accordance with the provisions of the Stamp Act as follows—

1977-78	\$8,929,743
1978-79	\$5,988,632
1979-80	\$6,370,540

Pay-roll tax is payable in accordance with the relevant charges applicable to any employer. The figures for the past three years were—

1977-78	\$974,244
1978-79	\$872,606
1979-80	\$973,758

A further charge paid by the SGIO is land tax in accordance with the provisions of the Land Tax Act. Details for the past three years are—

1977-78	\$306,613
1978-79	\$354,239
1979-80	\$419,664

Sales tax, of course, is a Federal Government matter and is paid by the SGIO in accordance with the provisions of the relevant legislation, which exempts the SGIO from sales tax only in respect of purchases used for internal operations or in respect of accommodation for the Public Service in SGIO investment properties.

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17. IMPROVEMENTS TO RAILWAY SYSTEM

Mr Elliott asked the Minister for Transport—

As he has recently investigated the public transport system in Japan, with particular emphasis on the rail system, has he made any recommendations in regard to ways in which the Queensland Railways could be improved?

Answer:—

A comprehensive report covering the recent overseas study tour undertaken by the Commissioner for Railways and myself and embodying a number of recommendations is in an advanced stage of compilation. It will shortly be presented to the Cabinet for consideration.

Many suggestions can be made regarding railways. For example, in Japan and Hong Kong, where there are vast populations, many things can be done that are financially impossible to implement in a State such as Queensland, with a population of 2 000 000. The report will eventually be made available to the public.

18. NEW HOSPITALS, MITCHELL AND CUNNAMULLA

Mr Turner asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Will he report the latest developments in relation to the construction of new hospitals at Mitchell and Cunnamulla?

(2) Has the proposed new site for the hospital at Mitchell received Works Department and Health Department approval?

Answer:—

(1) Planning is complete in respect of the new hospital for Cunnamulla, the invitation of tenders being dependent upon the ability of the board to raise sufficient loan finance.

(2) The proposed new site for the Mitchell Hospital has been examined by the Works Department and a report submitted. The decision on resiting of the hospital will be made in the near future when all aspects including social and economic, have been considered. At that stage, the planning team will meet again to develop further details of the planning brief.

19. WYANDRA-CUNNAMULLA ROAD

Mr Turner asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

(1) How much money has been expended on the road between Wyandra and Cunnamulla during 1979-80?

- (2) How much money is required to complete this important road?
- (3) When will this road be completed and open to the public?

Answer:—

(1) Expenditure on Mitchell Highway between Wyandra and Cunnamulla during 1979-80 was \$1,767,549.

(2) Funding required to a sand seal stage is \$3,995,000 and to a chip seal stage \$4,911,000.

(3) Depending on the availability of funds, the Wyandra to Cunnamulla section of road will be open to traffic by December 1981. At that stage, 12 km of the loam pavement, presently under traffic, will remain to be completed to a sand seal stage. Baring unforeseen circumstances, the whole of the section will be completed to a chip seal surface by June 1982.

20. KANGAROO HARVESTING

Mr Turner asked the Minister for Culture, National Parks and Recreation—

(1) Is he aware of the plague proportions of kangaroos in many areas of the State and the effect these kangaroos are having on winter crops and pastures?

(2) How many kangaroo tags are available for the remainder of 1980?

(3) What action does the National Parks and Wildlife Service intend to undertake to see that kangaroo numbers are kept below plague proportions and that professional shooters are not required to cease shooting during the latter part of 1980?

Answer:—

(1) Yes, I am aware that in some areas of the State kangaroos are in plague proportions and I am seriously concerned about this.

It is a most difficult problem to overcome. Several years ago kangaroo populations increased considerably as a result of good seasons and in some areas these large numbers remain in spite of the record numbers harvested in the last two years and also in spite of drought conditions in some of these areas in the last 12 months.

(2) At the present time there are available for distribution 130 000 kangaroo tags.

In addition to this figure, tags which were purchased earlier in the year by some shooters and which are no longer required are being returned. These are being re-allocated to professional shooters.

(3) Where there is evidence that kangaroos are causing serious crop or pasture damage, a special permit may be issued at

no cost to the applicant by my Director of National Parks and Wildlife and a number of these have already been issued.

The issue of such permits and the issue of kangaroo tags is the only course open to the National Parks and Wildlife Service in the control of plague numbers.

However, it is recognised that in times when kangaroos are in plague proportions these measures will not necessarily be as effective as may be desired. Furthermore, the general state of the kangaroo industry has a considerable bearing on the number of kangaroos harvested. For some months prices have been at a low level and hence harvest figures are not as high as they otherwise might be.

Top priority has always been given to bona fide professional kangaroo shooters in the allocation of tags, and this policy will continue.

To date no bona fide professional kangaroo shooter has had a request for tags refused.

In an attempt to encourage those persons who have surplus 1980 tags to return them, so that they may be re-allocated where most needed, the National Parks and Wildlife Service will refund the full purchase cost of these tags.

If the balance of tags available at this time is insufficient to meet the demands of bona fide professional shooters for the remainder of the year, then steps will be taken to ensure that their requirements are met.

21. DAIRY FARMING

Mr D'Arcy asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

As in July 1980 the Australian Dairy Corporation chairman, Mr Malcolm Vawser, called on the Queensland Department of Primary Industries to review its "closed industry" policy in respect of dairying and stated that (a) he had made the call because of the alarming inroads New Zealand dairy farmers had already made into the local cheese market and now stood to make into the butter market and (b) in the past twenty years the number of Queensland dairy farmers had fallen from 23,800 to 3,200 because of poor returns, what action does the Government plan to take to make dairy farming once more an attractive industry, and what review, if any, has been carried out on the "closed industry" policy?

Answer:—

The Government has already undertaken major initiatives to bring increased viability to the dairy farmers of the State. Members will be fully aware of the provisions of the amended Milk Supply Act which was proclaimed in June 1978. Under this Act

through the Milk Entitlements Committee some 80 000 L of market milk entitlements will be redistributed by 1 October to below average milk producers. Government funds amounting to \$3.6m have been made available on loan terms to redistribute this milk. On the 12 August I announced an additional \$800,000 from Government funds to continue this scheme among producers in south-eastern Queensland. This program will mean all processors will have at least 40 per cent of their total milk being paid for at market milk rates.

At the same time through the Land Administration Commission a total of \$23m has been loaned to some 1 900 producers in the past 10 years. These funds have been utilised for a range of improved farming practices and for build-up land.

While the number of dairy farmers in Queensland has reduced markedly, it is well to note that since 1970 average production per farm has increased from 70 000 L to 164 000 L—a 134 per cent increase.

On the matter of the closed industry I have called on the Queensland Dairymens Organisation for a review of their present policy. They have also been requested to undertake a further consultation with all processors on their particular wishes concerning additional supplies of milk. When this information is to hand, Government policy will be re-examined to take account of current industry views.

22. TRANSPORT OF COAL BY RAILWAY DEPARTMENT

Mr D'Arcy asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) What was the tonnage of coal transported by the Railway Department from 1974-1979 inclusive and in 1979?

(2) What was the gross income received by the Railway Department from the transport of such coal from 1974 to 1979 inclusive and in 1979?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) I would refer the honourable member to the annual reports of the Commissioner for Railways for the respective years.

23 & 24. SUGAR INDUSTRY EXPANSION SCHEME

Mr Row asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

What action does the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board intend to take to preserve equity of distribution among all cane-growing districts of the presently proposed 5 per cent expansion in the sugar industry?

Answer:—

The Central Sugar Cane Prices Board, following a hearing at which submissions were made by industry organisations and all mills and mill suppliers' committees, advised my predecessor, Mr Sullivan, that it was of the opinion that it was a necessity for an expansion in the productive capacity of the sugar industry and that the expansion should be of the nature of approximately 5 per cent of the present assigned area and that in principle there should be allocated, subsequently, to the industry an increase in peak of 150 000 t of 94 NT sugar. The recommendations were approved by Mr Sullivan as Minister and the board was requested to take immediate steps to implement the recommendations.

The industry was circularised and advertisements placed in newspapers published in the cane-growing areas calling applications for increased assignments from all cane growers in Queensland. The board is aware that some mill areas have not sufficient cane-growing land to take the full quota of 5 per cent, and it is proposed to distribute the shortfalls pro rata amongst the other mill areas.

The board in its decisions and advices has assured me that, as on previous occasions, in its distribution of the increases it would have regard to the willingness of cane growers in the first instance to accept the risks involved and to fulfil the obligations entailed, due weight being given to customary considerations such as equity and economic farm size. The board also considered that the interests of those producers who are unwilling or unable to expand production will not be unduly prejudiced. It is to be a limited expansion and, indeed, the recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry into Certain Matters relating to an expansion of the Sugar Industry (1977) which have been implemented seem to provide adequate safeguards in regard to pooling arrangements.

The matter of mill peaks will be considered at the appropriate time, but I have no doubt that in making its recommendations the board will have regard to the preservation of equity as far as it is practicable.

Mr Row asked the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Water Resources—

Will there be any designation of Crown land to accommodate the entitlements of those land-locked areas in the present sugar industry expansion scheme?

Answer:—

The Land Administration Commission has held discussions with a representative of the Queensland Cane Growers Council in respect of the availability of Crown land to satisfy any requirements of the recent increase approved in cane assignments.

Arrangements are already in hand for identification of available areas of Crown land and the honourable member may be assured that, where required, such areas will be available for allocation to growers to whom increased assignments may be approved and who may be recommended by the industry.

25. LOAN RAISINGS BY HOSPITALS BOARDS

Mr Row asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

May smaller hospitals boards make joint applications to the Treasury Department for loan subsidies in order to qualify for maximum benefits in loan raising procedures?

Answer:—

Arrangements already exist whereby the Central Accounting Bureau at the North Brisbane Hospitals Board co-ordinates all loan raisings by hospitals boards in Queensland. However, individual hospital bodies also have the prime responsibility to seek out their own loan funds. Furthermore, the responsibility for documentation, etc., is, and must remain, the responsibility of individual hospitals boards.

26. WESTERN AIR SERVICES

Mr Glasson asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Is he aware of suggested alterations to flight schedules to inland Queensland which would eliminate services to four towns, reduce services to one town and would also cause the non-delivery of the Sunday papers to five towns?

(2) Will he give an assurance that services will remain as licensed and that there is no reduction in the number of ports of call on flights?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) I am not aware of any suggested alterations to flight schedules to inland Queensland as referred to by the honourable member.

Any application received by the Department of Transport for alterations to flight schedules will receive appropriate consideration. Nevertheless, I did have discussions yesterday with Mr Mosely, the acting manager of TAA, and have received an assurance that there will be no substantial changes to these services over the next two years.

27. CHAIRMAN, QUEENSLAND SUGAR BOARD

Mr Yewdale asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

As he claimed in this House on 19 August that the Hon. Ronald Ernest Camm had been appointed to the position

of Chairman of the Queensland Sugar Board because and in his opinion he was the best qualified man in Australia for the job, what was the (a) nature of advertising given for the position (b) time allowed for application (c) number of applications received (d) number of interviews carried out (e) names of those who conducted the interviews and (f) names of those interviewed, and their qualifications?

Answer:—

(a) The position was not advertised.

(b to f) See (a).

I would point out that there is no requirement to advertise the position of Chairman of the Queensland Sugar Board. However, after eight years as Minister for Primary Industries I feel confident that I know the people associated with the sugar industry sufficiently well to make a suitable recommendation to Cabinet.

The Leader of the Opposition can laugh his silly laugh but he will find that people in his area are very satisfied with the appointment. I would like to go a little further and say that it saddens me somewhat that the Press even last night on television were just not telling the truth. The Press stated that the Government is paying Mr Camm in the vicinity of \$40,000. The Government is not paying Mr Camm, it is the sugar industry that pays the Chairman of the Sugar Board.

28. PRODUCTION OF BAUXITE

Mr Yewdale asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) What was the tonnage of bauxite produced at Weipa from 1974-1979 inclusive and in 1979?

(2) What was the value of such bauxite?

(3) What was the total royalty the Government received from such bauxite from 1974-1979 inclusive and in 1979?

Answer:—

(1) The tonnage of bauxite produced at Weipa from 1974 to 1979 inclusive was 56 327 991 t and in 1979 it was 9 576 944 t.

(2) The value of such bauxite produced from 1974 to 1979 inclusive was \$416,097,841 and in 1979 it was \$96,727,134.

(3) The total royalty the Government received from such bauxite from 1974 to 1979 inclusive was \$37,316,168 and in 1979 it was \$7,510,339.

29. CENTRAL QUEENSLAND COALFIELDS TAXATION DISPUTE

Mr Yewdale asked the Premier—

As he stated right from the start of the miners' housing subsidy dispute that he agreed with the miners in their claim

for tax exemption, what steps is he taking to overcome the impasse which has now developed, and what efforts will he be making to ensure that the Prime Minister honours his pledge to the miners in 1979 that everything regarding this issue would be OK as far as the miners were concerned?

Answer:—

I refer the honourable member to the ministerial statement I made yesterday on this subject in this House.

30. ACCOMMODATION FOR APPRENTICES, CAIRNS

Mrs Kippin asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Is he aware of the accommodation problems faced by apprentices who live in country centres but are required to reside in Cairns for the period of their block release training?

(2) As suitable accommodation within the price range which apprentices can afford is in extremely short supply, will he give every consideration to the establishment of a hostel to provide accommodation for country apprentices who are required to attend the Cairns College of Technical and Further Education?

Answer:—

(1) I am aware of the accommodation problems faced by apprentices from country centres whilst they reside away from home during their period of block release training.

In recognition of the difficulties facing these young people in finding suitable accommodation during their block release training, the Government provides financial assistance in the form of a subsidy to apprentices whilst attending colleges of technical and further education. This subsidy is made available through the Department of Labour Relations, administered by my colleague the Honourable F. A. Campbell.

(2) There are presently no plans to construct hostel-type accommodation in Cairns for technical and further education students.

31. ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM STRESS

Mr Lester asked the Minister for Health—

In reference to children in Queensland who suffer from stress or nervous breakdown at an early age, what efforts are being made to assist children in these circumstances?

Answer:—

Facilities for the treatment of emotional, behavioural and developmental problems in children are in two categories—babies and toddlers and pre-school and school-age children.

For babies and toddlers, apart from treatment by general practitioners, both private and hospital based, the facilities of the Maternal and Child Health Service are available all over the State, and in many centres there are also toddlers' clinics. In the large centres there are paediatricians at the major hospitals and, in the metropolitan area, the two paediatric hospitals are available as well as the Youth Welfare and Guidance Clinics in many areas.

In regard to pre-school and school-age children, apart from the general practitioner services as above, there are the facilities of the School Health Service and in the major centres Youth Welfare and Guidance Clinics are available.

Provision is made for country children to say at the Queensland Bush Children's Homes in Townsville and Redcliffe where the facilities of the Youth Welfare and Guidance Clinics are available to them and there is residential accommodation for country children at the Royal Children's Hospital to enable assessment and treatment to be carried out. The Institute of Child Guidance provides a special service for country children to enable them to be assessed speedily and treatment instituted. The Mater Misericordiae Childrens Hospital also provides services for children in this area.

32. CLERMONT-CHARTERS TOWERS ROAD

Mr Lester asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

What stage has been reached in works programs on the Clermont-Charters Towers road?

Answer:—

The present programme provides for the release of the next section to extend the bitumen to the Kilcummin turn-off late in the financial year.

33. ROAD-WORKS, YAN YAN ROAD

Mr Lester asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

What is the latest information available in relation to the missing link on the Yan Yan Road near Capella?

Answer:—

The honourable member will no doubt be pleased to hear that plans and estimates for this missing link have been completed and early release of the scheme is anticipated.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! In accordance with the Sessional Order agreed to by the House, the time allotted for questions has now expired. Questions remaining unanswered will appear tomorrow on the Notices of Questions.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

TAXATION ON SUBSIDISED HOUSING

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (12 noon): I want to raise in this House one of the most explosive issues that we have seen in the history of Queensland. Yesterday I moved, on behalf of the Opposition, to apply the all-party pressure of this Parliament on the Australian Government to end its housing tax confrontation with miners in Central Queensland. The Liberal and National Parties to a member (the Premier, the Deputy Premier and even the National Party member for Peak Downs) voted not only against the aims of my motion but also against discussing the subject.

Instead, we had a ministerial statement of one page from the Premier. It was not debated and it contained nothing new. At a later stage in a belated manner there was a petulant warning from the Liberal leader to his Canberra colleagues that they were being naughty and that he was losing his patience with them.

As for the moratorium that the Premier and Deputy Premier are today reported to be again proposing—that has been mooted about seven times, the first time being about two years ago when this dispute originally arose in the mining areas. As for the member for Peak Downs and all the noise he has been making recently—yesterday he was like the pet rabbit snarling defiantly through the fence at a greyhound until someone suddenly opened the gate. He beat his usually cowardly retreat—running backwards, of course.

Mr LESTER: I rise to a point of order. I am not a coward. I am a strong man. I ask that he withdraw that.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to accept the member's denial.

Mr CASEY: I presume the member feels offended by the remark which I made. If he feels offended, I withdraw that particular remark.

Mr LESTER: I rise to a further point of order. I want an unequivocal withdrawal of that remark.

Mr CASEY: Mr Speaker, I have done as you have instructed me to do on this occasion. It is quite obvious that here again today, just like yesterday, he wants to stop debate on this very important issue because of the approach he has endeavoured to make and the way in which he has been found out, quite clearly and positively, by us in this House yesterday.

Mr Lester: You wanted to frustrate it in the middle of negotiations.

Mr CASEY: He can rant and he can rave. He can perform in the manner to which we have become accustomed to witnessing right here in this Parliament. However, there are four very salient factors and they are sad and clear in this most unfortunate and, I believe, most unnecessary dispute.

The first is the almost insane determination of Canberra (the Frasers, the Anthonys, the Howards) to pursue provocatively this taxation "High Noon" with what is probably Australia's biggest export-producing workforce.

The second is the obvious absence of assurances that this new taxation attack of the Liberal-National Parties will not spread from the miners to public servants, police, nurses, teachers, railwaymen and thousands of others, including station hands, permanent farm workers and share-farmers who receive housing assistance throughout country areas of Queensland and who can only afford to remain and work in those remote areas by virtue of that assistance.

Third is the apparent absolute inability of the National-Liberal Party State Government to counsel its Liberal-National Party federal counterparts effectively on the futility of an industrial deadlock already so disastrously damaging to the economies of both Queensland and Australia.

The fourth is my firm conviction that the present objection of certain State Government leaders towards the Canberra housing tax policy is insincere and that their criticisms are motivated more by the short-term effects in the second half of an election year than a new-found concern for industrial fair play. In this regard I quote the statement of the Premier on 28 June, in the early days of the stoppage, when there were no indications that it would continue as sympathetically as it has—and it has gained the sympathy of the people of Australia. The Premier said only a couple of days after the dispute commenced—

"The striking miners should go back to work immediately. There is no justification for this latest disgraceful strike."

That was the attitude of the Premier less than two months ago, and there was certainly no disclaimer from Dr Edwards or any outbursts from the now militant member for Peak Downs that he, the Premier at that stage, was a dill or out of touch in what he was saying.

Queenslanders must be reminded, and reminded time and time again, that this housing-subsidy tax is the new tax of the National and Liberal Parties in both this State and Canberra. It has been fully and publicly supported by Mr Braithwaite, National Party member for Dawson, and Senator Collard, a National Party Senator from the area, and yesterday it was supported in the House by all National and Liberal Party members of

this Parliament. It is the new tax, as were the petrol tax and the Medibank tax, of the Premier, his Liberal deputy, the member for Peak Downs and every National and Liberal Party candidate who contests the coming election—the new tax passed on to them by a southern Government that they take every opportunity to applaud and, as recently as yesterday, defend.

There is no doubt—no doubt at all—that Prime Minister Fraser in the recent past misled the miners of Central Queensland and indicated that they would be exempt from this housing-tax imposition. They were betrayed by none other than the nation's top political leader—poisonously deceived—and, I believe, deliberately set up for a tax showdown without any complaint from the Bjelke-Petersens, Edwardses and Lesters until they saw their votes disappearing down the mine shafts.

The housing benefit now in dispute has existed in Central Queensland mining awards since the earliest days, with, I might add, Federal industrial ratification. It has been included in all dealings and discussions on wages. In fact, as the National and Liberal Parties were plotting this dislocation of a work-force lulled into false security by the Prime Minister himself, a new award was being finalised without any hint from the Canberra taxman of his imminent interference. If this benefit had not been granted, the wage structure of the miners would have been higher, and that would have been reflected in all awards in mining areas. However, the deal in the mining industry was part of the discussions at all stages, and the Government was cognisant of that.

I believe that a real problem for inland communities is the lack of interest of far-away political dwarfs such as Doug Anthony with pre-packaged philosophies who blow into country towns for luncheon stop-overs to be fed rather than informed. As far as country Queenslanders are concerned, these politicians leave with full tummies and empty minds. All they leave behind is a lot of foul air, particularly when they make such stupid comments as Anthony's famous "beach house" remark. That remark showed his incompetence. Is it any wonder that Fraser has been so anxious to get Sinclair back into the House of Representatives and at the helm of the National-Country Party?

There is only one honourable way to settle this dispute, and that is for the Prime Minister to keep his word to the miners and their families in Central Queensland. I am told that Mr Sinclair is prepared to offer them free funerals, but I do not know whether that is so.

I am not fussy whether it is done through locality allowances, locality exemptions or some other means, but it is the height of irresponsibility for this country to continue to pay such a terrible price to pacify the pride of a few guilty Government politicians. This matter must be finalised, and finalised quickly. It must be resolved not only for the miners

in Central Queensland but also for the thousands of other Queenslanders who receive housing assistance as minimum compensation for the comforts and amenities they forgo to work and live in outback areas.

Mr Bourke: What about the farmers who receive no assistance?

Mr CASEY: I mentioned the farmers earlier. The honourable member for Lockyer has been asleep.

It is despicable that Central Queensland miners are singled out by the National and Liberal Parties for this experiment in taxation prosecution while tax avoidance schemes for the wealthy prosper untouched beneath the noses of Treasurer Howard and his city investigators.

I gave this Parliament the opportunity yesterday to show Canberra that the whole of Queensland was behind their miners. However, the Liberal and National Party parliamentarians—including Messrs Newbery, Hewitt and Lester, who represent the area—led by the Premier and his deputy, squibbed. They certainly squibbed yesterday.

I am disappointed, but not surprised, that the Queensland Parliament was denied the opportunity yesterday by the National and Liberal Parties to register its united disapproval of this latest Canberra tax tactic. The National and Liberal Parties see industrial consensus, inside or outside Parliament, as a hideous superstition to be discredited and discouraged, and anyone who thinks they have really changed on this occasion, other than for temporary election trickery, should content himself with believing in the Easter Bunny and reading "Little Red Riding Hood", or, perhaps more aptly, "Tall Tales from the Timber-tops" by Vincey Lester.

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND COALFIELDS TAXATION DISPUTE

Mr KATTER (Flinders) (12.10 p.m.): After some considerable thought and, I might add, some considerable worry over this fairly contentious issue, I rise to give the whole-hearted support and backing of the people of the electorate of Flinders for the miners in their fight over subsidised housing.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr KATTER: I should like the miners of the Central Queensland coalfields to understand that my statement was greeted by laughter from Opposition members. Ever since the debate on this issue arose, those Opposition members have been responsible for a resounding and thunderous silence on it. My colleague from Peak Downs took a fairly courageous stand.

Mr D'ARCY: I rise to a point of order. Would the member for Flinders tell the House how he voted yesterday on this issue?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr KATTER: The interesting point about yesterday's debate was that Opposition members remained totally silent and let everyone else do the fighting for them. Even the Australian president of the Colliery Employees Union, Mr Kelly, said that the ALP has remained silent over the issue and that it has been the job of the National Party to do the fighting. The National Party has done that, under the leadership of the member for Peak Downs, Mr Lester. I pay him a great tribute.

The reason why the miners' housing was not taxed in the past was that the Federal Government had some understanding of the situation that exists in Australia outside the metropolitan areas. Very few people in this House realise that it is impossible to borrow money from a bank for the construction of a house in an inland town. Banks simply will not lend the money. I exaggerate slightly; perhaps they will lend one-quarter of the cost. Insurance companies, however, will not lend any money whatever, nor will building societies lend any money. In other words, it is impossible for a person living in a small inland town in Queensland to obtain finance to build a home. He simply cannot build his own home. Similarly, an ordinary person who has a bit of money cannot obtain finance to build a house for rental purposes. That simply cannot happen.

The first fact to emerge is simply that no housing is available in the inland towns; people cannot obtain money for housing. It is left to the big companies to undertake the construction of houses if they want their projects to proceed.

Say a mining company gives a miner \$60 a week to cover rental costs. What happens to that \$60? Forty per cent of that \$60 goes immediately in taxation. Say, for example, a miner is given \$100 a week. Automatically, \$40 goes straight to Canberra, and, as we know, very little of it comes back to the small inland towns of Australia. That \$40 goes straight to Canberra to provide for the public servants who live in luxury and work in Taj Mahals.

Of the \$60 remaining after tax, one-third is taken by the additional cost of living in country areas. So, from the \$100 that is given to the miner, he gets to use for his own purposes only approximately \$40. Needless to say, the companies have tried to help their employees, not by giving them the extra money but by providing them with free housing. That is the best possible way they can help them. If the companies were to pay them money, the miners would be left with only \$4 out of every \$10 they receive. It is important to take note of that fact.

The next important point to remember is that there has to be a lure to entice anyone to leave Brisbane or some other large town in the south-east corner of Queensland and move to Dysart, which is out in the middle of nowhere. The lure need not be in the form of money because, as I have just explained, out of every \$100 the mining company pays its

employees, only \$40 is available for use by the miners. So the company must find some way of creating a huge differential between the income in a centre such as Dysart or Moranbah and the income in Brisbane.

To illustrate my point, let me deal with a person receiving an annual wage of \$11,000. That is a fairly reasonable sum in terms of the salaries or wages paid in Brisbane. About one-third of that \$11,000 goes in taxation. That leaves the person with roughly \$8,000. The cost-of-living differential is about one-third.

I state the figure of one-third because an in-depth study has been conducted by Dr. Soon of the James Cook University and he found the differential to be 20 per cent on grocery items alone. That does not take into account the cost involved in visiting an orthodontist or medical specialist. A person would have to drive, for example, from Moranbah to Rockhampton to make such a visit and he would have to pay more for his petrol because petrol costs more in country areas.

So that, of the \$11,000, all that becomes available to the employee, in terms of Brisbane purchasing power, taking into account one-third for the cost-of-living differential, is \$6,000. If he has a wife and three children, he may as well stay in Brisbane and accept the dole, because it is more than \$6,000 a year. For a man, his wife and three children, the dole is \$136 a week. How could anyone be convinced that he should go to Dysart under the present circumstances unless there is no taxation on subsidised housing? That is why I tell the miners that they have our whole-hearted and enthusiastic support and I will do anything that I can possibly do to help out.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr KATTER: I am getting interjections from members of the ALP. They started off trying to project themselves as the great champions of the miners but now the honourable member for Brisbane Central is shooting his mouth off and trying to criticise me for what I am saying.

Mr Fouras interjected.

Mr KATTER: The honourable member says that my figures are shocking. The Parliamentary Library has advised me that a man, with a wife and three children, receives \$136 a week. Opposition members are attacking me because they do not like what I am saying. They think that they have the monopoly on poverty.

What I have said applies to people earning \$11,000 a year but, unfortunately, many people who live in the Flinders electorate are plant operators earning \$150 a week, stockmen earning \$140 a week and railway firemen earning \$160 a week. Unfortunately, they are not earning \$11,000; they are earning only \$7,000 to \$8,000 a year. If I

apply the tax and the cost-of-living differential to their wages, I come up with a figure that is traumatically below the registered poverty line in Australia. If I have said this once or twice in this House, I have said it a hundred times.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr KATTER: What I am doing is fighting Canberra, because the responsibility lies fairly and squarely—

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr KATTER: The honourable member says that I am a paper tiger. The major problem involved is the rate of taxation. Taxation is applied not to purchasing power or real income but to income. That is a simplistic approach to taxation.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr KATTER: Opposition members say that there is something that the State Government can do about it, and I agree that there most certainly is. We are paying district and zone allowances in all of these areas. It is a matter of great regret that the allowances are not higher. I sympathise to some extent, because 40 per cent of those allowances goes to Canberra.

The existing taxation being paid by Australians is exacerbated and aggravated dramatically because the vast bulk of the money we are paying for petrol is a form of taxation. Since people in country areas use three or four times as much petrol as do people in Brisbane, they are paying three or four times as much in tax on petrol as people in Brisbane. As I understand the recent Budget, 10 per cent of the Government's tax income is in fact now coming from petrol.

(Time expired.)

ATTACK BY MEMBER FOR LYTTON ON LIBERAL PARTY

Mr INNES (Sherwood) (12.20 p.m.): Yesterday the parliamentary Labor Party paid tribute to the Liberal Party's present popularity and potency by devoting all its speeches to attacks on my party, culminating in a bitter and scurrilous attack on the Liberal parliamentary leader, Dr Edwards, by the member for Lytton, Mr Burns. What was the reason for this exercise in mass hysteria? It is because we are looking good and they are looking bad—not bad, disastrous! Major limb and organ transplants, transfusions, skin grafts, even cloning could not revive the decayed body politic of the Queensland ALP, and if it was revived it would not know who would pay the bills, whether they would be paid or in whose house it would recuperate.

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Many members of the new guard of the ALP believe that the slate has to be wiped clean at the elections this year to allow a total rebuilding of the ALP. They know that the members of the new guard say that there is no point in democratising the branches if the stool-pigeons of the old power structures, the so-called winners of the plebiscites for the formerly safe seats, are left in the saddle. They say that these Government-paid ambassadors of the party have to bear the prime responsibility for their disastrous position. Their dissatisfaction reached new heights with the hypocrisy of that old guard fellow-traveller, the Leader of the Opposition, at the time of the appointment recently of the member for South Coast as Minister for Police. They have stated that they are appalled by the pressuring and conniving by the Leader of the Opposition to give his party's preferences to the National Party—that from the mouth of a man who, at the time of his appointment, said that Mr Hinze was a roughneck whose appointment would horrify and disillusion people. He said—

“People are fearful about this appointment because of his outspoken comments about people who offend in various areas.”

That hypocrisy is too much for the decent members of the ALP to take.

Let us look further at the situation. Why is the Labor Party so upset? What do the polls say? “The Bulletin” poll of 12 August 1980 showed the popularity of Casey at 27 per cent, Joh Bjelke-Petersen at 41 per cent and Edwards at 45 per cent. The QIT Communications Course poll of April 1980 showed Casey with a 26 per cent approval rate. The Liberal Party poll, which was released to the Press, showed an approval rating for Casey of 36.3 per cent—we have given him a few more points—Bjelke-Petersen 43.3 per cent and Edwards 47.7 per cent. “The Bulletin” polls compare in a fascinating way the style of the new and the style of the old. In September 1978, immediately before the Sherwood by-election, Mr Burns had an approval rating of 57 per cent and in February 1979 Mr Casey had an approval rating of 36 per cent. The conclusion is clear: Casey is the worst ALP leader in the history of this State. And who put him there? He was put there by Mr Burns, the member for Lytton, who engaged in an extraordinarily vicious attack on Dr Edwards and the Liberal Party last night.

Let us look at Mr Burns. He led with the chin; he can cop some. Mr Burns is most notable for his resignations. He is a peculiarly resigning member of Parliament. On 29 September 1973 he resigned as shadow Health Minister, supposedly on the grounds that his house was broken into and someone stole his suits. After the Sherwood by-election in 1978 he resigned as leader of the Labor Party after being soundly defeated in a campaign which he centred around his own personal style of leadership. Members will

also recall at that time that the Labor Party was singularly silent on the street-march issue, which was raised again by them yesterday. Later he resigned as shadow Transport spokesman—again letting the Labor Party Opposition down—on the grounds that he was afraid for the safety of some of his constituents.

The greatest fiasco came when he was offered the State presidency of the divided Labor Party. After shopping around without any success, in desperation Batt and Coombes flew to Brisbane to offer the State presidency to Burns. In a typically courageous move, he wrote a letter (which he did not have the courage to deliver himself, but instead gave it to Ed Casey's driver to deliver) to Neil Batt during a Press conference at the airport stating that he would not accept any offer of leadership. At a time in the Labor Party when there was the need for balance in a democratic system by having a strong Opposition, Burns was nowhere to be found. In true, decisive leadership style he vacillated for weeks. Finally, he accepted the State presidency, only to resign again after a week saying that he was too tired.

The greatest indictment of Mr Burns was the time that he resigned as Leader of the Opposition after the Sherwood by-election. He did it, I am reliably informed, so as to completely get the ALP off guard in order to lobby and push Ed Casey into the leadership. He organised favourable Press comments for Casey and said that he would be the best leader. I am sure that members of the Labor Party and members of the Liberal Party will thank Mr Burns for a long time to come for that particular move.

I turn to other issues. Mr Burns is not unblemished when it comes to accepting lurks and perks. He was the only ALP member to accept Comalco shares in the '60s, although he tried to blame his father. His relationship with Mr Casey is a prime example of how one never knows who he is with or against. It is interesting to recall the statements of Mr Casey. In 1972 he said

"All I will say is that in Queensland today the rank and file of the Labor movement has, unfortunately, lost control of its own party. The ordinary supporter of the movement has no idea of the intrigue, in-fighting and compromise that is continually going on at the top in order that certain people can maintain their positions."

He has revolutionised that. Now everybody knows about the intrigue, in-fighting and compromise that is continually going on in the top order of the Australian Labor Party. The true state of the party can be seen if one refers to the Labor Party itself. In March of this year Mr Whitlam, the great white hope, the fallen idol of the ALP, was interviewed on television. He said—

"Because Queensland looks the least progressive of all the States in Labor terms, in every other State the Labor Party gets

the support of progressive elements. In Queensland it doesn't appear to have their support and doesn't appear to earn their support.

"I think it's because a great number of people who would like to support Labor believe that they had better support the Liberals in Brisbane because they look more modern and progressive than Labor appears in Brisbane."

Let us go from the former federal Labor leader to the young hope of the Labor Party, the State secretary of Australian Young Labor. In August of this year—an update—he said—

"At least we have done it. There were rumours that the ALP had learnt not commit hari kiri in public, but no fear whenever our political opponents are at a low ebb, we seem to go even lower."

The person who has presided over that demise of the ALP is the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Casey). But, of course, he was set a prime example by the previous leader, Mr Tom Burns.

Of course, Mr D'Arcy weighed in with his contribution yesterday. There is no doubt that the deputy leadership and the leadership of the Labor Party went to the two most incompetent people in the parliamentary Labor Party so that when the election is lost—everybody knows the Labor Party will lose, and lose disastrously—they can both be got rid of. The predictions can soundly be made on all the evidence from within the Labor Party, from the prominent members of the party interstate and from the polls that have been taken in this State by every source. They indicate that the parliamentary Labor Party will be reduced even beyond its 1972 soccer-team proportions. It will not have enough skins left to make one miserable soccer ball. The reason why Opposition members were so upset yesterday was that they can see that the Liberal Party is the party to beat. It is the Liberal Party that will take Labor seats at the next election. That is because of the barrenness of the Labor Party's performance and because of the complete disillusionment of the party's own most ardent supporters under the new guard of the ALP.

FEDERAL BUDGET

Mr WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (12.29 p.m.): It is very clear to members of the Opposition that the Liberals are running scared. I was surprised to hear the member for Sherwood get up and start talking about other people because his own colleagues have referred to him as the member who criticises after the event. In fact, they once called him the "After the fact lawyer". I recall that he was the one who supported the amendments to the Justices Act. Wasn't he the guy who went shopping, came back and criticised the amendments? He supported the amendments to the Police Act in the joint parties room and then

came back here as the great democrat. I am told on good authority that he is also the one who stood in this House to say that he was an anti-abortionist, but at the same time acted as a legal adviser to the pro-abortion lobby. So one starts to wonder. I think we can discount what he said.

Mr INNES: I rise to a point of order. I will not cavil at anything that is said but I take personal offence at the suggestion that I was the legal adviser to any party involved in the abortion debate. I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr WRIGHT: I will accept that. I note, however, that although he has been speaking of jobs for the boys, he voted with the Government yesterday. Once again, he is an "after the event" critic.

In speaking to the Appropriation Bill yesterday, I made the criticism that the Queensland Government was being severely disadvantaged under the Commonwealth-State arrangements. The Government is being disadvantaged because of the under-estimations of population, because of the social composition of this State, because of the number of pensioners and the number of Aboriginal people, because of its decentralised character, and also the problems that we have from environmental and climatic conditions. The Budget introduced last night in Canberra by the Liberal Treasurer (Mr Howard) is a clear continuation of that situation.

Because of its social composition, Queensland does have problems. It has a huge pensioner population, people who are on fixed incomes. It has the lowest household income per capita in this nation and tens of thousands of Queenslanders and other Australians have been forced to accept lower living standards because of their limited buying power.

I say to this Assembly that the Budget last night will do little to relieve this situation. In fact, the plight of the lower and middle income families can only deteriorate and worsen over the next 12 months. One might say that the Federal Government was not trying to win votes, but irrespective of that one would have thought that a responsible Government would have recognised the problems, would have recognised the great difficulties facing people and acted to alleviate those problems, firstly by improving the purchasing power of those who are financially disadvantaged and, secondly, by putting a brake on the escalating costs. But instead of this the Fraser-Howard Government has maintained its escalating cost influences. It has maintained its import parity pricing scheme for oil. It has refused to adjust the family allowances. It has put zone allowances back in the inquiry basket. That is an amazing thing to do, but that is what it has done. It has maintained its exorbitant personal income tax policy and it has shut its eyes completely to the ever-worsening problem of unemployment. It is clearly a Budget that continues the last five years of the Fraser Government's regressive fiscal policies, policies that have

kept the inflation rate in double figures and kept the unemployment rate at over 6 per cent of the population. It has also kept the standard of living and the purchasing power of millions of Australians on the decline.

It is almost as if it did not matter. Almost complacently Mr Howard said that there would be little, if any, fall or decline in unemployment in the coming year. He also made it clear that the inflation rate, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, would remain at 10 per cent—if there are not massive increases in the price of oil, and we know that will happen. What an admission of failure by a Government which in 1975 on every platform and in the Parliament claimed that it was the only one, the only political party, the only type of Government that could give the solutions to Australia's economic problems.

A recent survey in one of the national magazines showed that the majority of Australians thought that Mr Fraser had had enough time. After this Budget, I suggest that the low and middle income earners, the unemployed, the Aborigines, the socially disadvantaged and those on fixed incomes will say with justification that not only has he had enough time but he has had too long and that his time is up.

The price of petrol has continued to rise. In the Brisbane metropolitan area it has risen from 9.5c per litre 10 years ago to between 29.9c and 34.9c per litre today.

Mr Vaughan: It is higher than that.

Mr WRIGHT: And in country areas, as the honourable members for Port Curtis and Nudgee say, it is even higher.

Apparently Mr Howard will continue to tax Australians through the petrol bowser. It is also apparent that he will continue to reap millions of dollars in revenue from Australian motorists. It is also apparent that he will effectively reduce the motoring consumers' buying power in other areas. It is also obvious that he is placing additional costs on manufacturers, retailers, and industry generally, and those costs will eventually have to be passed on to consumers. So it is the consumer who will pay. In all this he is putting further inflationary pressure on the economy.

Mr Howard admitted that the current rate of inflation is almost 11 per cent; yet despite this, his allocations in a number of very important areas—areas that affect people; areas that affect ordinary Australians—have not risen accordingly. Take housing, for example. At a time when tens of thousands of people are living in substandard conditions—every member knows of people waiting for Housing Commission homes, of families living with parents who still have a couple of children with them or of people living in caravans because they cannot get accommodation—at a time when the building industry is facing great difficulty, when unemployment in the building industry is grave, instead of doing something about the problem, the Federal Treasurer has

announced a drop in real terms of 3.3 per cent in spending on housing. Despite the rise to \$366m, an increase of \$23m, it is a pittance and will do nothing to alleviate the problems.

We have a similar story in social welfare. There is a rise in real terms of only 2.4 per cent. In education, it is "Stay as you are". There is no change in real terms. In health, there is a rise in real terms of only 5 per cent. For Aborigines, the increase in real terms is less than 2 per cent; yet they are totally disadvantaged. They have the lowest disposable income of any group within our community. However, as assistance to them there is a rise of less than 2 per cent in real terms. There is little joy for the low and middle income family, and it is total despair for the unemployed and those on fixed incomes.

From other aspects in the Budget—\$547m in foreign aid on a massive \$3,541m in defence—it seems that it is the opinion of the Fraser Government that the ordinary people are of secondary importance to overseas countries and defence. The Federal Government is putting weapons before welfare, bullets before bread and butter and helicopters before houses. Shame on the Federal Government for casting aside the plight of thousands—in fact, tens of thousands and millions—of Australians.

For Queenslanders especially there is no joy. This Budget means very little to the people of Queensland. We realise that in the financial agreement arrived at in June this year Queensland lost out. The demands made by this Government were slashed in half. When we look, what do we find? We have the old-hat promise of the Brisbane Airport. As for the Townsville Airport, which has been raised as a great thing for Queensland—it is a sop; a miserable \$27m of an estimated cost of \$225m. There will be no immediate benefit. No immediate upgrading program can really take place to benefit the people now. Again North Queensland has suffered, because there is no commitment on the Burdekin Dam. It will be left to the State Government—and that means to Queensland. However, I will not see any Government member stand up and say anything. I will not see any North Queensland member of this Government say anything. They are not game to.

Mr Casey: A State Labor Government will be the one to do it.

Mr WRIGHT: That is the only way we will get anything done. Queensland will suffer because of lack of assistance to the unemployed, because we have the highest unemployment rate in the country. We will suffer because of lack of improvement in the lot of the lower and middle income family, because we have the lowest household income in Australia. We will suffer from the lack of assistance to pensioners because we have the greatest proportion of pensioners in this country. We will suffer

from the lack of assistance to Aborigines because, except for Western Australia, we have the highest percentage of Aboriginal people.

Country people can forget about any benefits. There is no improvement in zone allowances. There has been no change since 1958—but now there is an inquiry. That is what the Commonwealth Government does. When people are screaming everywhere, when submission after submission has been put forward, it casts them aside and sets up an inquiry. For country people, there is the burden of petrol costs, transport costs and lack of finance for roads. There is no relief for those people who live outside the metropolitan area. It is a going-nowhere Budget. It is a non-incentive Budget. It is an anti-growth Budget. It is an unemployment Budget. It will enable Queenslanders as they face the next election to see the Fraser Government for what it really is. It has had enough time. The Budget is proof that the Fraser Government is like the dog that chases the car: it would not know what to do with it if it ever caught it. The Fraser Government is chasing three more years in power but, if it gets them, it won't know what to do with them to alleviate the economic dilemma confronting this nation.

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND COALFIELDS TAXATION DISPUTE

Mr LESTER (Peak Downs) (12.35 p.m.): I am trying very hard to fight for the miners' cause and indeed for the cause of all people in Queensland so affected, in spite of statements by Mr Coffey, who was the liaison leader for the mining unions at the time, when he said, "Mr Fraser told me we could sleep tight tonight, but he would not give any direct guarantee." I have to live with that sort of thing and still try to solve this issue. Then, unfortunately, we have the likes of the Leader of the Opposition, who has gone down the line so much that all he can do to get notoriety or publicity is to attack a hard-working back-bencher. Further can I say that, while he attacks me, his own record is far from unblemished. Take the abortion debate, which was not even a debate on party lines. The Leader of the Opposition began by speaking against the policy of his party on that issue, but his views changed in midstream when the going got rough. I have never done anything like that.

Yesterday the Premier indicated to the House the unequivocal stand taken by the State Government. He said that the Government was involved in deep negotiations with the Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, and that has been borne out by the main headline in today's "Telegraph". While these negotiations were taking place, the Leader of the Opposition, on behalf of the ALP Opposition, attempted to get on the political bandwagon by moving a motion stating that we all condemn the Fraser Government. The

adoption of such a motion would only have halted negotiations and kept the miners on strike. It certainly would not have solved the problem. He later appeared on television and condemned me, and he also sent telegrams round my electorate. His action was a cheap political stunt aimed at causing me embarrassment rather than an attempt to do something responsible to solve the strike.

I support the continuous efforts made by the Government to bring the strike to an end. Let me get down to the nitty-gritty of the situation. The people involved in the strike have been lured to the West by the attraction of low rentals. There was an employer-employee agreement, and after 10 years the Federal Government decided to try to implement this accursed tax, a tax that is going to cost the nation dearly if the problem is not solved now. As I said, I support what the Premier and the Deputy Premier have done to try to solve it.

The miners believe that the issue must be settled once and for all. They believe that their stand will prevent this tax being imposed on nurses, students, station hands, Army personnel and others. Let me take an extreme case. If I were to invite somebody to have dinner with me at Parliament House and they did not have to pay for their meal, they would have to fill out a voucher stating that they had had a meal the value of which was so much. Although that is an extreme case, it shows why we are all fighting this tax. Therefore, it is very unsettling to find the State Labor Party, for its own political advantage, doing so much to try to frustrate the Government's efforts.

The fact that the tax was not charged originally set a precedent, and, in my opinion, its imposition now could be challenged successfully in the High Court or some other court. The Government needs to provide incentives for people to go to the country, and that is the policy of all political parties. Let us persuade the Federal Government to provide such incentives. Already the miners pay huge amounts in taxes and the mining companies pay huge amounts in taxes. In fact, one of the companies has paid more taxes than any other Australian company. I ask: Why is the Federal Government trying to hit the miners and, indeed, all the other little people associated with them? They receive little from the Federal Government in return for the taxes that they pay. People in country areas have to fight hard for improved communications, roads and hospitals, and I think they are entitled to assistance of that type from the Federal Government.

It should be pointed out, so that our friends in the Press will know once and for all, that not all miners receive \$25,000 a year. Those who work underground—and I have been underground with them—earn only about \$15,000 a year. Let us get our facts straight. Let us not forget that it costs about 20 per cent more to live in the country. Let us not forget that these taxes

should be decreased by as much as 20 per cent as an incentive to people to live in the country. Such a reduction would also help to balance the taxes. How does that sound? We want country people to remain in the country. The imposition of taxes and extra taxes will not keep them in the country areas.

The people who live in the mining towns are all good people and they find their own amusements. They do not have the amenities, such as music teachers, the theatre, the Gold Coast, tertiary education and so on, that the city dwellers have; nor are they able to enjoy the type of environment that exists in the cities.

Say someone who formerly lived and worked in Brisbane, who sold his house here 10 years ago and who gave up a key position to move to Blackwater, now decided that he would like to move back to Brisbane. He would find that he could not afford the additional cost involved. Having given up a key position in Brisbane, he would find that he actually lost money by moving to Blackwater. It would be fair to say that over the intervening 10 years the cost of the house in Brisbane would have risen by \$20,000, and there is no way in the world that over that same period he would have saved that much money.

Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that any of the offers that the Federal Government has made to the miners so far will be maintained. There is no guarantee that the offers will not be changed within the next few years, next year or the year after. That is partly what the strike is all about.

In this whole issue the State Government has acted responsibly. It has done everything it could to resolve the issue. It could be said that so far it has not been resolved. All I would say to that is that no-one else has resolved it. At least the State Government, together with the miners and those people who have helped, has been responsible for getting the Federal Government to make an offer that is far better than the \$20 that it offered in the first place.

Mr Austin: What has the ALP done?

Mr LESTER: The ALP has provided no solution. Even Mr Hayden himself said that the other day when he was at Blackwater.

The Premier went to Blackwater and addressed the first rally. He has contacted Mr Fraser on several occasions, as has the Deputy Premier and Treasurer. The Queensland Government has put forward a partial solution by suggesting that a Senate select committee conduct an inquiry across the board into taxation in country areas, subsidised housing, petrol costs and zone allowances. Such an inquiry could be assisted by taxation commissioners. For far too long we have seen too much shooting from the hip in relation to taxation.

The Queensland Government has maintained its stand throughout. It realises that the policy of the State National and Liberal Parties is one opposed to the imposition of

these taxes. The State Government has kept its word; unfortunately, the Federal Government has not.

In recent times my comments have attracted a good deal of publicity. At least they have highlighted the issue and made people realise that someone must act. I have come under criticism from all sections of the community. Pressure has been put on me because of comments I made over the past two weeks. All I want to do is bring the matter to a head. The Premier and the Deputy Premier are trying with all the means at their disposal to resolve the issue. I have received telephone calls from senators and from people all over the nation. If the issue is not resolved by Christmas-time, the nation will have lost \$2,000m. Our trading reliability will be put on the line. People will get hurt. I stand by what I have done to try to prevent that. People have asked why I said what I did say. If I didn't make strong comments and add some colourful adjectives, my statements would have appeared in "The Clermont Telegram", full stop.

(Time expired.)

MOORING FEES, GOLD COAST AREA

Mr P. N. D. WHITE (Southport) (12.50 p.m.): I, too, wish to speak about taxes. But before doing so I should like to support some of the points of view put forward by my colleague the honourable member for Peak Downs, particularly his point that, if we are to develop this rich State of ours, some encouragement must be given to people to live in decentralised areas. That is basically what the argument is all about.

Today I wish to speak about the mooring fees that are imposed on boat-owners in the Gold Coast area. This is a tax that is a bit closer to home. The Government has always taken its share of mooring fees. I suppose that a reasonable share is something that has come to be expected. After all, the navigation facilities have to be paid for and I support the principle that the user pays.

Before the setting up of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, the port of Brisbane levied the fees in this area. At present, the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, which is responsible for maintaining the facilities, collects the fees from the boat-owners.

The scale of fees is what concerns me. Each year, \$200 per swing mooring has to go to the Department of Harbours and Marine. Shortly, I hope, that amount will be reduced to \$150, and for that I will be grateful. Each year, for every private berth provided by private enterprise in the Southport Boat Harbour, \$120 has to go to the Government. That amount is added to the cost of a private berth in a marina. I hope that that amount will be reduced shortly to \$90. It is good to see them coming down.

About two years ago, mooring cost only about \$60. Overnight, while a private enterprise marina is under construction, the Government's fee goes from \$60 to \$120. Again that is added to the amount the boat-owner has to pay to moor his boat at that marina.

The real bone of contention is that all this money is going to the Government but, unfortunately, the Government is not putting any of it back into dredging or harbour facilities in that area. It is some 12 years since any Government work was done in the Southport Boat Harbour. Apart from the very small cost of providing a swing mooring, which is a chain on a tyre, no Government money is going into the area.

This is a great imposition on the people who have to moor their boats in that area because their boat is too big, because its mast cannot be taken down, because the owner does not want to take it down to get it under the bridge or because of some other reason. So they have to moor in the Southport Boat Harbour, and the Government is putting nothing into it. The owners are paying \$200 or \$120 a year to the Government, and they are cranky about it. I do not blame them. It is also providing a distinct disincentive to private enterprise to provide further marinas.

I realise that the department has an overall problem throughout the State. It has to borrow money to provide some facilities and make repayments on the loans. But I fail to see why one area, which is not getting the attention it deserves, should fund other areas. I fully support the principle that the user pays, but not to the extent that people in my electorate are paying for what is done in other areas.

I am asking the department and the Minister to look into why the people in Southport are getting nothing in return and are funding other areas. Obviously a study should be made to find a more equitable way of raising the money. Possibly registration fees should be increased. That would spread the burden among all boat-owners.

An Opposition Member: Why should that be?

Mr P. N. D. WHITE: If the honourable member has not followed my argument so far, I am glad that he asked. All boats use the facilities in harbours and along waterways but some of the owners are paying not only registration fees but also very high mooring fees to the Government and they are being penalised. In view of this, I would ask the Minister to look at a more equitable way of raising the necessary funds to provide the facilities required in Queensland, and not penalise only those areas where there is a natural harbour and Government work is not being done.

The second aspect of this problem which I would like to raise is that the Gold Coast Waterways Authority has been made entirely

responsible for the maintenance of waterways in that area, but is not allowed to retain the fees collected. The amount I spoke about, \$120 per berth plus \$200 per swing mooring per year, is still going to the Government. The Gold Coast Waterways Authority (whatever people might think of some of its members the fact is that it is a responsible planning body and doing a good job) has never been given any money; it has been given only a loan. If it is to maintain the facilities required in this area it needs the mooring fees presently being paid to the Government. They should be going to the authority and not refunded to a department which is obviously going to spend them elsewhere. So again I ask the Minister to look at this problem and allow the fees imposed in the area to stay in the area and be spent there. After all, unless some reasonable dredging is done very shortly and facilities improved we are going to see fewer and fewer boats in that area instead of more and more. It is now very difficult to travel in the area in a boat which draws over 5 or 6 feet.

In conclusion, while we are talking about waterways I would like to bring to the attention of this House, Queenslanders and Australians in general a very significant sailing feat and pay my tribute to the people involved. This feat has been achieved by a boat called "Gold Coast Express" which was built on the Coast by a New Zealand builder to a New Zealand design. It has recently competed in the Pan Am Clipper Series in Hawaii, an international series of clipper races for quarter-ton yachts. Just the other day, the "Gold Coast Express" had its fifth win out of five races in Class D. One might ask why this feat was so remarkable. It is remarkable because about 12 months ago some members of the Southport Yacht Club and other businessmen decided to get together, put in some money and design and build a boat to go to Hawaii and win Class D of this highly competitive clipper series. They raised some of the money for expenses by conducting chook raffles around the yacht club. I would like to pay my tribute to the people involved, to the expertise of the crew, the initiative they showed and the general spirit of private enterprise. It involved people getting off their tails, raising the money, building a boat, having a go and winning. I think it is a great tribute not only to the Gold Coast but to Queensland and Australian enterprise in general.

Premier and the National Party. He boasted about a shonky poll that was conducted over recent weeks. The poll was a bodgie one done by the Liberal Party. The prime purpose of releasing this spurious poll to the Press was to embarrass the Premier, as it revealed that Dr Edwards was leading the Premier in the popularity polls by some three points. It is just so much hog-wash. Dr Edwards is regarded by the people of Queensland as a weak, vacillating leader who has a reputation for procrastinating. Earlier this week he accused the National Party of being guilty of a dirty tricks campaign in sending newspapers through the mail alleging that he campaigned for Mr Houghton, the National Party candidate for the seat of Redcliffe in the 1977 State election. It is public knowledge that Dr Edwards denied the accusations. He must have been suffering from political amnesia when he made that denial. I have here a copy of the "Sunshine Coast Advertiser" dated 13 August.

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

The House adjourned at 1 p.m.

ATTACK ON LABOR PARTY BY MEMBER FOR SHERWOOD

Mr K. J. HOOPER (Archerfield) (12.58 p.m.): Today we heard a speech by the honourable member for Sherwood which was an exhibition of complete cant and humbug and indicated a serious rift in the ranks of the coalition. Under the guise of attacking the Labor Party and my leader, Mr Casey, it was in reality a thinly veiled attack on the