

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 27 AUGUST 1980

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

TROTTING INDUSTRY

Hon. L. R. EDWARDS (Ipswich—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (11.1 a.m.): I wish to inform the House that over the past two days I have had discussions with the trotting industry in general. Following these discussions—they were held as late as this morning—certain assurances have been given by both parties. Following the assurance that further discussions will take place in the next few days, the boycott that was planned for Albion Park trotting has been lifted and racing will go ahead on Saturday evening.

CRITICISM OF MINISTER FOR EDUCATION BY MEMBER FOR SALISBURY

Hon. V. J. BIRD (Burdekin—Minister for Education) (11.3 a.m.): I deplore the action taken by the member for Salisbury when she attempts to misuse information gained as a member of this Government for her own selfish political gain. It is obvious that, not only does she leak information from party and other meetings but holds Press conferences to do so. This latest outburst will surely be seen for what it is—another dismal attempt to discredit this Government.

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

THIRD READING

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

PRIVILEGE

PRESS REPORT ON ALLEGED BUDGET LEAK

Mr KRUGER (Murrumba) (11.4 a.m.): I rise on a matter of privilege. An allegation about certain leaks of matters in the forthcoming Budget was made in the House yesterday against a National Party Minister. I draw the attention of the House to an article in today's "Peninsula Record", which clearly states that the Liberal member for Redcliffe has made statements in the Parliament about the Budget that is to be brought down tomorrow. The article, under the heading "Peninsula will gain from State Budget", states—

"State member for Redcliffe Mr Terry White has predicted another well-balanced Queensland Budget."

He was reported as referring to—

"... the announcement of funding for the Redcliffe rail link; improved roads on the Peninsula and in and out of Redcliffe; increased spending on health care facilities based on the Peninsula; the expansion of accommodation for the aged and increased activity by the Queensland Housing Commission to provide low cost housing."

It is quite clear that this gentleman has set out to pre-empt the Budget and leak matters to the Press so that the people of Redcliffe would be well aware of what is contained in the Budget. I would say that he has been fully informed by the Treasurer so that these matters could be leaked to the people of Redcliffe.

Dr EDWARDS: I rise to a point of order. I take very strong exception to the comment by the member for Murrumba. Nobody except Cabinet Ministers has information about Cabinet documents relating to the Budget. I find his comment offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: I sustain the Treasurer's point of order and I ask that the comment be withdrawn.

Mr KRUGER: Just what section does the Treasurer want withdrawn?

Mr SPEAKER: The section that referred to the information relayed to the member for Redcliffe having been divulged by the Treasurer.

Mr KRUGER: I accept the denial, but I would say that the member for Redcliffe has extracted it from some source.

Mr SPEAKER: I have asked for an unqualified withdrawal.

Mr KRUGER: I did withdraw the statement that upset the Deputy Premier. That this information has leaked out in such a way is very damaging to the people of Redcliffe.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

CLOSURE OF SAWMILL AT SOUTHPORT

From Mr P. N. D. White (31 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will close a sawmill situated at 4 Gillian Lane, Southport.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE FOR BUILDING WORKERS

From Mr Davis (275 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will immediately introduce legislation which will provide long service leave for building workers based on service to the building industry.

[A similar petition was received from Mr P. N. D. White (187 signatories).]

ESCORT AGENCIES

From Mr Fouras (176 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will legislate to prevent escort agencies operating from private houses in zoned residential areas.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION FOR ZOONOSIS DISEASES

From Mr Yewdale (4 885 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure the Queensland Workers' Compensation Act is amended to fully cover workers who contract zoonosis diseases.

Petitions read and received.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. DEDUCTION OF UNION FEES FROM SALARIES OF PUBLIC SERVANTS

Mr Casey asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

With reference to his recent rejection of claims by certain Public Service trade unions for the voluntary deduction of union fees from the salaries of Public Service officers, and since numerous voluntary deductions are already made from Public Service salaries, including private life insurance contributions, what is the reason for this industrial discrimination by him and obviously sections of the Cabinet against Public Service employee organisations?

Answer:—

This is a Public Service Board matter and should be referred to the responsible Minister.

Mr Casey: I redirect my question accordingly.

2. JOINT PARLIAMENTARY PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Mr Casey asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

In view of the pretended interest of the Liberal Party in parliamentary accountability in Queensland and its failure once again during the week ending 23 August to support moves for an overdue joint parliamentary public accounts committee as proposed by the Labor Party, will he either initiate appropriate action in this Parliament for a joint parliamentary public accounts committee before it adjourns for the coming election or give a firm assurance that, irrespective of that election result, the State Parliamentary Liberal Party will in the next Parliament support moves for a properly constituted joint parliamentary public accounts committee as exists in Canberra and all other States except Queensland, irrespective of who puts it forward?

Answer:—

I believe the Opposition Leader will find the answer to his question in my ministerial statement on the matter yesterday.

3. OFF-ROAD DRIVER-TRAINING

Mr Stephan asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) As the road continues to take its toll of people and machines and efforts continue to be made to remedy this situation, will he support off-road driver-training measures, particularly for young people?

(2) Will he also give support to the idea of a driver-training complex such as is being developed by the combined Rotary clubs of Gympie?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) So far as it is practical to do so, every encouragement is given to any training measures which might assist in reducing the road toll. It is for this reason that during my recent visit overseas I visited the driving-training establishment at Cardington in the United Kingdom to see for myself the training facilities directed towards better driving. At this establishment, the main objective is to turn out highly professional driving examiners who conduct qualifying examinations for persons who wish to become approved driving instructors, as well as learner and heavy-vehicle examiners. This is why I am pressing for and have set in motion arrangements for the establishment of facilities similar to those at Cardington at a Mt Cotton driving establishment so that our driving standards in all areas can be vastly improved.

Logistically, in a State the size of Queensland, it is not possible to provide off-road driver-training facilities for all persons who wish to learn to drive. It will be appreciated that each year something of the order of 120 000 persons are learning to drive and their competence will be dependent upon the driving instruction they obtain. Broadly, the approach within the limited resources available to the department has been for the Queensland Road Safety Council to conduct courses for learner drivers as well as for those who hold licences in class-room situations. Whilst off-road practical driving such as is being developed by the combined Rotary clubs of Gympie is commendable, there is no real substitute for on-road experience under competent professional instructors. I might add that no approach has been made to me for any support, nor am I aware of the nature of any support, which the Rotary clubs of Gympie would be seeking for the development of their driver-training complex.

I feel I should say that the competence of learner drivers will be dependent upon the quality of the instruction given and it is desirable that instructors be properly trained in all aspects of safe driving. They should at least have undertaken the learner-driving course and the defensive-driving course conducted by the Queensland Road Safety Council. Of course, if they are to provide paid instruction, they will be required to be registered as driving instructors under the provisions of the Motor Vehicle Driving Instruction School Act.

4. MUSIC INSTRUCTORS (INSTRUMENTAL), EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Mr Stephan asked the Minister for Education—

(1) How many teachers of musical instruments are presently on staff with his department?

(2) Will he give further consideration to the appointment of a musical instrument teacher to be attached to the Gympie schools?

Answer:—

(1) 115 music instructors (instrumental) are presently employed by the department.

(2) The Budget control within which my department must operate does not allow for the employment of any additional music instructors (instrumental) during 1980-81.

5. HUNTINGTON HARBOUR LAND SALES

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

With reference to television advertising presently being shown on at least Channels 7 and 0 in the name of Lewis Land advertising Huntington Harbour land sales, which denigrates Surfers Paradise by depicting the area in a derogatory fashion as a poor place to live, holiday or purchase property—

(1) Who are the directors of the company?

(2) In view of the transparent falsity of such advertising, will he make every effort to ensure its withdrawal from use, not only in this State but elsewhere in Australia?

(3) In order that the public be made aware, will he state what legislation covers the dissemination, in this fashion, of such false and misleading information for the sole purpose of imagined financial gain?

Answer:—

(1) The Commissioner for Corporate Affairs has had difficulty in establishing beyond reasonable doubt the identity of the organisation involved in or responsible

for the advertising of property styled Huntington Harbour land sales. A number of corporations and business names appear to have some connection with this area and sales of land either by name or other implication. If the honourable member is able to advise me of the full title of the organisation to which he refers, I will have a further search made in an endeavour to supply the information requested.

(2 & 3) I have no authority to order withdrawal of any advertisements, whether in Queensland or elsewhere. The only Queensland provision of which I am aware which covers specifically false, deceptive or misleading advertisements is section 37A of the Vagrants, Gaming, and Other Offences Act 1931-1978. This Act is, of course, administered by my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police.

Television advertising is regulated by a Commonwealth statute and the appropriate body to which to direct complaints is the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal. I have not seen the advertising in question and therefore cannot personally comment. I should stress that it is quite legitimate and in accord with accepted practice for advertisements to exaggerate somewhat the advantages of any particular produce or property.

6. FUNDING OF FIRE BRIGADES

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

As it has been some months since an inquiry was commenced into the method of funding fire brigades, and as concern is continuing to be expressed by the public, particularly home unit dwellers, at the high fire services levy—

(1) Does he see a need for the committee's work to be expedited?

(2) When does he expect, or can he state when, announcements on the committee's findings can be made?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) The committee is continuing to investigate what is a very complex matter. I anticipate that the report of the committee will be available for Government consideration before the end of 1980. As indicative of the need for careful consideration of any possible change in the method under which insurance companies generally meet three-quarters of fire brigade costs, I would mention that a report recommending a change was made to the South Australian Government late last year, but there has been no announcement whether the present system will be altered. Results are also not yet available from an inquiry which has been in progress in Victoria since before the Queensland investigation commenced.

7. CLUBHOUSE, SURFERS PARADISE SURF
LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr Bishop asked the Minister for Welfare—

(1) Have submissions been made to Cabinet regarding additional Government funds for the construction of the new clubhouse for the Surfers Paradise Surf Life Saving Club?

(2) On how many occasions have they been made and on what dates?

(3) Is there to be a further submission and when will that be?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) Details of an application by the Surfers Paradise Surf Life Saving Club for additional Government funds for the construction of its new club were submitted to Cabinet on 21 August 1979. The same matter was subsequently considered by Cabinet on 19 November 1979. The question whether any further submission will be made to Cabinet regarding this same matter is still under consideration.

8. RELOCATION OF TOWNSVILLE RAILWAY
FACILITIES

Mr Wilson asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Are the south yard railway workshop and goods yard in Townsville to be relocated at Stuart and Wulguru and, if so, when will construction on the (a) workshop and (b) goods yard commence?

(2) As space is very limited in the north yard and is causing problems, is the second stage of the north yard workshop cancelled, and will these shops be relocated to Stuart?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) I would refer the honourable member to my reply to a question asked of me on this matter on 22 November 1979. There has been no decision to depart from this proposal or to embark on such a costly project as the relocation of the goods yard.

9. PRE-SCHOOLS, TOWNSVILLE AREA

Mr Wilson asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Are pre-schools to be built at Oonoonba, Hermit Park and Mundingburra?

(2) If so, on what date will construction commence?

(3) Are Hermit Park and Mundingburra State Schools the only schools of their class in Townsville that do not have pre-schools?

Answer:—

(1) Yes, it is intended to provide pre-school facilities at Hermit Park and Mundingburra. The situation at Oonoonba is under review.

(2) It is provisionally planned to construct the Mundingburra and Hermit Park facilities during 1981.

(3) Yes, the coverage of State pre-school facilities in Townsville has progressed in keeping with State-wide coverage levels.

10. BURDEKIN FALLS DAM

Mr Wilson asked the Premier—

(1) What is the nature of work being carried out at the Burdekin Falls dam site, is it completed and how many men were paid off?

(2) What road-work is being carried out by (a) the water resources authority and (b) the Main Roads Department?

(3) As a number of these workers live in the Ravenswood area and are now unemployed with little or no prospect of further employment, will he have the construction of the access road stepped up by the letting of more contracts and have more work done by the Main Roads Department to ensure that the access road to the dam site is completed to allow for an early start on the construction of the dam and give work to the unemployed workers in the Ravenswood area?

(4) When will construction of the dam commence?

(5) Will it be built to its full capacity of 8.6 megalitres?

(6) Will a hydroelectric power station be built in conjunction with the dam?

Answer:—

(1) The major work being undertaken at the Burdekin Falls Dam site has comprised geological investigations associated with the future power-station site and for the foundations of the main dam itself. The investigations undertaken have involved diamond-drilling, trenching, seismic traverses, materials sampling and surveys.

Investigation work associated with the future power-station site has been completed and is nearing completion for the main dam. Following completion of various sections of the work, four men have been paid off.

(2) (a) The Queensland Water Resources Commission has let contracts for construction of two 10 km sections of the access road between Ravenswood and the dam site. Construction of both sections is under way.

(b) The Main Roads Department has arranged for Dalrymple Shire Council to construct some 4 km of the road between Ravenswood and Mingela. This work is well advanced. The council will also undertake the widening of two bridges on this road.

(3) Because of funding limitations, it is not possible to let further contracts for road construction between Mingela and the dam site at this stage.

(4) The current objective is for the design of the dam to be completed in the second half of 1982 with a view to a contract for its construction being able to be let in early 1983. Whether such a starting date is feasible will depend upon the outcome of discussions with the Commonwealth on funding.

(5) No.

(6) No.

11. COAL STOCKPILING AREA, HAMILTON

Mr Lane asked the Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism—

(1) Has he seen a statement in "The Courier-Mail" of 26 August stating that the Port of Brisbane Authority has offered to lease a coal stockpiling area on McArthur Avenue, Hamilton, to two subsidiaries of Patrick Operations Pty Ltd and Brisbane Wharves and Wool Dumping Pty Ltd?

(2) As the development plan of the new Port at Fisherman Islands specifically sets aside an area for bulk materials including coal, (a) why is that area not being used for the West Moreton coal and the McArthur Avenue site being considered, (b) on whose initiative has the land at McArthur Avenue been suggested and, (c) what environmental impact studies have been undertaken on that area and what was the result?

(3) If the Brisbane City Council grants permission for the project to go ahead, what guarantee can be given that the nearby residential areas of Hamilton will not be affected by coal-dust from the stockpile or from vehicles carrying the coal to the site?

Answer:—

(1) Yes.

(2) The possibility of providing for bulk exports through Fisherman Islands is currently under consideration, but it is anticipated that this and other matters included in the study being carried out will take some time to determine and, if a decision is made to proceed with the development of a separate bulk terminal at Fisherman Islands, approximately three years would be required to complete the

development. In the meantime, stevedoring companies have shown keen interest in handling coal exports in conjunction with their existing operations. Such companies appreciate that facilities which they provide will be capable of handling the coal trade only while such remains at a relatively low level and that they may lose this component of their throughput if alternative facilities are later provided at Fisherman Islands.

Environmental impact studies were carried out in detail for the proposed location of stockpiles on Fisherman Islands and concluded that the proposed facility would not pose any threat to personnel working in the area, and that dust concentration and deposition will be confined to the immediate vicinity of the loading plant and stockpile area, as long as specific safeguards, such as enclosed conveyors and moisture control in stockpiles, are adhered to. Similar criteria will apply to stockpiling of land adjacent to Hamilton Reach. Any company wishing to establish a coal-loading operation will be required to meet these environmental standards.

(3) See (2).

12. COMPENSATION FOR INDUSTRIAL DISEASES

Mr Lane asked the Minister for Labour Relations—

(1) Has he read a claim in the Press of 26 August by the member for Lytton that the State Government is showing a callous indifference to the health risks faced by meatworkers and that pinpricking regulations hinder primary industry industrial disease sufferers from obtaining compensation?

(2) Does he give any credence to the member's allegations?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) The only legacy the honourable member for Lytton can bequeath to the Parliamentary record is one of inaccuracy and scaremongering. His latest outburst is a classic example.

On April 23 I made a ministerial statement to the House refuting, in the strongest terms possible, claims by the honourable member for Rockhampton North and the Assistant Federal Secretary of the Meat Industry Employees Union in relation to the Government's attitude to and compensation for zoonosis sufferers. I rejected as fallacious any allegation which flew in the face of the Government's proven performance in the field of industrial health and welfare. I pointed out—and I repeat—that sufferers from industrial diseases in primary industries are fully covered under the Workers' Compensation Act.

If blood tests prove that claimants are suffering from zoonosis diseases, the definition of "injury" in terms of the Workers'

Compensation Act is broad enough to admit any claims and to pay benefits. It follows that AMIEU members and all primary industry workers are entitled to compensation for infections attributable to their occupations. This is the "callous indifference" to which the honourable member for Lytton refers.

Since I made my statement in April, the Workers' Compensation Board has taken further steps to ensure that there is immediate blood testing of suspected sufferers. This has the automatic result of proving as quickly as possible that a worker has, in fact, contracted the disease. This naturally results in workers' compensation payments being made as expeditiously as possible if the diagnosis is confirmed.

I believe that, far from showing callous indifference, the Workers' Compensation Board and the State Government are doing everything possible to improve the reporting of primary industry diseases and to ensure expeditious payment of compensation claims.

I believe too, that the honourable member for Lytton causes unnecessary public alarm by implying that health risks faced by meatworkers are widespread.

I mentioned in my ministerial statement that in 1977-78 177 claims were paid to Q fever or brucellosis sufferers. The Workers' Compensation Board processes on average 79 000 claims a year. Obviously the percentage of claims based on primary industry disease illnesses is miniscule, even though the disease is distressing for those who contract it.

I deplore the honourable member's sensationalising of the true position and I give the assurance once again that the Government's activities in the field of industrial health will continue to expand and that meatworkers and primary industry workers generally will always have complete cover under the Workers' Compensation Act if proof of their illness is clear.

This is not the first time the honourable member has cast a slur upon the integrity of officers of the Workers' Compensation Board who conscientiously apply themselves to providing redress to those who incur illness or accident at the work-place.

13. SITE FOR HIGH SCHOOL, SAMFORD VALLEY

Mr Akers asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

With reference to the Pine Rivers West Policy Plan recently prepared by consultants to the Pine Rivers Shire Council, which shows a specific site for a proposed secondary school—

(1) Has that site or any other been chosen by the Government for acquisition in the Samford Valley?

(2) If not, in view of the rapid planned development that is about to begin in the valley, will he take action to have a suitable site acquired?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) Both my Department of Works and the Department of Education are aware of the proposed plan of development of this area, and the acquisition of a high school site in the vicinity of the Samford State School has been under investigation for some time. Final determination on this action would be subject to the availability of funds for this purpose.

14. BUS SERVICES, ALBANY CREEK AREA

Mr Akers asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Is there a Brisbane City Council bus service that terminates in the vicinity of the Albany Creek Road and Graham Road intersection?

(2) How much is paid by way of State Government subsidies to the Brisbane City Council for (a) bus services generally and (b) this service in particular?

(3) Will he have investigations made into extending this or another service into the Albany Creek area of the Pine Rivers Shire, for example along Keong, Old Northern and Albany Creek Road with a view to providing a frequent regular public transport service to the more than 5 000 residents of this suburb?

Answer:—

(1) No, but there is a Brisbane City Council bus service which terminates at the corner of Graham Road and Hawbridge Street, Aspley.

(2) I am advised that under the scheme of assistance to local authority transport undertakings, an amount of \$6,412,627 was paid by the Treasury Department to the Brisbane City Council for 1979-80 as subsidy on gross fare revenue from its total bus operations. There are no individual amounts paid in respect of particular services.

(3) Investigations into the passenger transport requirements for the Albany Creek-Murrumba area are presently being carried out by the Metropolitan Transit Authority.

15. CONSTRUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS UNDER PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Mr Akers asked the Premier—

(1) Has his Government made a decision to procure all building and civil works through the engagement of project managers and to cease the direct commissioning of architects and other consultants?

(2) If so, in reaching such a decision did his Government consult with any professional bodies and, if so, what are the names of those bodies?

(3) How many works under the following classifications, have been procured in the last three financial years under the project management system, what were those projects and what were (i) the original contract prices and (ii) the final contract prices for (a) hospital buildings, (b) office buildings, (c) education buildings, (d) other buildings and (e) civil works?

(4) Has an assessment been made of these projects comparing them with projects constructed under the safer, conventional method of public tendering and, if so, what was the result of that assessment.

Answer:—

(1 & 2) No. In fact, the Department of Works expended \$4.5m last year in the direct commissioning of architects and other consultants.

(3 & 4) The only two project management jobs within the last three financial years are the Mater Hospital and the Mt Gravatt Hospital. Neither of these projects has reached final completion, and consequently no comparison of original and final prices can be given at this stage.

16. MR M. HODGINS

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

With reference to the keeping of dogs by Mr Michael Hodgins of "Bull Arab Kennels" in the Moreton Shire and his refusal to comply with the shire's by-laws and a judgment of the Supreme Court of Queensland—

(1) What action has been taken to have Mr Hodgins comply with the council's by-laws and the Supreme Court decision?

(2) Why has not the council taken the necessary action to have the dogs removed from the yard?

(3) When will the necessary action be taken?

(4) Is he aware of the vast amount of circumstantial evidence which indicates that Mr Hodgins and/or his agent is dumping large numbers of dead dogs, pigs and cattle, bread wrappers, dogs' bedding, excreta and other rubbish by the roadside near his house?

(5) Is he aware that Mr Hodgins purchases large quantities of stale bread and on occasions dead cattle to feed the dogs?

(6) What action has the council taken or does it plan to take to bring Mr Hodgins to justice for dumping this filthy mess?

(7) Is he aware of the unhealthy situation which exists at the Hodgins house, where two young children live with the dogs roaming through the house as well as the yards and the filth therein?

(8) What action has the council taken to protect the health of children and the neighbouring residents?

Answer:—

(1 to 8) The questions raised by the honourable member basically relate to matters that are under the control of the Moreton Shire Council and I have no information in relation thereto. I will, however, take up with the Moreton Shire Council the various matters raised and write to the honourable member informing him of the outcome.

17. GLUE-SNIFFING

Mr Underwood asked the Minister for Welfare—

With reference to the disturbing growth of glue-sniffing in the community and, in particular, the very small but growing number of young children and teenagers in Ipswich who are involved—

(1) What action has been taken in an attempt to stamp out this disastrous practice?

(2) What new initiatives are contemplated?

(3) How successful have these measures been or how successful are they expected to be?

(4) Have other departments been asked to assist and, if so, which departments and in what ways?

(5) Are parents or guardians of habitual or casual glue-sniffing children at fault under the law?

(6) If so, to what degree and what are the penalties?

(7) Have any charges involving glue-sniffing ever been laid and, if so, what were the results?

Answer:—

As my colleague the Minister for Health advised this House yesterday, the problem of glue-sniffing among teenagers is not going to be solved by sensational publicity and scare tactics. It is regretted that recent media publicity has not only drawn attention to this problem, but has demonstrated how glue-sniffing is carried out. In relation to the various sections of the honourable member's question, I wish to advise as follows:

(1) Teenagers involved in glue-sniffing brought to the attention of departmental officers have been counselled in an effort

to modify their behaviour. Their parents are also counselled with a view to assisting their children in overcoming the habit.

(2) Officers of various Government departments are constantly reviewing published material on experiences interstate and overseas with a view to coming to grips with this problem.

(3) No specific measures have yet been introduced although discussions have been held with glue manufacturers in an effort to have their product modified.

(4) Discussions do take place between various departments concerning this problem and, as outlined by my colleague yesterday, the Health Department's Alcohol and Drug Dependence Service is aware of the problem and is directing its efforts towards counselling the youngsters involved.

(5) No. However, the parental problem of lack of control could be evident.

(6) The only penalties involved would be those connected with any illegal act committed by a person whilst under the affect of glue-sniffing.

(7) This is a question which should be directed to my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General.

I am sure the honourable member is aware of the Government's concern for the children who are involved in this most dangerous practice and I can assure the House that officers of Government departments are doing everything in their power to eliminate such self-destructive behaviour.

Mr Underwood: I redirect the relevant part of the question to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General.

18. CONSTRUCTION OF URANIUM ENRICHMENT PLANT

Mr Underwood asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to an article in "The Courier-Mail" of August 1980 headed "Japan Puts in Power Bid", which says that Japan has submitted plans for the construction of a joint uranium enrichment plant in Australia—

(1) Has Queensland been involved in any discussions to date?

(2) If not, does Queensland expect to be involved, at what time and with whom?

(3) If the answer to (1) is yes, at what level have discussions or negotiations taken place and with whom and at what stage are the negotiations?

(4) What undertakings or decisions have been made and, if none, when are they expected to be made?

(5) What are the proposed sites in Queensland for the enrichment plant?

(6) When will the negotiations be concluded?

(7) When will the plans be released?

(8) What other countries are negotiating to establish uranium enrichment plants and at what locations in this State?

Answer:—

(1) The Queensland Government has been involved in discussions with several countries regarding the possibility of establishing a uranium enrichment plant within the State.

(2) See (1).

(3) These discussions, all of which have been of a preliminary nature, have involved senior officials of relevant organisations.

(4) No undertakings have been given and no date has been set for the giving of any undertakings.

(5) Queensland has a number of potential sites, but no preferred site has been selected.

(6) See (4).

(7) If and when they eventuate.

(8) See (1) and (5).

19. PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

Mr Moore asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the Federal Government's latest move on pharmacies, and the outcome of the Ralph report on the pharmaceutical industry, which is alleged to have gone beyond its terms of reference?

(2) Will he assure the House that, in considering the question of ownership of pharmacies, he will ensure that a good working relationship is established between the Government and pharmacy organisations, by consultation with his pharmacy advisory committee?

(3) Will he further inform the House whether it is this Government's plan to protect small business, as the Federal Government's decision could lead, in many instances, to the smaller pharmacies being forced out of business?

Answer:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) The Pharmacy Act 1976-1978 provides for the ownership of pharmacy practices to the extent that a pharmacist shall not own or have a pecuniary interest in

more than four pharmacies. The Act further provides that if a pharmacist has more than four pharmacies at the time of the commencement of the Act, he is permitted to retain ownership of the said pharmacies provided there is no change in ownership, change in name or change in location.

I assure the honourable member that every effort will be made by the Queensland Government to ensure that the rights of small businessmen in this area are protected.

20. BURDEKIN IRRIGATION SCHEME

Dr Lockwood asked the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Water Resources—

Will the Government pursue its plan, as declared in the Wivenhoe project, of making the consumer pay for his water, if the long-mooted Burdekin scheme is implemented, especially if it means farmers paying between \$25,000 and \$30,000 per farm per annum toward interest and redemption on top of the cost of supplying water used in irrigation?

Answer:—

The total level of subsidy approved for the Wivenhoe Dam is 27.5 per cent of the capital cost. Rural water supply and irrigation schemes such as the Burdekin River project generate considerable increases in production and because of this a different approach to debt repayment is usually adopted. Despite this comment, the charges proposed in the report presented to this House earlier this year are sufficient to meet debt-servicing costs on about 20 per cent of the capital cost of the scheme. The sale of some of the farms developed by the scheme could further increase the level of recoveries.

The Queensland Water Resources Commission is currently investigating ways and means whereby the level of recoveries from the project might be further increased.

21. IMMUNISATION AGAINST RUBELLA

Dr Lockwood asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to concern expressed by both the community and the medical profession that natural immunity to rubella among children is now very low because the last major epidemic here was 15 years ago, will he and his department consider offering mass rubella immunisation to all children to prevent a major rubella epidemic and thereby prevent hundreds of babies being born with congenital blindness, deafness, mental or heart defects?

Answer:—

The immunisation schedule recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council is for girls aged

between 10 and 14 years. Rubella vaccine is made available through the State Department of Health to local authorities and to private practitioners. Local authorities conduct campaigns through their medical officers of health and some councils, such as the Brisbane City Council, visit schools to give the injections, while others arrange them at shire offices or doctors' surgeries.

Since August 1979, rubella immunisation has been made available at maternity hospitals to post partum women who have not been previously vaccinated.

In respect of mass vaccination, I will refer this proposal to the National Health and Medical Research Council for its consideration as implementation would need to be uniform and on a national level.

22. HORVATH HYDROGEN CAR

Dr Lockwood asked the Premier—

(1) Did his Government experts report to him before 30 June on the examination of the Horvath hydrogen car carried out on 10 April?

(2) Did their exhaust analysis report show that although there were no dangerous chemical emissions, the complete lack of (a) ionizing radiation (b) neutrons and (c) any increase in 3H tritium beyond levels found in ordinary air, proved beyond serious scientific doubt that the engine absolutely did not work as claimed by Horvath i.e. by thermonuclear conversion of 2H deuterium into helium?

(3) When he was in possession of absolute proof that Horvath was grossly misrepresenting the truth concerning his engine, on what grounds did he continue to use his position and influence as Premier to back the Horvath car?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) I thank the honourable member for asking the question because it enables me to say that despite the efforts by the honourable member to imply by his question that the Horvath hydrogen car will not come to fruition, I am convinced that this project is one of the most exciting prospects as a source of alternative energy for the near future.

I am completely satisfied that Mr Horvath has not misrepresented the truth in respect of any claims he has made in relation to this engine.

I have taken, and will continue to take, a personal interest in the progress of the work undertaken by Mr Horvath because of my conviction that it will provide the solution to our energy problems. I have lent my support without any personal financial involvement and without any commitment financial or otherwise of the Government, merely seeking to gain a new and exciting industry for Queensland.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr CASEY: The Treasurer has disappeared again. He seems to disappear quite regularly at question-time. He did it yesterday, too.

Mr Sullivan: Stop trying to be so smart.

Mr CASEY: It is a pity he is not in the House at question-time, when he is supposed to be. He disappears with monotonous regularity.

An Opposition Member: He's at the trots.

Mr CASEY: Yes, we all know he is in a bind over the trots. I will put the question on notice.

Mr CASEY having given notice of a question—

Dr EDWARDS: I rise to a point of order. I believe the Leader of the Opposition made some comments regarding my absence from the House. I am quite happy to receive a question without notice. The reason I was absent was that I was discussing a matter of great importance to the State regarding the trotting industry with the chairman of the Trotting Board. That was why I was called from the Chamber.

Mr CASEY: I said you had trouble with the trots.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Does the Leader of the Opposition wish to ask a question without notice?

Mr CASEY: Yes, I have a question without notice.

Mr W. D. HEWITT: I rise to a point of order. The honourable gentleman was apparently going to direct a question without notice to the Treasurer. The Treasurer was temporarily absent. Do you, sir, have a discretion to now allow the Leader of the Opposition to direct that question to the Treasurer without notice?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The question that arose in my mind was that the Treasurer was not here to hear the commencement of the question, and I thought that it may not be fair to ask him to respond without having heard its total content. It is up to the Treasurer whether he wishes to answer the question.

Mr CASEY: In any case, I shuffled the pack. That one was to be on notice, anyway. I now have a question without notice.

STATE BUDGET ALLOCATIONS FOR EXTENSIONS TO BRISBANE RAIL NETWORK

Mr CASEY: In asking a question of the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, I refer to a Press report in "The Courier-Mail" of 7

August 1980 in which the Premier preempted the Treasurer's Budget by announcing that the State Budget would include \$2m for extensions to Brisbane's suburban rail network to Cleveland and Redcliffe.

I ask the Deputy Premier if he could inform the House the apportionment of this \$2m allocation as between the Redcliffe line and the Cleveland line, especially as costings indicate that a minimum of \$3m would be needed to extend the Brisbane suburban network south to Thorneside only and that this outlay would be principally taken up in the construction of a bridge over Tingalpa Creek.

Finally, I ask the Deputy Premier whether he was reported correctly in "The Courier-Mail" in that this decision by the Premier for an allocation of \$2m was "news to him".

Dr EDWARDS: It is clear that the question relates to Budget discussions within the Cabinet room. The Leader of the Opposition has never been in government and never will be. It is just as well for the people of Queensland that he will never achieve that position and, of course, he will not be the Leader of the Opposition after the next election.

Mr Underwood interjected.

Dr EDWARDS: The mumbling member for Ipswich West will not be here, either.

Mr Casey: Neither will the member for Ipswich.

Dr EDWARDS: They have been saying that for eight years, and I am still here. I will be here after the next election.

Getting back to the question—the Premier indicated that this matter was under discussion by the Government. As is usual with the Government, these matters are discussed at departmental and ministerial level. I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that he awaits with great expectation to see whether this matter is in the Budget tomorrow.

OIL PARITY PRICING POLICY

Mr CASEY: I ask a further question of the Deputy Premier and Treasurer. In view of his strong support in the Parliament for the petrol parity pricing policy of his Federal Liberal and National Party colleagues which, according to latest estimates, will drain about \$3,157m out of the Australian motoring community in 1980-81 (that will be 10 per cent of all Federal revenues), I ask: Of this estimate of \$3,157m, is it a fact that at least \$500m will come from Queensland, causing, in a decentralised State, a wave of new price rises covering almost every commodity and service? Is it also a fact that of this \$500m-plus that will be lost to Queensland under the petrol policy, which the Deputy Premier and Treasurer

so strongly endorses on behalf of the State Liberal Party, not a single cent will be returned to Queensland for road construction or maintenance? Finally, what submissions has this State Government really made to Canberra since the 1977 elections for the return of a fair share of this massive petrol tax revenue? Will he, as Treasurer, table all such State submissions before this Parliament adjourns tomorrow so that they can be considered in the course of the Budget debate?

Dr EDWARDS: The Leader of the Opposition does not even understand what his own party's policy at the Federal level is. In fact, on a number of occasions Mr Keating has indicated he believes that there is merit in the world oil parity pricing policy but that there should be a freeze in certain areas—new oil and so forth. To suggest that the policy is completely outdated and not supported by his party is typical of the inaccuracies that the Leader of the Opposition continually states in this Parliament.

Regarding our own party's policy—we have stated that we believe this policy is the correct one at this time, but we are totally critical of the Federal Government for the way in which it has handled the money that has come to it from this oil parity pricing policy. We have made continual representations at Premier level, Treasurer level and ministerial level about the allocation of these funds back to the States. We will continue to make representations. In fact, about two weeks ago the Premier and I went to Canberra to discuss at first hand with Ministers there some of the problems associated with our roads and the distribution of these funds. We, as a Government, pledge ourselves to continually fight to make certain that as much as possible of the funds associated with this world oil parity pricing policy will be returned to the States. At conferences and in various publications my colleague the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police has been very critical of this policy. He has indicated the need for this money to be returned to the States. We pledge ourselves to making continual representations. I have no intention of tabling the documents in this House.

FEDERAL INTERVENTION IN STATE AFFAIRS

Mr T. A. WHITE: In directing a question to the Minister for Aboriginal and Island Affairs I refer to the Federal Government's recent intervention in the Western Australian Noonkanbah affair. Would the Minister inform the House of any implications he sees in this issue regarding State sovereignty?

Mr PORTER: Yes, the Queensland Government believes that it does, and we would view that with the same hostility that Sir Charles Court very properly expressed as Premier of Western Australia. Our positions

are slightly different, of course. The Queensland procedures for protecting Aboriginal ceremonial sites are extensive and longstanding—so much so that I do not know of any such site that is not presently fully and statutorily protected. Any proposal to set up a clearing-house, as it were, in Canberra to process site claims in Queensland just isn't on.

It is not needed—we already have by far the best machinery to this end in Australia—and I am certain that under no circumstances would this Government contemplate handing over to Canberra any area of decision that would have massive significance for all future land, mining and development determinations.

So Queensland stands with Sir Charles Court in this matter. We are not prepared to have academic theorists undo the good work of half a century and yield essential authority for this State's continued development, into the bargain.

INTERCAPITAL FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED;
FEDERATED HOUSING FUND OF AUSTRALIA
LIMITED

Mr MACKENROTH: In asking a question of the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, I refer to letters he has sent to members of Intercapital Finance Corporation Limited and Federated Housing Fund of Australia Limited in which he refers to an offer that has been made by the companies to shareholders. Could he inform me if he is aware that this offer is for 40 per cent of the paid-up value of shares and the payment will not be made for six months? Does he consider this to be a fair and reasonable offer?

Mr LICKISS: I have sighted a copy of the notice that has been sent to shareholders. The honourable member is well aware of its contents because he has made mention of them. I make no further comment at this stage.

INTERCAPITAL FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED;
FEDERATED HOUSING FUND OF AUSTRALIA
LIMITED

Mr MACKENROTH: I ask the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General if he will table the report which an investigating officer from the Corporate Affairs Office made to him following a meeting of shareholders of Intercapital Finance Corporation Limited and Federated Housing Fund of Australia Limited at the Greek Community Centre on 19 July 1980? Is he aware that promises made at that meeting by directors of those funds to shareholders have not been kept?

Mr LICKISS: Reports made to the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs are confidential and I have no intention of tabling that report.

ELECTORAL VISITOR FORMS

Mr MACKENROTH: I direct a further question to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General: What action does he intend taking in relation to the unfair advantage gained by the member for Merthyr in this year's State election by having received electoral visitor forms from the Merthyr returning officer? Can he inform me if those forms will be confiscated and withdrawn? Further, can he inform me if any other Liberal Party candidate has received forms?

Mr LANE: I rise to a point of order. I find the remarks embodied in the question of the honourable member offensive and untrue. I ask him to withdraw them.

Mr CASEY: I rise to a point of order on that. Standing Orders clearly state that questions cannot be debated. A question has been asked of the Minister. It is up to the Minister to give a reply. The Minister knows from inquiries that we have made in his department that such events have occurred in Merthyr.

Mr LANE: I rise to a further point of order. With respect, offensive language may not be used in questions or any other utterances in this place. The fact that they are questions does not make them any less offensive or untrue. The allegations are untrue and I ask that they be withdrawn. If the member is to act as an honourable member, he shall do so forthwith.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The statement has been made by the member for Merthyr that the comment is untrue. Therefore, I ask the member for Chatsworth to withdraw his remark. The statement has been denied and claimed to be untrue by the member for Merthyr.

Mr MACKENROTH: If I withdraw that question, do I have the opportunity to ask a further question?

Mr SPEAKER: If the question is framed in a manner acceptable to the Parliament and the procedures normally adopted in it, I will allow the question; otherwise I will not do so.

Mr MACKENROTH: Then I will withdraw that question and ask the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General: Does he intend taking any action in relation to political candidates in this year's State election gaining an unfair advantage by receiving electoral visitor forms from their returning officers? Can he inform me if any Liberal Party candidates have received those forms?

Mr LICKISS: It is interesting to have that question from the honourable member. The matter of advantage or disadvantage is, of course, debatable. The forms to which he is referring relate to an application for an electoral visitor vote or a sectional vote.

It is well known that those forms would be inoperative and of no advantage until such time as writs for an election are issued. Anyone signing one of those forms prior to that date would be committing an offence. The matter of the issue of electoral visitor or other electoral application forms is one that has been considered. For the information of the House generally, electoral visitor application forms and sectional vote application forms will be available from returning officers on request for those people requiring to make application, without any discrimination, from Monday next.

ABOLITION OF QUEENSLAND FISH BOARD

Mr INNES: There has been public speculation over a letter that went from the Premier's office to the President of the Queensland Commercial Fishermen's Organisation in July of this year. It has been interpreted by many in the industry as indicating that the Premier considers that the Queensland Fish Board should be abolished. That interpretation has been widely circulated and has caused great and damaging loss of confidence among board employees and within the industry. I therefore ask the Premier: Will he clarify his personal attitude to the board, and will he also clarify the commitment of the Government to any recommendations made by the committee of inquiry?

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: It certainly is not true that I suggested dissolving the Fish Board. I have actually been one of those who support very strongly the value and importance of the Fish Board to the fishing industry. The Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism (Mr Max Hooper) and I have had discussions seeking to do the best we can for the people concerned and for the industry. I assure the House that decisions that we have taken recently, which will be released shortly, will indicate just that. We are supporting the fishermen; we are supporting the Fish Board. I hope—in fact, I am sure—that the Fish Board will be a profitable organisation for Queensland, and particularly for people in the fishing industry.

STABILISATION OF SOUTHPORT BAR

Mr P. N. D. WHITE: Recent statements appearing in the Press have indicated to many people that Cabinet has decided to fully fund the stabilisation of the Southport bar. I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, in view of his recent meeting with the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, to clarify this point. In short, I ask: Has any decision yet been reached to fund the stabilisation of the bar?

Dr EDWARDS: It is true that, on behalf, of the Government, the Minister for Main Roads, Local Government and Police and I met the Gold Coast Waterways Authority

and had discussions about the way in which the operation of the authority would continue in relation to the stabilisation of the Southport bar and the development of the wave-break island. As a result of that meeting, it was indicated to the Gold Coast Waterways Authority that the Government considered the authority to be the body responsible for planning, subject to Cabinet approval, of any activities in the areas defined by the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act. In addition, we indicated to the authority that the Government did not favour any development of the wave-break island. The Government asked the authority to go ahead with consideration of the planning and the siting of the training walls for the stabilisation of the bar. The Gold Coast Waterways Authority indicated to us that it wished to place before the public some of the other proposals that had been put before it and which it had developed, understanding that the Government did not favour any development on the wave-break island.

The question of funding was also discussed. However, because no real information on the cost of the total project is available, no commitment can yet be made as to the source of funding. It was agreed that the funding would be a matter for further discussion and negotiation in future, and that the Government and the Gold Coast Waterways Authority together would consider proposals for funding the project. No details have yet been arranged. There are subsidy schemes; there are arrangements under which loans and so forth can be raised to enable the authority to undertake the project. No doubt those discussions will take place as soon as plans have been finalised.

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

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

ATTITUDE OF ALP TO PARLIAMENT

Mr SCASSOLA (Mt Gravatt) (12 noon): In recent days the Opposition has attempted, through its leader, to give the impression that it is the champion of the cause of parliamentary reform in this State. It is clear that reform in this Parliament is necessary. It is necessary to enable the Parliament to discharge its responsibilities to the people of this State as an elected Parliament. Reforms to make Parliament more responsible and accountable to the public are essential if Parliament is to do its job properly. Without them, Parliament is without its essential tools of trade; it is like a carpenter who has been engaged to build a house without a hammer and a saw.

The motives of the Opposition are not what they appear to be. The Labor Party's antics over the last week or so do not arise from a commitment to Parliament. On the contrary, an examination of the Labor Party's conduct in this place over the term of this

Parliament shows that it has not the slightest regard or concern for this great institution of Parliament. The Opposition is being blatantly hypocritical, because its conduct over the life of this Parliament does not measure up to its new-found concern. The Labor Party has amply demonstrated that it has not the slightest respect for the institution of Parliament, for its privileges, for the people its members are elected to this place to represent or, indeed, for the officers of this Parliament. In fact, the Labor Party's attitude to Parliament is not just one of disrespect; it is one of utter contempt.

Members of the Opposition, by their gross and calculated abuse of parliamentary privilege, by their continual assault on its Rules and Standing Orders, by their refusal to abide by the rulings of Mr Speaker and by their lack of regard for those whose reputation may be affected by slanderous and inaccurate statements, have consciously sought to bring dishonour upon, and to lower, the public reputation and standing of this Chamber. In that respect they have done far more than any self-confessed enemy of Parliament could possibly have done in the same period of time. They have in fact by their conduct disintituled themselves to be called "honourable members".

In examining the facts, I shall merely refer to a few of a very great number of examples to illustrate the point that I wish to make. In what must surely be the most shameful episode of this Parliament, on 20 November 1979 the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Cairns made allegations in this Chamber to the effect that a number of people, including certain members in this House, had been involved in drug-trafficking. Those allegations were, as you know, Mr Speaker, the subject of searching investigation by the Williams royal commission, which found them to be totally false and baseless.

In its report in respect of the allegation against the Minister for Justice, the royal commission said—

"The commission does not want to rest its finding on an absence of evidence against Mr Lickiss. The commission is clearly persuaded that Mr Lickiss has been the unfortunate subject of quite false and malicious rumours which have been made public by a series of events for which a number of persons are responsible and of which they should be, to varying degrees, ashamed."

With respect to the honourable gentlemen to whom I referred, the commission had this to say—

"The commission can only conclude that it was irresponsible of Messrs Casey and Jones to name the four politicians on the material available to them."

On 6 December 1978 in the course of the introductory debate on the Aborigines and

Islanders Acts Amendment Act the honourable member for Wolston informed the House that he had a letter—

“ . . . sent to me by a resident or submitted to me by a resident from the Cherbourg council.”

The honourable member proceeded to read extracts from that document. When asked to table it, he refused. He was subsequently compelled to table the document by resolution of the House, whereupon it was found that the member had deliberately misled the House. The document was not a letter but some anonymous person's composition. That conduct cannot by any stretch of the imagination be regarded as proper from one who has any regard for the institution of Parliament.

Those are but two examples of the Opposition's scant regard for truth and the principles on which this Parliament rests. The Opposition's guiding principle is not a regard for this Parliament but that a good story should never be embellished by a few facts. In April last year Mr Speaker referred to the Committee of Privileges certain statements made by the honourable member for Archerfield in a speech made on 23 April 1980 in which he referred to a defendant in certain proceedings and a Minister of the Crown. The Committee of Privileges considered the complaint and, in the words of the Committee—

“ . . . arrived at a clear conclusion that the matter referred to the Committee by the Speaker of the House regarding a speech made in the course of debate on matters of public interest on Wednesday, 23 April, 1980 by the Honourable Member for Archerfield, is in breach of the sub-judice convention.”

The committee went on to say—

“Concern has been expressed by this Committee regarding an increasing tendency by Members to abuse the Privileges of Parliament. The Committee points out to Members in the strongest possible terms that the stature and credibility of the Parliament will be severely damaged if Members do not have an honest and reasonable belief in the truth of the matters they raise in the House where such statements could damage a business reputation or good name of any person.”

That conduct can hardly be described as proper for those who profess to have a regard for the institution of Parliament. There have been innumerable examples in the past two and a half years of the deliberate and scandalous misuse and abuse of the Standing Orders of this Parliament, the latest being the Opposition Leader's scandalous attack yesterday on the Deputy Premier under the guise of making a personal explanation. Is that conduct proper from a person who now professes to have a deep concern for this Parliament? On this side of

the House time after time members have had to suffer refusals on the part of the Opposition to accept rulings from the Chair.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr SCASSOLA: Only last week the honourable member for Lytton, who I understand is again to be installed as temporary Leader of the Opposition, preferred to leave the Chamber rather than abide by Mr Speaker's ruling. Worse still, we have had to witness almost daily, as we are witnessing to some extent now, arguments against rulings from the Chair, with the Leader of the Opposition seeking to talk down to the Chair. Not only does such conduct bring discredit on the Leader of the Opposition and every member of the Opposition; it also wastes the time of this House. Contrary to the basic principle that every member is entitled to be heard, we have had to endure persistent interjections and rabble-rousing calculated to prevent speakers from being heard. Is that the sort of conduct proper from those who now claim to have a deep concern for this Parliament? Labor Party members conduct themselves as they would at an ALP meeting, at which rules for proper and responsible conduct are totally disregarded. They have come from a political background in which rules are changed at will to suit particular individuals for particular purposes. In the light of that background, the professed concern by the Labor Party is insincere and indeed hypocritical.

ALLEGATIONS BY MEMBER FOR ARCHERFIELD
AGAINST DARLING DOWNS INSTITUTE OF
ADVANCED EDUCATION

Mr WARNER (Toowoomba South) (12.10 p.m.): Last week this House was used by the member for Archerfield to cast aspersions on people and an organisation in an improper manner. He, once again, under the guise of protecting the little man of this State, of exposing white-collar crime and all the other hollow phrases that he constantly uses in his speeches, made accusations that were misleading and untrue; and he again abused the privilege of this Parliament.

Nobody is more aware than I am of the right of every member of this House to bring to the attention of this Assembly what he believes is in the interests of the public, and that is how it should remain. Unfortunately, the member for Archerfield has made serious allegations against the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education in Toowoomba and its director and chairman, which must be refuted. The motive is obscure, as was most of his speech, as the auditor's report he tabled was last year's report, 1978-79, and the matters to which he referred as being suspect were dealt with in that report by the Auditor-General and they have been, I am reliably informed, satisfactorily settled. In fact, suggestions put forward by the Auditor-General's Department have now

been, or are being, implemented, which shows, of course, just how misinformed the member for Archerfield is.

He says he was leaked the information by a Treasury informant. He knows as well as I do that it came direct from those well-known academic Left-wing socialists within the DDIAE itself. The member for Archerfield in his speech referred to a matter of cross-membership and implied that conflict existed between two organisations. There certainly was, and is, a cross-membership between the council of the institute and the Darling Downs Association for Advanced Education. If the member for Archerfield had been informed correctly, he would have known that the Darling Downs association is a support body and has raised approximately \$800,000, most of which has been allocated to the building of McGregor College. This same association, which the member considers suspect, also runs the now famous summer school which will attract 500 students this year. To attempt to downgrade such a successful voluntary organisation that has done so much for the little people, as the member for Archerfield describes them, is tragic and unworthy of any elected member. He should apologise to that organisation, which deserves all the support it can get.

The member for Archerfield referred to a smell attached to circumstances surrounding the purchase of, and payment for, demountables at the DDIAE. The only smell that surrounds those negotiations is the one which he is trying to create. For the benefit of this House, let me say that there are no circumstances not known to the auditors. The Association of Art Unions is well known and is paying for buildings on State land for State purposes from a loan from the Commonwealth Bank. The demountable buildings were provided by the association and were rented by the institute. The rent was used by the association to repay its loan from the Commonwealth Bank. The institute has had the use of the space for approximately the same rent as it would have had to pay for other buildings elsewhere. There is no mystery about the \$68,000 to which the member for Archerfield referred. This amount is the rent for the demountables paid out of recurrent funds. The auditor is of the opinion that any funds used for purposes other than educating and the back-up for it should be regarded as capital funds, and therefore rent paid from recurrent funds has been wrongly used.

May I point out to this House that this opinion is a technical argument. It can be argued quite rightly, I believe, that if this were the case, no college could rent any space and pay for it unless it was granted special funds to do so.

Mr K. J. Hooper: Who wrote that speech for you—Lindsay Barker?

Mr WARNER: I wrote it myself. Once again, the difference of opinion is, as I have said, technical, and certainly not one that can be described as a job for the Police Fraud Squad.

The member for Archerfield said he did not make the statement lightly and that it was an instance of white-collar crime. Although his motives are suspect, as they always are, he has said nothing other than what could be described as trying to smear the association without proper information.

It seems extraordinary that in this House I should have to defend the name of Mr Buntly Griffiths, who is one of Toowoomba's best known and respected citizens. It is well known that Mr Griffiths is the Managing Director of Toowoomba Insurance, the company that insures some of the buildings of the DDIAE. As a point of interest and enlightenment to the member for Archerfield, who has now appeared in the House, over the last seven years that insurance company has received in premium payments \$62,550 and has paid out \$384,996.

Mr Griffiths was one of the founders of the DDIAE and has given enormous voluntary support not only to the Darling Downs Association but also as chairman of the DDIAE for many years. He is the director of many companies and for the member for Archerfield to cast such serious allegations against such a man certainly shows to what lengths he will go to discredit anyone under the privilege of Parliament. To my knowledge, and I know Mr Griffiths very well, he is not a member of any political party, nor is he bound to any philosophy other than the one which opposes the philosophy that the honourable member for Archerfield espouses in this House.

I think it is immaterial to comment on Mr Griffiths' association with the League of Rights or, for that matter, Mr Eric Butler. Thank goodness every member of the community still has the right to associate with whom he likes. This, of course, in no way implies that Mr Griffiths in any way knows Mr Eric Butler at all. That also applies to the so-called donation to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation, which was established to provide funds to fight the socialist forces in our community. I am sure that he would agree, as would so many others who have contributed to make up the \$2m that is now in that fund, that it must receive the highest commendation. That the member for Archerfield condemns it shows that he, like other members of the Labor Party, recognises the enormous support it has from the public. I assure the member for Archerfield that hundreds and hundreds of people have given small amounts to the fund to protect the community from the type of Government that the Labor Party would impose upon it if that party were elected.

Before concluding I mention the matter of the fire which Mr Hooper referred to as another "smell" that should be investigated.

I inform the member for Archerfield that it is well known how the fire was started and by whom. It was an accident caused by a man working back at night, and he freely admitted that.

For the benefit of the member for Archerfield I repeat that the DDIAE has nothing to hide. Any disagreement between that body and the Education Department or the Auditor-General could only be described as a difference of interpretation of the Act. As I have said, I believe these differences have been dealt with. The whole speech of the member for Archerfield involved not only the chairman and director but also all the members of the governing bodies of both associations. I can only describe his attack on these organisations as disgraceful and an abuse of parliamentary privilege and I believe that this House should demand an apology from the member.

QUEENSLAND FISH BOARD

Mr BLAKE (Bundaberg) (12.19 p.m.): I rise to speak on a matter of great public interest to Queenslanders, the Queensland fishing industry, and of vital importance to Queensland's independent fishermen. I challenge the Minister and the Bjelke-Petersen Government to declare unequivocally whether it will restructure and retain the Queensland Fish Board, or whether it will sell it out to private enterprise.

I know that in answer to a question a short time ago in this Chamber the Premier said that he would support the board and that he had always supported the restructuring of the board and hoped that that would be successful. I want to place before the House the reasons why the community at large is worried and wants an unequivocal declaration on this matter.

Don't give me or other honourable members the guff and nonsense that the Government cannot answer forthrightly because its own appointed committee has not completed its investigation into the Queensland Fish Board's operations. The facts are that the Government's own committee, appointed last March, recommended months ago that the Queensland Fish Board be retained and restructured, and that many months before the committee was appointed, P.A. Consulting Services Pty Ltd, which was engaged by the Government, had already recommended retention and restructuring of the Fish Board.

The consultants' recommendations included—

"The Queensland Fish Board must be restructured and an identifiable marketing function included in its new structure. Later the Queensland Fish Board must adopt an active buying/marketing stance instead of its present passive role."

I ask honourable members to note that neither P.A. Consulting Services nor the Governmental committee recommended the

sale of the Queensland Fish Board and its facilities to private enterprise. On the contrary, both of them recommended months ago just the opposite—the retention and restructuring of the board and a more active role by the board in the buying, processing and marketing of fish and sea-foods.

If any further recommendation is needed for retention of the Queensland Fish Board, no less an authority than the Australian Fishing Industry Council, which, incidentally, has private processor representation, decided unanimously that in principle it supports the retention of the Queensland Fish Board. Naturally, the QCFO, which represents many independent Queensland fishermen, also favours retention and restructuring of the board.

The member for Mourilyan, Mrs Kippin, who is a member of the Government-appointed committee, stated on TV that the committee is convinced the board should be retained and restructured. When asked by the interviewer why the Minister, Mr Hooper, had not stated the Government's intention to retain and restructure the board, she replied that it was up to the committee to convince him. The fishermen and the community have a right to ask why he is not prepared to make a statement of Government intent to retain and restructure the board.

Mr Jones: And an assurance before the election.

Mr BLAKE: Yes. That is a very critical point. Is it because the Government is waiting until after the election to announce a sell-out of the board to private enterprise, as was publicly mooted earlier by the Government before fishing industry and community outrage caused it to go silent on this aspect?

Let me look a little closer at this possible Fish Board sell-out to private enterprise and the Government's attitude towards it. I state flatly that none of the propositions put forward by the Government to justify dismantling of the Fish Board are genuine, and I intend to prove it.

That private enterprise is interested in acquiring Fish Board facilities or having the Fish Board liquidated is undeniable. People purporting to represent P & O interests have openly visited Fish Board depot managers and asked to see the books to get an idea of returns on investment capital. I know of at least one instance where they were refused.

I refer to a copy of a newspaper extract, which I am informed is from "Gold Coast Bulletin" earlier this year, headed "Williams backs decision to drop 'loser'." The article reads—

"Gold Coast developer, Mr. Keith Williams, is all for scrapping the Fish Board.

"Mr. Williams plans to build a fishermen's wharf at The Spit. He said yesterday the Fish Board loses millions of dollars a year.

"And that this amounts to using taxpayers' money to subsidise an ineffective organisation.

"Mr. Williams heads a group of companies which runs Sea World and Bird Life Park.

"He is also chairman of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority."

I am told he is the same Mr Keith Williams who gave \$25,000 to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation a short time before he was appointed by the Government to the chairmanship of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority.

The news item continues—

"He said yesterday: 'It would be hypocritical of the Gold Coast to criticise the State Government's decision that the Fish Board should be replaced as a marketing organisation'."

That is a truly remarkable statement by Mr Williams. If a State Government decision already exists that the Fish Board should be replaced as a marketing organisation, this Parliament has not yet been informed of that decision. If this item is to be believed, it would appear that large donations to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation give donors a pipeline to Government decisions before Parliament itself is informed.

The news item concludes—

"Mr Williams said his organisation will start to build a fishermen's wharf opposite Bird Life Park in April.

"A 19th Century style fishing village will be created with restaurants, etc . . ."

Incidentally, I would like the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Water Resources to tell the Parliament what leasehold fees Mr Williams pays on Sea World and the other Spit sites, because I have been told that they are a mere bagatelle considering relative values in that area.

Mr D'Arcy: Peppercorn rental.

Mr BLAKE: Peppercorn rental.

One could scarcely describe Mr Williams or his organisation as parties disinterested in the future of, or the liquidation of, the Fish Board. I state flatly that the proposition cannot be justified that the Fish Board should be sold because it loses millions of dollars of taxpayers' money a year, whether proposed by Mr Williams or by Mr Bjelke-Petersen. Let me debunk this nonsense.

I refer to a report on 16 August in the Bundaberg "News-Mail" of the Premier's statement that the Queensland Fish Board would go broke within a year the way it is operating now. Yet, in answer to my question in Parliament last week, he said—

"The Fish Board has, in fact, reversed its operating losses. The board recorded an operating profit of \$149,850 for the

twelve week period ended 19 July 1980. The board has continued to make an operating profit for the last month."

If we collate this with figures on page 14 of the Government committee's report, we find that, with in-payments from export expansion grants, the board's losses for the first 40 weeks of last year were of the order of \$800,000. If, as the Premier states, the board traded for the following three months at a profit of almost \$150,000, the board's losses for last year are in the order of some \$650,000—not millions of dollars, as claimed by Mr Williams and many others.

I must add that last year was a disastrous fishing and seafood-trading year for everybody, including private processors. Companies went broke and most, if not all, suffered heavy trading losses. The previous year the Fish Board showed an operating profit of \$208,510.

The evidence does not support the charges of losses of millions of dollars, subsidised by the public purse. The Queensland Fish Board has millions of dollars of assets, all capital, interest and redemption and operating costs being financed by charges on the fishermen themselves, not on the public purse, as alleged as an excuse to sell this public facility. All the evidence presented to date by investigating committees recommends a less passive and more active role for the Queensland Fish Board.

Why then does the Premier state that it is not considered appropriate that the board should become involved in a further area currently being serviced by private enterprise? Is it the Government's intention to liquidate the board and leave the field open to private enterprises contributing to the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation? If so, both fishermen and consumers are likely to be collusively exploited, and the Queensland Fish Board was formed originally to prevent exactly that. The position would be no different if it were abolished today.

With the recommendations now before them, there is every reason why the Minister and the Government should make a forthright declaration on their intention to restructure and retain the board or to liquidate it. I challenge the Minister either to tell the fishing industry and the community now of the Government's intentions to retain the board, or to confirm the increasing suspicion that fishermen, the board, its employees and the public are to be sold out to the "gimme" interests financially supporting the Government, and I want those assurances before the election.

(Time expired.)

TENDERS FOR CONSTRUCTION WORK, TARONG POWER STATION

Mr AKERS (Pine Rivers) (12.29 p.m.): In the debate today, I raise a serious matter which is at best a severe lack of public

accountability and at worst a cover up of incompetence and/or corruption in a Government instrumentality. It is another step in the scandal that could be dubbed "Tarongate".

Last Thursday, in an attempt to have the matter cleared in the proper parliamentary manner, I asked the Minister for Mines and Energy a question on notice regarding contract No. 35/31 for structural steel for the turbine house at Tarong Power Station. Among other things, I asked for the details of tender amounts and alternative tenders received, the final contract figure, and why the lowest tender was not accepted. The answer supplied by the Minister can only be described as deceitful. It was an attempt to hide from this Parliament what should in normal circumstances be public information. Furthermore, it was incorrect in many aspects and did not give answers to important questions.

Firstly, the Minister's answer stated that section 93 of the Electricity Regulations 1977 prevented the release of the tender figures and contract sums relating to the project. I remind honourable members that this project was the construction of steel-work in a publicly owned power-station, paid for from public funds by a statutory body established by this Parliament. The Minister, obviously on advice from the QEGB, wanted to keep the information secret.

The only apparently relevant part of section 93—I say "apparently" because it really is not relevant—provides—

"(3) . . . verbal information as to the name of the tenderers and their respective price or prices tendered will thereupon be supplied upon request."

The inference that has been drawn from that is that only the tenderers who were present at the opening of the tenders are entitled to have those figures. I cannot by any stretch of the imagination see how that could be held to prevent a Minister from informing this Parliament of the tender prices and the contract prices for the project.

From one of the tenderers who were present at the opening of the tenders I received the figures. I seek leave to have them incorporated in "Hansard".

(Leave granted.)

Tenders submitted:

EFS Pty Ltd, \$6,227,436.31, alternative tender; \$7,677,435.34, conforming tender; John Holland, \$8,783,612.00; Welcon, \$9,171,603.30; VAC, \$10,606,396.85; Drysdale & Ridgeway, \$11,298,919.00; Evans Deakin, \$12,028,459.00; ANI Sargents, \$12,301,674.00; EFS Pty Ltd's alternative tender price was later increased slightly owing to uncertainty about footing design.

It can be seen from those figures that the conforming tender of EFS Pty Ltd was \$1.5m lower than that of John Holland, who

was the lucky tenderer, and the EFS Pty Ltd's alternative tender was \$2.5m lower than John Holland's tender. It can be seen that EFS Pty Ltd's alternative tender was \$6.2m, whereas John Holland's tender, which was accepted, was \$8.7m.

Secrecy surrounding the whole matter prevents me from confirming it, but I understand that the final contract price submitted by John Holland rose to approximately \$10m. That means that the QEGB has wasted nearly \$4m—\$4m that the electricity users of Queensland will have to pay interest and redemption on for at least 20 years without being given one extra cent's worth of service. After interest costs are added, the cost will probably be of the order of \$6m to \$8m over the repayment period. To put it politely, this is a scandal.

To be fair to the QEGB and to the Minister, I have tried to find reasons for the rejection of the EFS tender. I can find only two possible reasons. The first is that the firm may not have been able to fulfil the contract. An investigation would have shown that EFS supplied the steel frame for the Nathan sports stadium grandstand on its own. That was a \$1.1m contract over seven months.

The turbine house frame is a \$7m contract spread over nearly four years. It was to be carried out by two firms, EFS and another firm that it was to bring into the contract. A further point is that EFS has its own trucking company. So a basic, competent and unbiased investigation would have proved that EFS could handle the job adequately.

The only other possible reason for rejection could be that something was wrong with the tender. In fact, that is what the Minister alleged in his answer. But the QEGB staff held only one meeting with EFS and its consultants and at that time no such question was raised. There was just a simple request for a small amount of further clarification. No further query was raised. There was not even a phone call to EFS or its consultants. In fact, all that EFS received from QEGB was a polite letter saying that it did not have the job. A competent officer would have fully discussed the details with the lowest tenderer before rejecting the tender and accepting one \$1.5m higher. If the tenders had been closer there might have been some excuse for not doing so, but \$1.5m was at stake.

After having shown that the only legitimate reasons for rejection are not valid, I can turn only to the possible illegitimate reasons, and I list the six such reasons that I think possible—

1. Incompetence and/or laziness on the part of the investigating officer and in his advice.

2. Acceptance of graft on the part of that officer.

3. Personal bias on the part of senior QEGB officers.

4. Acceptance of graft on the part of senior QEGB officers.

5. Personal bias on the part of the Minister in charge at that time.

6. Personal or party influence flowing from cash donations. This is of the ultimate concern for all Queenslanders.

Any one of those reasons gives cause for worry. I desperately hope that it was just plain laziness on the part of one officer. However, there has been a wastage of at least \$1.5m of public funds. That warrants at least a thorough investigation by the Minister; because of the possible involvement of high-level people, I believe it requires a judicial investigation. If the Minister follows my request, I ask him not to allow a continuation of the cover-up that began in his answer to my question last week.

Another question that needs answering is why EFS and their consultants Robert Morgan & Associates Pty Ltd were able to produce an alternative design for the building that would have saved \$1m. Bland statements such as those given by the former Minister to Robert Morgan will not answer that question. Comments such as, "The specified design had been developed after many years, and had been selected after full consideration of capital cost" etc., should not prevent a full investigation of a proposal that would save \$2.5m and, in fact, probably \$4m. That is the type of statement that was received by Robert Morgan & Associates in the brush-off letter from Mr Camm.

This is a matter of grave concern to the people of Queensland. If this is the usual way in which the QEGB carries out its work, there is need for a severe shake-up of that board. What has happened also supports the point that several members of this Parliament have been making for a long time, namely, that laws should not be written or passed by this Parliament relying on the diligence and/or integrity of public servants or Governments.

When these regulations were approved it would have been accepted by all concerned that honesty would prevail, but the board or the Minister has used the loose wording of the regulations to cover up an incorrect decision.

I call on the Government to take action in two ways—firstly, to instigate a judicial investigation into this matter and, secondly, to amend the electricity regulations immediately to require full public disclosure of all public tenders and expenditure of public funds by the QEGB and all other electricity boards.

This is a matter of serious concern to the people of Queensland. I think the term "Tarongate" becomes more and more appropriate as we go deeper and deeper into the whole project relating to the Tarong Power

House. It has never been discussed in this Parliament and it has never been approved by this Parliament.

(Time expired.)

ATTITUDE OF ALP TO PARLIAMENT

Mr BOURKE (Lockyer) (12.39 p.m.): It is fashionable for people in many sections of the community to blame many of the community's ills on politicians. We hear pop stars, TV commentators and others laying on politicians all the faults affecting society today. I resent such criticism, not on a personal basis but because I feel that it is harmful to the political institution to which we owe support. We are not simply politicians; we are elected representatives of the people. I feel that most of the members of this Chamber would have a great respect for the institution as such. I have been here now for four years, and I have been struck by the harmful effect upon debate and good government in this State of the lack of an effective Opposition.

When I entered this place in 1976 we had 11 members of the Labor Party in Opposition. Of course, the present Leader of the Opposition, the member for Mackay (Ed Casey) was then sitting as an Independent at the side of the old Chamber. His contributions to debate in the first 12 months were such that I honestly cannot recollect any memorable speech he made. Of the 11 Opposition members, I must say that some members made a valiant attempt to contribute to the best of their ability, particularly when one considers the problems caused by their lack of numbers. I instance the honourable member for Rockhampton and the honourable member for Lytton. The honourable member for Lytton displayed a ready ability and wit, but shortly thereafter the pressure of the job drove him from the position of Leader of the Opposition. There were four older members, Mr Marginson, Mr Dean, Mr Melloy and Mr Houston—politicians of the old school—men of honour, ability and quiet personality who did their best to contribute to the Opposition and make this Chamber work in the way in which it is intended to work. It is often said that a blood-letting or a purge can have a beneficial effect upon a party, and one would have hoped for the good of politics in Queensland that the debacle that hit the ALP in 1974 would have led to a better class of member entering this Chamber. But it was obvious to everybody after the 1977 election when the Opposition's numbers rose to 23 that that beneficial effect had not occurred in any shape or form. It is a tragedy for the ALP that the members who entered this Chamber after the 1977 election have not improved the performance of the Opposition in any way at all.

The present Leader of the Opposition, the member for Mackay (Mr Casey) sits there and giggles and smirks during debates of great importance to the people of this State.

Mr Austin: He said he wouldn't join the new guard at any price.

Mr BOURKE: That is right; he made a lot of false commitments and promises. Then we have his deputy, the member for Woodridge (Mr D'Arcy) who sits there with only a pale smirk and a reflection of his leader's giggles—

Mr Gygar: He's the one who drives a Mark X Jag.

Mr BOURKE: That is right. He is noted for the very expensive cars he flaunts about the place, and his life-style.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Miller): Order! I will not tolerate cross-firing in the Chamber.

Mr BOURKE: We also see the use of character assassination by members of the Opposition, not as a contribution to debate in this Chamber but as a deliberate misuse of privilege in an attempt to besmirch and smear people outside this Chamber. We had the honourable member for Archerfield making allegations about people in Toowoomba regarding the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education. The honourable member for Toowoomba South has answered those allegations, but I would like to say a few words about them because those members of the community had an idea and worked hard to establish that institute which exists today as a positive asset for the people of Toowoomba and the Darling Downs.

Those people have no defence to the foul accusations that the honourable member for Archerfield levelled against them in this Chamber. They cannot come in here and defend themselves, and as the member for the area I would like to say that they do not need to defend themselves. They built that institute. They gave very generously of their time and resources to make it the institution that it is today. I become despondent when I see a member of this Chamber who has sworn an oath of office using parliamentary privilege to launch a cowardly attack on such people.

Then we have the honourable member for Port Curtis. In the first two years I was here all I heard from him were endless, tiresome attacks of a personal nature upon the former Mayor of Gladstone. I have no interest in what happened in Gladstone, and it became very tiresome listening to the honourable member for Port Curtis time after time launching bitter personal attacks upon that man, obviously attempting to pay off some personal score from the past.

Mr PREST: I rise to a point of order. The remark made by the honourable member for Lockyer that in my first two years I made many personal attacks on the former member for Gladstone is untrue. During the time I have been here I have had nothing but utter respect for the former members for Port Curtis or Gladstone, Marty Hanson and Mr Burrows.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to withdraw the remarks.

Mr BOURKE: Whatever it was he found offensive, I withdraw, but I make the point that in my speech I made no comment at all about former members for Port Curtis. The honourable member has misunderstood what I said. In deference to the Chair, I withdraw any comments that may have been offensive to him. It is remarkable one can find sensitivity where one would not expect to find any trace of it.

I now refer to some other members. Some quite crude replies, in the form of interjections, have been made to me. I have never bothered to take a point of order about them. They are so obviously shallow and crude that the public at large can judge them for what they are. I refer to the member for Brisbane Central and the member for Archerfield in that respect.

One point that has really concerned me about the manner in which we do our business is the quite crude, unfair and ungentlemanly way in which Opposition members pick on the lady members of this Parliament.

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. I have never picked—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Miller): Order! That is no point of order.

Mr BOURKE: It is a blatant waste of time.

Quite foul inferences have been drawn from the remarks and actions of these two lady members. They are ladies in every sense. Opposition members have shown bad manners towards them. Opposition members have used bullying tactics towards them only because there are only two of them. I would like to see at least 20 lady members of this Parliament. Then we would not see these bullying tactics being used. Opposition members would not be game to pick on them.

Mrs Jordan of the Labor Party would have been an asset to this House, but she was stabbed in the back by her campaign manager, who sits there in her place today. I refer to the member for Ipswich West. He offered to help her and then pulled the rug from under her. Of course, that is in keeping with the Labor Party's policy on lady members of Parliament.

We have seen a blatant waste of time in this Chamber by the Leader of the Opposition; more importantly, we have seen his blatant waste of question-time, which is limited and is provided to enable all members to service their electorates. The Leader of the Opposition is extended the courtesy of asking the first questions. Time after time he makes snide comments, accompanied by his silly giggle, about some Ministers not being in the Chamber. I resent that. Quite often, because of the blatant waste of time by the Leader of the Opposition, I have not been able to ask the questions that I wished to ask.

There has been a waste of time in moving motions. They have been moved not to serve any useful purpose but merely to cause divisions and appeal to the Press. It is quite obvious that they are considered to be a waste of time. Indeed, the Leader of the Opposition said quite audibly in this Chamber yesterday, when referring to a motion, "Well, we got our debate, and that is all we wanted." That is a shameful remark from a member of this House who professes to support the parliamentary system. There is no shame or sensitivity; there is no commitment to the parliamentary system.

Mr K. J. Hooper: Who said that?

Mr BOURKE: It was the member's leader, the member for Mackay. I distinctly heard him say that.

Opposition members gesture to the Press gallery and to the public. I put it to the House today that, as a group, Opposition members have no obvious interest in the parliamentary procedures or in the good government of Queensland. They are in this House only to use it; to make personal attacks on people who are not in a position to defend themselves. These people are not able to come in here, look Opposition members in the eye and give them the answer they deserve.

Mr D'Arcy: When is the Liberal Party going to stop whinging?

Mr BOURKE: One thing that is really amusing in this Chamber is the constant appeal from the Labor members, who have provided no real opposition in four years, to the Liberal Party to step into their shoes and provide some opposition to the Government, which we support and of which we are a full half. We have heard from the Labor Party this blatant hypocrisy that the Liberals should cross the floor. When did we last see a Labor member in this Chamber cross the floor or speak out against his party? It was in 1956. We have seen the rip-off of the Australian Pensioners League by the Labor Party. We have not seen any concern expressed by Opposition members for the welfare of the pensioners in that regard.

As a member who, I hope, has a commitment to parliamentary democracy in this State and does his best to contribute to his full ability, I think it is shameful that the gentlemen of the Opposition come into this Chamber and make no serious attempt to contribute to the workings of the Parliament. They sit over there and posture. They cry to the public about wanting more privileges and more staff. They make no serious attempt to participate in the actual running of the important machinery of this Chamber, and that is a serious accusation.

(Time expired.)

IMPORT PARITY PRICING OF OIL

Mr VAUGHAN (Nudgee) (12.49 p.m.): I rise to speak in this debate today not to launch any personal attack upon any member of this Chamber but to speak about a matter that I believe is of interest to the people of this State: the Federal Government's policy of pricing Australian-produced crude oil at world parity prices and the disastrous effect such a policy is having on the people of this State and this nation.

This pricing policy, which was introduced in the 1977 Federal Budget, makes the people of Australia pay the world price for Australian oil despite the fact that currently Australia produces 70 per cent of its own oil at a cost of around \$1 per barrel. As a result of import parity pricing the price we are required to pay for our own oil is about \$28 a barrel, and this will increase in the near future, regardless of what the Fraser Government says.

What are the effects of this pricing policy? According to the Federal Government's own figures released in conjunction with this year's Federal Budget, last financial year Federal revenue profited to the tune of \$2,223m and the figure this year will be in excess of \$3 billion. In addition, of course, import parity pricing has meant huge windfall profits of the order of \$1,000m to the oil companies.

While the Federal Government and the oil companies are laughing all the way to the bank, the people of this State and this nation are being ripped off by this iniquitous tax as they have never been ripped off before. A person who owns a motor vehicle is paying over 100 per cent more for his petrol now than he was paying when the Fraser Government assumed power in December 1975. That is a shocking state of affairs! In less than five years under a Federal Liberal Government the price of a litre of petrol has increased from 16.2c in December 1975 to 35c now. Its current price is approximately \$1.60 per gallon. I might add that these are Brisbane prices.

According to a recent survey by the RACQ the average price of a litre of petrol in this State is 37c. Motorists in country areas know that the price can be up to 11c a

litre higher there, despite the Government's fuel equalisation scheme which is costing \$120m a year and which is supposed to result in prices in country areas being no more than .44c a litre (2c a gallon) above city prices. In view of the price people in country areas are required to pay for petrol, one may well ask where that \$120m a year is going. I recall reading an article in a North Queensland newspaper recently in which the member for the area—I think his name was Thomson—said that it was the responsibility of the State Governments, which receive the \$120m a year, to farm the money out and make sure it was applied in the right direction in order to reduce the price of petrol in country areas.

However, this subsidy, which was to apply from 1 April this year, is administered by the Federal Department of Business and Consumer Affairs, which is supposed to check that the benefits of the subsidy are passed on. In view of the scandalous price of petrol in country areas of Queensland it is obvious that the department is not doing its job.

This year alone the price of petrol has increased by over 7c a litre (32c a gallon) or approximately \$5 a tank of petrol. Anybody who goes to a petrol bowser is now paying more than \$5 more for a tank of petrol than at this time last year. Earlier this year the price increased by 5c a litre; it increased by 2c a litre in July and it will continue to go up under this present policy. It now costs twice as much to fill a motor vehicle's tank as it did when the Fraser Government assumed office in December 1975. I am concerned about where it will end. When motorists go to petrol bowser will they be continually faced with increased prices? People on fixed incomes, including the family man, have come to rely on their motor vehicles in this day and age, but they may be forced off the road by increased petrol prices. That is the way we are heading. How much further will the family man's wage packet be eroded by this savage tax through the petrol pump? It all boils down to the fact that the average family man with a motor vehicle is paying approximately \$16 a week in extra tax. That is equivalent to a 21 per cent increase in pay-as-you-earn taxes.

Unfortunately the Fraser Government has firmly locked itself indefinitely into world parity pricing of Australian-produced oil, notwithstanding the adverse effect such a policy has on inflation and the purchasing power of the people of Queensland and the rest of the nation. Even this morning the Deputy Premier and Treasurer admitted that his party and his Government are also locked into import parity pricing of Australian-produced crude oil. His only whinge or complaint about it was that the State was not receiving sufficient back from the Federal Government. In actual fact we are not receiving anything back from the Federal Government in return for this petrol bowser rip-off.

In this regard, I refer to an article in "The Courier-Mail" of Monday, 14 April 1980, headed, "P.M. Stands Firm on Oil Price Policy." The article reported that Mr Fraser had told the Liberal Party Federal Council in Canberra that the Rundle shale-oil project and the North West Shelf project were dependent on the parity policy.

In view of the serious effects that the Fraser Government's import parity pricing policy is having on inflation and the cost of living of every man, woman and child in this State and this nation, I believe that it is the responsibility of this Parliament, acting on behalf of the people of Queensland, to indicate our State's total opposition to the petrol pump rip-off. This Parliament, including the Liberal members of this House (who talk a lot but do not back their words with actions as they should do), should resolve that the Parliament of Queensland condemns the Fraser Liberal-National Country Party Government's import parity pricing policy for Australian-produced oil, which has caused undue hardship and economic difficulty for those who are required to purchase fuel. Industrialists, primary producers, motorists and the community at large have all been forced to suffer through the most inequitable tax that has ever been imposed by an Australian Government. We should call for the immediate withdrawal of the present disastrous fuel-pricing policy.

We should indicate that this Parliament also condemns the Federal Government for not returning any of the millions of dollars it has already received from the people of this State as a result of its fuel-pricing policy.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I now seek leave, because of the way I feel about this subject, to move a motion condemning the Fraser Government's fuel-pricing policy in the terms of the resolution which I have outlined.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Miller): Order! I cannot allow the honourable member to move a motion during the debate on Matters of Public Interest. This time is allocated to members of this House to put before the House matters of public interest. I do not believe that the member has the right to move a motion during the debate on Matters of Public Interest.

MR CASEY: I rise to a point of order. In actual fact, Standing Orders allow for a member to seek leave of the House at any stage to move a motion. That is what the member for Nudgee has just done.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I did not understand the member to seek leave of the House.

MR VAUGHAN: I will repeat what I said, Mr Deputy Speaker. I now seek leave to move a motion condemning the Fraser Government's fuel-pricing policy in the terms of the resolution which I have outlined.

Mr GYGAR: I rise to a point of order. I submit that Standing Orders do not provide for leave being granted during a discussion on Matters of Public Interest. If the member wishes to try this political stunt, the only method he can use is to seek the suspension of Standing Orders.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am not prepared to take a motion during the debate on Matters of Public Interest.

Mr CASEY: I rise to a point of order. The debate on Matters of Public Interest is allowed under a Sessional Order. Therefore, I seek leave of the House to suspend so much of Standing Orders and Sessional Orders as is necessary to enable the member for Nudgee to move the motion that he has outlined.

Question—That leave be granted—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 20

Blake	Shaw
Burns	Underwood
Casey	Vaughan
D'Arcy	Warburton
Hansen	Wilson
Hooper, K. J.	Wright
Kruger	Yewdale
Mackenroth	<i>Tellers:</i>
Milliner	Jones
Prest	Davis
Scott	

NOES, 35

Ahern	Lockwood
Akers	Moore
Armstrong	Newbery
Austin	Porter
Bird	Powell
Bishop	Row
Booth	Scassola
Bourke	Simpson
Elliott	Stephan
Frawley	Tenni
Gibbs, I. J.	Turner
Glasson	Warner
Goleby	Wharton
Hewitt, N. T. E.	White, P. N. D.
Hewitt, W. D.	
Kaus	<i>Tellers:</i>
Kippin	Gygar
Kyburz	Neal
Lickiss	

PAIRS:

Gibbs, R. J.	Hartwig
Fouras	Doumany

Resolved in the negative.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Miller): Order! Under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 19 August, the time allotted for the debate on Matters of Public Interest has now expired.

The House adjourned at 1.6 p.m.