

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 1981

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

chosen to hold the place in the Senate of the Parliament of the Commonwealth rendered vacant through the resignation of Senator Glenister Sheil.

“Yours faithfully,

“James Ramsay,

“Governor.

“The Honourable S. J. Muller, M.L.A.,

“Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
of Queensland,

“Parliament House,

“Brisbane. 4000”.

ACTING CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

NOMINATION OF MR E. C. ROW

Mr **ACTING SPEAKER**: Honourable members, I have to inform the House that, during the absence of Mr Speaker, I have nominated Mr E. C. Row, Temporary Chairman, to act as Chairman of Committees.

TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 1981

The House met at 11 a.m.

ABSENCE OF MR SPEAKER AND THE CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENT

The Clerk-Assistant informed the House that Mr Speaker and The Clerk of the Parliament were attending the Twelfth Conference of Presiding Officers and Clerks at Wellington, New Zealand.

The Chairman of Committees (Mr C. J. Miller, Ithaca) read prayers and took the chair as Acting Speaker.

VACANCY IN SENATE OF COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Mr **ACTING SPEAKER**: I have to announce that Mr Speaker has informed His Excellency the Governor that Mrs Florence Isabel Bjelke-Petersen was, on 11 March, chosen to hold the place in the Senate of the Parliament of the Commonwealth rendered vacant through the resignation of Senator Glenister Sheil, and that the following letter has been received from His Excellency—

“Government House,

“Brisbane.

March 13, 1981.

“My Dear Speaker,

“I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated March 12, 1981, informing me that on the 12th instant Mrs. Florence Isabel Bjelke-Petersen was

PHOTOGRAPHS OF MEMBERS

Mr **ACTING SPEAKER**: I wish to advise all honourable members who have not had their photographs taken for identification card purposes that the Works Department photographer will be available in the Media Room, Level 5, today and tomorrow between the hours of 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. and 1.30 p.m. and 2.30 p.m.

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Builders' Registration Board of Queensland, for the year 1979-80.

Registrar of Co-operative and Other Societies, for the year 1979-80.

Mackay Harbour Board, for the year 1979-80.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

Supreme Court Act 1921-1979.

District Courts Act 1967-1980.

Auctioneers and Agents Act 1971-1980.

Harbours Act 1955-1980.

Beach Protection Act 1968-1974.

Electricity Act 1976-1980.

Metropolitan Transit Authority Act 1976-1979.

Forestry Act 1959-1979.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

USE OF 2,4,5-T AND 2,4-D ON RAILWAY
DEPARTMENT LAND

Hon. D. F. LANE (Merthyr—Minister for Transport) (11.5 a.m.): On 12 March last I answered a question on notice by the honourable member for Cairns concerning the experimental use on railway property in North Queensland in 1968-69 of chemicals designed to control tropical vegetation. I stated that tests on the effectiveness of several types of herbicides had been carried out but information made available to me at that time did not indicate that the chemicals 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T had been used.

This answer was based on information supplied to me by the Commissioner for Railways, who was in possession of technical notes 187 and 230 from the Department of Supply, Australian Defence Scientific Service, Defence Standards Laboratories. These technical notes were given to the department as a result of a request made to the Defence Standards Laboratories by letter in 1973. This followed the appointment of an agricultural scientist as Vegetation Control Officer, who asked for available reports of herbicides tests on railway property in the Cairns area conducted by a Mr Lugg of the Department of Supply. Only two reports, nos. 187 and 230, were subsequently supplied and my answer was based on information contained in those two reports.

I have since ascertained that a similar question was answered in the Senate on 24 February by Senator Durack, representing the Minister for Defence, who indicated that 17 reports related to herbicide testing and two reports, nos. R344 and R351, specifically referred to tests at Redlynch and Freshwater in 1968-69. As I said, these other reports had not been received by the Railway Department. Those reports apparently indicated that in fact 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D were used at Redlynch and Freshwater.

In view of the lapse of time, and the fact that the testing was done by the Federal Department, I am sure honourable members appreciate the limited extent of Railway Department records on this matter. However, as I said initially in my previous answer to this House, anyone who has any information relating to this matter or who feels that he has experienced some exposure to chemicals should come forward to the Federal Department or, if it is more convenient, to me and I shall ensure that the information is brought before the proper authorities.

PETITION

The Clerk-Assistant announced the receipt of the following petition—

UPGRADING OF CALOUNDRA HOSPITAL

From Mr Ahern (10 506 signatories) praying that the Parliament in Queensland will

treat as a matter of extreme urgency the extension and upgrading of the Caloundra hospital.

Petition read and received.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

Questions submitted on notice by members were answered as follows:—

1. WATER SUPPLY FOR WINCHESTER
SOUTH MINE AND MORANBAH

Mr Casey asked the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs—

(1) With reference to the Winchester South deal, what proposals have been made about the water supply for the Winchester South mine and the town of Moranbah, taking into account the fact that Moranbah already suffers some of the worst water restrictions of any mining township in Queensland, that the Eungella Dam, which supplies water to some of the Central Queensland Coal Associates' mines nearby is already fully committed and will remain so until such time as the Burdekin project is proceeded with, and that the Mackenzie River Weir, which supplies water to the other mining areas south of Peak Downs Highway, is already fully committed?

(2) Where will the water come from for this project and what arrangements are being made for Moranbah, which will suffer further water supply problems as a result of this development?

Answer:—

(1) The recent decision in respect of Winchester South relates only to an authority to prospect under the Mining Act and firm proposals in relation to infrastructure requirements, including water supply, have not been submitted.

(2) However, the Queensland Water Resources Commission prepared notes for the guidance of prospective tenderers for the Winchester South authority to prospect on the availability of water supplies for the coal-mining project and its attendant town water supplies. These notes indicate that a dam on Denison Creek is the best source of water for the project. The mining company and other companies taking water from the dam would be required to meet its cost and would also be required to meet the costs of conveying water from the dam to the mine and township site. To provide water supplies while the dam is constructed, temporary use of ground-water resources in the Braeside area would be authorised.

2. NURSING TRAINING, STANTHORPE HOSPITAL

Mr McKechnie asked the Minister for Health—

(1) What is the future of nursing training in Queensland?

(2) In particular, will he authorise the appointment of a nurse educator at Stanthorpe Hospital or make satisfactory alternative arrangements so that local nurses can continue to receive the major part of their training at Stanthorpe Hospital?

Answer:—

(1) There are several points to the question raised by the honourable member. Two main aspects are the new training curriculum of 1200 hours for general nurses, and the pilot program of student nurse training with the Queensland Institute of Technology. If the honourable member would correspond with me concerning any specific points in relation to these two major developments, I would be pleased to provide him with that information.

(2) I am aware of the particular problems being encountered by the Stanthorpe Hospital in nursing training, and at the present time departmental officers are examining what might be appropriate for that area.

3. RATE CONCESSIONS FOR WIDOWS

Mr McKechnie asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

As there are some widows who have a life tenancy in the family house and also a legal obligation to pay the rates, will he support moves to make these widows eligible for a pensioner rate concession?

Answer:—

The guide-lines and criteria for the Government's pensioner rate subsidy scheme were given very lengthy consideration, taking into account the many and varied circumstances whereby pensioners may have responsibility for the payment of rates and charges.

However, the Government's prime intention was to help the pensioner home owner and it was therefore decided that ownership of the property was the most equitable criterion which catered to the needs of the great majority of pensioners, particularly having regard to equity problems which arose in differentiating as to why one particular tenancy situation should receive consideration over another very similar situation.

Also, in the particular case of life tenants, while the life tenant may have prime responsibility for rates, charges and

other expenses, it would not be unreasonable to expect the ultimate beneficiaries and owners of the property to assist with some contribution if the needs of the life tenant were such as to warrant it.

While the position of life tenants and others in similar circumstances is deeply appreciated, I regret to say I do not see the guide-lines of the scheme being extended to include life tenants.

4. PENALTIES FOR HOAX BOMB THREATS

Mr McKechnie asked the Premier—

As the Queensland Shop Assistants' Union has written to him seeking increased penalties for those people found guilty of making hoax bomb threats, will he do everything in his power to support the union's case?

Answer:—

I agree that this is a matter of some concern and consideration is presently being given to drafting legislation which will provide adequate penalties for this type of offence.

5. HOSPITAL CHARGES FOR PENSIONERS

Mr Underwood asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the "60 Day Rule", whereby pensioners exceeding that duration in hospital are charged 87½ per cent of their pension, that the Queensland Cabinet put into operation from 1 January—

(1) When did his department first become aware of the proposal?

(2) Did his department give an understanding of agreement to the proposal and, if so, at what time?

(3) When was the proposal (a) officially agreed to by the Queensland Government and (b) signed?

(4) On what dates did other States (a) officially agree to the proposals, and (b) put the 60 day rule into operation?

(5) How many hospital patients have been affected to date?

(6) How much money has been collected from (a) hospital patients and (b) patients and residents of homes and psychiatric hospitals?

(7) What is the destination of that money referred to in 6 (a) and 6 (b) respectively?

(8) What is the estimated income referred to in 6 (a) and 6 (b) for (a) 1 January to 30 June and (b) 1981-82 respectively?

(9) What discussions were held with pensioner groups (a) prior to the decision being taken and (b) after the decision was made?

(10) What action has been taken to provide nursing home care for the pensioners who have been classified as "nursing home" patients but still have to reside in hospitals?

Answer:—

(1 to 10) The scheme whereby contributions are made by long-stay "nursing home type" patients in the State's public hospitals was instigated at the wish of the Commonwealth Government, which was agreed to by Cabinet. The first such deductions were made on and from January, 1981.

Basically these arrangements provided that long-stay patients in acute hospitals both in standard, private shared and private single wards would be examined 60 days after admission, or 60 days after implementation of the proposal, to determine whether the patient is an acute patient or a "nursing home type" patient. Reviews will also be undertaken at a maximum of 30 days after the initial assessment. Where a patient is readmitted within seven days after discharge or is transferred to another hospital, the previous period of hospitalisation will be taken into consideration in determining length of stay.

This decision on classification will be the responsibility of the patient's doctor, which in the case of standard ward patients is the hospital medical staff, and in the case of patients in private shared and private single wards, their private medical practitioner.

If the appropriate doctor certifies that the patient is needing acute care, professional attention as defined in the Health Insurance Act, required active rehabilitation, or continued management as a hospital patient on medical grounds, such patient continues to be recognised as a hospital patient.

Should the attending doctor not be able to certify as such, then that patient after 60 days admission is classified as a "nursing home type" patient.

"Nursing home type" patients, whether they are pensioners or not, accommodated in standard wards will be required to make a contribution as accommodation charges in line with arrangements for patients in nursing homes controlled by the State.

The contribution required to be made by these patients, regardless of whether they are pensioners or otherwise, is calculated at approximately seven-eighths of the maximum single rate pension plus supplementary assistance. At the present time this daily rate is \$8.60. Unfortunately a patient cannot insure himself against this contribution with any medical benefits organisation. If the patient is not a pensioner, he is required to meet this amount out of his own resources.

Patients of private medical practitioners who are classified as "nursing home type" patients and are accommodated in private single or shared wards will be required to meet a "daily charge" for their accommodation and care. This "daily average" consists of the amount contributed by standard ward patients, as mentioned above, plus an amount applicable to the daily rate of the Commonwealth ordinary care benefits and, if applicable, extensive care benefits. The current rates for ordinary care benefits and extensive care benefits are \$16.85 and \$6 per day respectively.

Private patients who are insured for hospital benefits are entitled to a refund from the medical benefits organisation of the amount paid to the hospital concerned for the ordinary care benefits and if applicable, the extensive care benefits. Of course, private insured patients can assign the payment of these benefits to the hospital instead of making the payments in the first instance.

A private uninsured patient is required to meet the "daily charge" out of his own resources.

The number of patients affected by this arrangement would vary from day to day. Details thereof are not readily available nor at this time am I able to readily advise accurate details of estimated income.

The Nursing Home Committee within my department is constantly reviewing the need for nursing home units and, where the need can be substantiated, approval is given for the establishment of such units.

6. MINING LEASES, FRASER ISLAND

Mr Underwood asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) What were the dates of the last four inspections of mined areas of Fraser Island by Government officers?

(2) Who carried out the inspection and what were their respective qualifications?

(3) How many words were in the last written reports about each of D.M. Minerals and Queensland Titanium Mines Pty Ltd areas?

(4) Are these reports available to the public and, if not, what is the reason?

(5) What is the size of the bonds lodged for rehabilitation of Fraser Island by the mining companies?

(6) Had any reports recommended that either Queensland Titanium Mines or D.M. Minerals bonds be returned and, if so, which bonds have been refunded?

(7) Has any action been taken by either his department or by the mining companies to relinquish any of the areas on Fraser Island which have been mined or which contain no commercial mineralization?

(8) What are the annual rentals paid for each of the mining leases current on Fraser Island?

(9) What are the current terms regarding exemption from labour conditions applying to mineral leases on Fraser Island?

Answer:—

(1) The dates of the last four inspections of mined areas of Fraser Island by Government officers were:—

- 13, 14 October 1980;
- 31 March, 1 April 1980;
- 26, 27 November 1979;
- 12, 13 March 1979.

(2) The inspections are carried out by an inter-departmental team of officers comprising:—

Mr D. C. Kratzing—BAgrSc (Hons)
MAgrSc—Ecologist, Department of Mines;

Mr T. J. McDonald—BSc, MSc—
Botanist, Department of Primary Industries;

Mr D. Barr—BScAgr—Senior Dune Conservationist, Beach Protection Authority;

Mr M. Anderson—BSc Forestry—Forester, Department of Forestry;

Mr G. Tipman—QDA—Experimentalist, Beach Protection Authority.

(3) Quality of reporting is sought by the department rather than quantity of wording. Both were satisfactory.

(4) These reports are confidential department documents and are not available to the public.

(5) The amounts of the bonds or security deposits are confidential matters between the Minister and the lessees.

(6) No.

(7) No.

(8 & 9) This information is available by search at the department.

7. HIGH SCHOOL, CLERMONT

Mr Lester asked the Minister for Education—

(1) With reference to the huge projected expansion in the Clermont area due to grain expansion and the coming on stream of Blair Athol and Wolfgang Mines, will he take urgent action to provide for a high school at Clermont if no action has been taken to date?

(2) Will he take action to ensure that the Central Highlands will keep pace with expansion needs and so avoid problems similar to those that exist in Gladstone?

Answer:—

(1) Demographers within the Planning Branch of my department are continually engaged in monitoring enrolment trends in schools throughout the State, and give particular attention to both actual and projected industrial developments and their effects on school size. Companies involved in this area, and seeking attention to their infrastructure needs, maintain liaison with these officers.

Through discussion, particularly with officers of the Department of Mines, attention is being given to acquisition of an alternative school site in the township of Clermont against a possible future need.

Dependent upon availability of funds, moves are usually made to re-establish secondary departments as full high schools when their year 8/9/10 enrolments exceed 250 students.

(2) Assurance is given that my department will be vigilant in its planning, and will meet school accommodation problems as quickly as our available funds will allow.

8. BLACKWATER HOSPITAL

Mr Lester asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to extensions to the Blackwater Hospital (a) when will tenders close, (b) what is the estimated cost of the project, (c) when will building be completed, (d) how big will the extensions make the hospital and (e) what extra service will the hospital provide to the increasing Blackwater population?

Answer:—

The extension to the Blackwater Hospital is of 10 beds, which will make a total of 24 beds at that hospital. The estimated cost of the extension is \$153,000.

The Emerald Hospitals Board has recently been given approval to invite tenders for the project subject to minor alteration of documentation. Tenders will be invited as soon as this matter has been attend to.

9. CLOSURE OF BAKERIES

Mr Katter asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

Will he take action with regard to the continuing collapse of owner-operated bakeries and concomitant growth of a monopolist situation arising in this industry that will result in country towns having their bread supplied on a very tenuous basis from bakeries hundreds of kilometres away and having their prices set

by these monopolistic interests in the main owned and controlled by companies based in southern States?

Answer:—

A somewhat similar question was put to me recently by the honourable member for Auburn. I indicated on that occasion that I have been undertaking a consultative review of the operations of the Bread Industry Committee which was established under the Bread Industry Committee Act, partly to offer some protection to small country bakers from the sort of circumstances to which the honourable member refers.

I have consulted with all sections of the bread industry and have put a submission to Cabinet. Because of the complexity of the matter, Cabinet decided to allow Ministers time to consider the issues before reaching a decision on my recommendations. I expect to have that decision soon.

If the honourable member has details of any specific examples of collapse of owner-operated bakeries, I would be pleased to receive them.

10. LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS, AGENT-GENERAL, LONDON

Mr Hooper asked the Premier—

(1) What are the annual leave entitlements of the occupant of the position of Agent-General in London?

(2) Did Sir Wallace Rae take these entitlements during his term of office?

(3) If not, what *ex gratia* payment was made to Sir Wallace Rae in lieu of these annual leave entitlements?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) The Agent-General for Queensland in London receives the normal Public Service recreation leave entitlements.

During his term of office the Honourable Sir Wallace Rae, for a variety of reasons, was not able to take recreation leave as and when it became due. As a result, on his retirement, he had accrued a period of deferred leave.

In view of his outstanding service to Queensland and the fact that, through no fault of his own, Sir Wallace was unable to take this leave, Cabinet approved an *ex gratia* payment of the cash equivalent of the period involved.

11. HOMELOCATORS

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

(1) Have any complaints been received by the Corporate Affairs Department concerning the activities of Homelocators of 71 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley and, if so, what action has been taken?

(2) Is it true that this firm charges people seeking homes a minimum fee of \$30 for a couple of addresses, or phone numbers, with no action by the firm and no refund of fee?

Answer:—

(1) No.

(2) There is no information available in my department relating to the fees charged by this firm. The fee alleged to be charged does not contravene the provisions of the Auctioneers and Agents Act.

12. LICENSING OF NEIGHBOURHOOD TAVERNS

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

As his department is currently holding 338 cancelled or surrendered hotel licences will he give urgent consideration to granting some of these licences for the establishment of neighbourhood taverns and so reduce the need for motorists to drive to obtain a drink?

Answer:—

The Licensing Commission is constantly carrying out surveys with a view to meeting the needs of localities and the public therein in respect of hotels and taverns.

There is no prohibition in the Liquor Act to prevent the establishment of neighbourhood taverns, but such establishment is a matter for the Licensing Commission and the Licensing Court.

13. UNLICENSED MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS

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

(1) Is he aware that at least 12 motor dealers in Toowoomba are contravening the Auctioneers and Agents Act by selling motor vehicles whilst not being a current holder of a motor dealer's licence?

(2) Is he aware that these motor dealers' names have been submitted to him through the Australian Automobile Dealers Association and that no action has been taken to see that they are brought within the Act?

(3) When will action be taken to bring these unlicensed dealers under this Act?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) Since 1977 inspectors have periodically visited Toowoomba to investigate complaints relating to unlicensed motor dealers. A major exercise was carried out in March 1978. Inspectors

remained in the area for eight days and during that time, visited 29 persons, some of whom were alleged to be unlicensed motor dealers. Insufficient evidence was available to take prosecution action.

During the course of these investigations, officers had personal discussions with Mr Bond, the secretary of the local branch of the Australian Automobile Dealers Association and sought his co-operation in helping to stamp out unauthorised dealings which adversely affect legitimate operators. Since then, a number of complaints, some of which were received from the Australian Automobile Dealers Association, have been investigated. Some of the complaints received have been found to be without merit, and prosecution action could not be taken in the others for lack of evidence. If that association has any evidence that any person is carrying on business as an unlicensed motor dealer, it should communicate full details to my office so that the matter may be investigated and all necessary and appropriate action taken.

14. RADIUM LEVELS IN SPA WATER, BEER, WHISKY AND MILK

Mr Warner asked the Minister for Health—

(1) What are the acceptable levels of radium allowed by the Australian and International Atomic Energy Agency in (a) spa mineral water, (b) XXXX beer, (c) whisky and (d) milk?

(2) Does XXXX beer contain 130 picocuries per litre and milk contain 1 400 picocuries per litre and whisky contain 1 200 picocuries per litre?

(3) Is the radium in spa water the same radium as in milk and whisky and beer?

(4) If not, why was it necessary to withdraw Taurina Spa Mineral Water from the market and, if so, why are the levels in beer, milk and whisky not considered dangerous?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) The recommended maximum of radium 226 in drinking water set by Australian authorities is 10 picocuries per litre, which accords with international standards. Various beverages are known to contain naturally occurring radioisotopes such as radium 226 and man-made radioisotopes. The recommended levels for various radioisotopes vary greatly depending upon factors such as where the material is stored in the body, how long it is retained, and energy and type of radiation given off by the material. Statements of levels in picocuries per litre without reference to the radioisotope of interest are meaningless in terms of potential public health hazard. The level of radium 226 in Taurina Spa Mineral Water was four to five times the maximum recommended level. It should

be noted that the company concerned voluntarily withdrew the product from sale some days after it became aware of the problem. I would point out that the company is again producing Taurina Spa Mineral Water but from a different spa in the same area.

15. PHYSIOTHERAPY TREATMENT, TOOWOOMBA HOSPITAL

Mr Warner asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Is he aware that patients needing physiotherapy at the Toowoomba General Hospital can no longer be referred direct by their own doctor to a physiotherapist?

(2) Is he also aware that this new procedure where patients have to report to the casualty department at the Toowoomba General Hospital to obtain a referral to a physiotherapist is causing distress to many elderly and infirm people?

(3) What are the reasons for the change which now applies which takes the referral from private practitioners to the casualty department at the Toowoomba General Hospital?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) I have advised by the Toowoomba Hospitals Board that the following procedure is applied to patients referred from private practitioners for physiotherapy at the Toowoomba Hospital—

(a) Patient reports to casualty department in the afternoon. This section and the time were specially selected because of the proximity of casualty department to the physiotherapy department, and in the afternoon the waiting time for registration is minimal;

(b) Patient is required to bring a letter of referral with him or her;

(c) Letter of referral to indicate the time physiotherapy treatment is to be reviewed.

The board has advised me that the above arrangements were adopted on the recommendation of its Medical Advisory Committee to ensure that the referral was correctly registered as an out-patient in the first instance, and that all subsequent occasions of service were accounted for.

The board considers the current method to be administratively efficient, and helpful and convenient to the patient.

16. STORAGE OF EXPLOSIVES

Mr Hartwig asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

As many mining companies and Government departments such as Forestry, Main Roads and Mines store large quantities of explosives, what regulations or security control the safe storage of such explosives,

taking into account the dangers of theft with subsequent acts of terrorism which endanger buildings and could cause loss of life in Queensland?

Answer:—

The storage of explosives in Queensland, other than on mines, is governed by the Explosives Act 1952-1980 and regulations. The storage of explosives on mines is governed by the Mines Regulation Act 1964-1979, the Coal Mining Act 1925-1979, and the Petroleum Acts 1923-1976. In each case, the regulations specify standards of isolation, construction, and security of magazines for the storage of explosives, which provide security against unlawful entry and safety for the public.

17. CALLIDE DAM

Mr Hartwig asked the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs—

With reference to the new "B" class Callide Power Station, about to start construction at Callide near Biloela what plans has the Water Resources Commission to erect flood gates on the Callide dam, which when placed in position will increase the capacity of the Callide dam from 40 000 acre feet to over 100 000 acre feet thus providing adequate water for power house requirements and irrigation in the Callide Valley?

Answer:—

Water supply for the Callide "B" Power Station will be obtained from Awoonga Dam on the Boyne River. Although it is intended that water from Awoonga be pumped into Callide Dam and repumped to the new power-station the latter will not be dependent in any way on supply in Callide Dam itself.

The provision of the crest gates on Callide Dam to boost its capacity from the current 57 600 mL to 125 000 mL to provide water for ground-water recharge remains on the Queensland Water Resources Commission's program of works. In recent years it has been indicated that construction of the gates would, subject to funds being available, be scheduled to follow construction of Cania Dam on Three Moon Creek. The latter storage is scheduled for completion during 1982.

18. INDUSTRIAL LAND, YEPPON

Mr Hartwig asked the Minister for Commerce and Industry—

With reference to a large area of industrial land at Yeppoon which was acquired by his department approximately two years ago and set aside for industrial

development, what plans does his department have to clear this land and to have water and electricity supplied so that secondary industry and commerce will be enticed to the Yeppoon area?

Answer:—

I can assure the honourable member that the matter of development of the proposed industrial estate at Yeppoon is receiving attention. In fact, consulting engineers, W. J. Reinhold & Partners of Rockhampton, have already been appointed to prepare a conceptual design, together with detailed cost estimates of the work required to be undertaken to provide serviced sites on the estate. When this has been done, consideration will then be given to incorporation of the project in the department's future works program.

19. PETRIE-REDCLIFFE RAIL LINK

Mr Kruger asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) How much of the allocated funds has been spent to date on the planning and surveying of the Petrie-Redcliffe rail link?

(2) When will the plans and references be completed?

(3) What is the Government's intention regarding the timing of construction of the link?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) I am advised by the Commissioner for Railways that up until the end of February 1981, a total of \$34,636.25 has been spent on the planning and surveying of the Redcliffe-Petrie rail link. Survey plans relating to land acquisition will be completed during June 1981. Civil design and planning will be commenced when the necessary funds are made available, and these are expected to require 12 months to complete.

With reference to the timing of the construction of the rail link, this will largely depend on the availability of finance. However, members will appreciate the ground work is well under way.

I would advise the honourable member that I am keeping in regular contact with the honourable member for Redcliffe, who is in the forefront of local interest in this matter.

20. CONTROL OF DINGOES

Mr Kruger asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

With reference to statements about increased dingo population and obvious failure of "1080" in some areas and varying opinions of property owners over retaining the dingo fence—

(1) When will he make a statement about the repair and retention of the dingo fence or otherwise?

(2) What other methods of control have been considered apart from stronger "1080" dosage?

Answer:—

(1) Within the next three months following submission of a detailed and costed proposal by the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Board.

(2) The available dingo control measures of poisoning, shooting, trapping and exclusion fencing are all encouraged by the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Board, and following recommendations from the board I recently approved that the dingo bonus be increased from \$2 to \$5 per scalp as from 1 July 1981. Compound "1080" still remains the most effective and selective poison for dingo control.

21. USE OF LAND, CAPE TRIBULATION AREA

Mr Kruger asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

With reference to LO.56 Pt.Doug. Sub. E. Parish of Noah at Cape Tribulation—

(1) Did his department advise the Cape Tribulation Community Council by letter dated 2 June 1980 that his department had no proposals at that time which would involve alienation of the subject area?

(2) Has a lease been granted over 18 ha of land to a Mr Courtenay of Cairns and others?

(3) If so, was the lease granted in priority or was the proposed lease advertised so that others were aware that the land was available?

(4) Is there freehold land available in the area which could accommodate tourist facilities?

(5) Was the preservation of Australian teak considered when this area was being considered for a National Park?

Answer:—

The honourable member is obviously referring to a proposal to declare an area of about 15 000 ha of Crown land in the parishes of Tribulation, Noah and Alexandra, situated generally between the Daintree River and the Bloomfield River, a national park. Reservation in principle has already been approved and finalisation of the proposal is now being dealt with by the Land Administration Commission and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Apart from a proposal to grant a lease to a Mr Peter Courtenay and others of a small area, there were no proposals which involved alienation of the lands within the overall proposed national park area.

With that as background, the honourable member's questions are answered as follows:—

(1) Yes, in response to an inquiry by the president of the community council covering the vacant Crown land in the parishes abovementioned.

(2) A lease has been offered and accepted and is in the process of being recorded over an area of about 18.71 ha south of Cape Tribulation to Messrs P. and J. Courtenay, Mr John Recciti and Mrs O. D. Wyatt, who have formed a company, Powderum Holdings Pty Ltd, in which name the lease will issue.

(3) The proposed lease was issued in priority after examination of the circumstances involved and in terms of the authorities contained in the Land Act.

(4) I am not aware of the availability of any freehold land for such purpose.

(5) I would be sure that the National Parks and Wildlife Service would have considered all aspects of interest in proposing the area for reservation as national park, including timber species. There is no particular record that Australian teak occurred on the small area proposed for leasing previously mentioned, but in any case the lease will be subject to a condition that the lessee shall not at any time destroy any tree upon the leased land without the prior permit in writing of the Land Commissioner or contrary to any of the terms and conditions of such permit.

22. HOUSING COMMISSION PENSIONER UNITS

Mr Stephan asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

Will he give consideration for the erection by the Queensland Housing Commission of further units for pensioners or deserted wives with small families to cater for the number of one or two-bedroom size units at present required?

Answer:—

Yes. The commission builds a balance of single-bedroom, two-bedroom units and houses as well as conventional three and four-bedroom houses to cater for the range of clientele on its waiting lists, and this diversification program will continue.

23. RAINBOW BEACH-INSKIP POINT ROAD

Mr Stephan asked the Premier—

What stage has been reached in negotiations to release the connecting road from Rainbow Beach to Inskip Point presently held under a mining lease as this road is the only access road to Inskip Point?

Answer:—

I am informed that no negotiations are presently taking place.

24. COLLINSVILLE POWER STATION

Mr Powell asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) What is the generating capacity of the Collinville power house?

(2) What has been the average output during the past 12 months?

(3) How many employees does the power house have?

(4) What is the comparative cost of producing electricity at Collinville and Gladstone?

Answer:—

(1) 180 MW.

(2) In the 12 months to the end of January 1981, Collinville Power Station was operated to meet the requirements of the interconnected system and produced an average over this period of 60 MW.

(3) 190.

(4) The cost of producing electricity at Gladstone is approximately 40 per cent of the cost at Collinville.

25. QUEENSLAND BOATING AND FISHERIES PATROL

Mr Powell asked the Minister for Northern Development and Maritime Services—

(1) How many people are employed in the Boating and Fisheries Patrol section of his department?

(2) How many of these employees are actually working in the field?

(3) How many are employed in (a) Bundaberg and (b) Maryborough?

Answer:—

(1) The total establishment of the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol Section of my Department of Harbours and Marine is 74.

This is made up of one superintendent, two assistant superintendents, three regional officers, two officers who concentrate on prosecutions, one officer responsible for public education, one officer responsible for equipment, six clerical staff, and 58 field officers.

(2) The field work is carried out by the three regional officers and the 58 field officers, although the three senior officers also carry out field investigations and interviews when required.

(3) There are two officers stationed at Bundaberg and four at Maryborough.

26. TERM OF MEMBERS IN VICTORIAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr Fouras asked the Premier—

(1) Is he aware of the announcement on 11 March that Mr Hamer, the Premier of Victoria, will follow the Wran Government of New South Wales in legislating for an increase in the term of members of the Legislative Assembly from three to four years?

(2) Does he consider this to be a desirable trend?

Answer:—

(1) Yes.

(2) There are many arguments for and against such a proposal but my own personal view is that a three-year term is best in the overall interests.

27. REDEVELOPMENT STUDY OF CROWN LAND, KANGAROO POINT

Mr Fouras asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry—

Will he release the redevelopment study of the Crown land formerly occupied by Evans Deakin Industries Ltd. at Kangaroo Point, which was commissioned by the Land Administration Commission from Messrs Cardno & Davies Pty Ltd. in order that residents and myself as their member can take part in objective discussion as to the future use of this land?

Answer:—

As advised to the honourable member in reply to a similar question from him last year, the examination of the Kangaroo Point redevelopment study has not yet been completed. When that has been done the matter of making the report publicly available will be further considered.

28. POPULATION, AREA AND STAFFING OF POLICE DISTRICTS

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

(1) What is the actual and planned staff numbers of each police district in Queensland?

(2) What is the population in each of those districts?

(3) What is the area of land contained in each of those districts?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) The answer to the honourable member's question concerning the strength, population and area of each police district in Queensland amounts to quite a lengthy statement and I seek leave to have the reply which I have prepared tabled for incorporation in "Hansard".

(Leave granted.)

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid on the table the following document—

Details of actual strength of each Police District in Queensland, and population and area of each, are as follows:

District	Actual Strength	Population Approx (Latest Figure Available)	Area km ²
Beenleigh ..	82	103 000	3 000
Brisbane ..	263	160 000	500
Bundaberg ..	72	66 000	27 000
Cairns	132	80 000	113 000
Charleville ..	40	11 000	228 000
Dalby	53	30 000	32 000
Fortitude Valley	166	181 000	200
Gold Coast ..	174	140 000	1 000
Gympie	70	44 000	16 000
Innisfail ..	48	28 000	17 000
Ipswich	127	111 000	8 000
Longreach ..	48	13 000	227 000
Mackay	117	97 000	55 000
Mareeba	54	30 000	205 000
Maryborough ..	61	42 000	10 000
Mount Isa ..	81	35 000	345 000
Oxley	74	85 000	200
Redcliffe ..	117	137 000	3 300
Rockhampton ..	216	141 000	137 000
Roma	56	21 000	113 000
South Brisbane	181	227 000	200
Sunshine Coast	88	80 000	3 000
Toowoomba ..	108	102 000	9 000
Townsville ..	250	149 000	147 000
Warwick	68	37 000	27 000
Wynnum	57	81 000	600

These figures include Trainee Constables temporarily attached to various Stations in these Districts.

Police strength is constantly reviewed by the Department's Planning and Research Branch resulting in changes consistent with workloads and availability of manpower. Consequently details of planned strength for each police establishment are not available.

29. BALD HILLS/BRACKEN RIDGE HOSPITAL

Mr Akers asked the Minister for Health—

What is the planning and construction timetable for the Bald Hills/Bracken Ridge Hospital?

Answer:—

Documentation for the proposed Bald Hills Hospital is almost completed. The invitation of tenders will be subject to sufficient funds being raised to cover the estimated cost of \$1.5m. The administrator of the North East Suburbs Hospitals District is endeavouring to raise the necessary finance.

30. FORK-LIFT, MARYBOROUGH STATION

Mr Akers asked the Minister for Transport—

What is the possibility of having a fork-lift made available by the Railway Department for use by the goods shed staff for loading goods at Maryborough Railway Station?

Answer:—

I am advised by the Commissioner for Railways that the situation at Maryborough has so far been met by the hire of a fork-lift on those occasions on which it has been shown that available crane facilities have been inadequate. The need for the acquisition of a fork-lift will, however, be further examined in the light of the honourable member's approach. As will be appreciated of course, the ultimate determining factor, even if justification were established for the purchase of a fork-lift, would be the availability of finance.

31. TAKING OF BLOOD SAMPLES FROM RACEHORSES, MT ISA

Mr R. J. Gibbs asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

With reference to the recent illegal raid and taking of blood samples from racehorses by the Mt Isa police—

(1) Who authorised the raid?

(2) Is he aware that neither the North Queensland Racing Association nor the Mt Isa race club asked for police assistance?

(3) What has been the outcome of police investigations into illegal interference by Detective Ken Morris?

(4) Why were blood samples taken before the races and not after as is the customary practice?

(5) Does he expect charges to be laid as a result of the investigations?

Answer:—

(1 to 5) I am not aware that there was any recent illegal raid at Mt Isa Racecourse. Certain action was taken by detectives at Mt Isa Racecourse on 31 January 1981, and investigations into this matter are still incomplete, but it is hoped that the matter will be finalised in the near

future. It would not be proper for me to canvass police investigations at this time, and certainly not to project what action may or may not be taken as a result of such investigations. The matter of allegations made against certain members of the Police Force is under investigation by a senior superintendent and an inspector of police and their investigations are continuing as expeditiously as possible.

32. ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT OF POLICE IN SP BETTING

Mr R. J. Gibbs asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

(1) With reference to allegations by a former Police Inspector on the television program "State Affair" of police corruption in the illegal SP betting racket and further serious allegations that members of this Parliament are involved in a protection racket, will he take the necessary action to obtain the documents referred to on the program?

(2) In view of continuing and increasing public disquiet about the activities of certain elements of the Queensland Police Force will he instigate a judicial inquiry into the police force?

(3) Will he include as a term of reference of such an inquiry an investigation of any honourable member accused of being involved in the said racket?

(4) Has he received any information on the above matters?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) The former police inspector referred to by the honourable member retired from the Police Force on 2 December 1972. I am informed that his allegations were generalised, and one matter he referred to, namely, the alleged gambling premises in Mary Street, Brisbane, allegedly occurred over 35 years ago. I know of no involvement of police or members of this Legislative Assembly in receiving payments for alleged protection of SP book-makers. No responsible Government could be expected to institute a judicial inquiry into generalised allegations without reasonable foundation.

33. DEATH OF MISS J. A. WOODS

Mr R. J. Gibbs asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

With reference to the death on 1 March of Judith Alison Woods in the Nambour Police Watch-house—

(1) What measures were taken to ensure that Miss Woods was supplied with an adequate dosage of insulin?

(2) What account was taken of her condition as a diabetic?

(3) Did the arresting officers consider what the effect would be on a 17-year-old diabetic girl to be locked in a police cell overnight?

(4) Was a doctor called to check her condition at any time during the night?

(5) What has been the final report by the Government pathologist on the post mortem carried out?

(6) What medical reasons were given for frothing at the mouth by the deceased?

(7) Is he aware that rumours are rife in the local community that Miss Woods was raped in her cell?

Answer:—

(1) Police became aware of Miss Woods' diabetic condition about four years ago and that she required two injections of insulin daily. Prior to her being taken to the Nambour Police Station, two phials of insulin were obtained from her flat and stored in a refrigerator at Nambour Police Station.

(2) Miss Woods was visited half hourly by the watch-house keepers. She was informed of the method of operation of the communication system from the cells to the Nambour Police Station office.

(3) The arresting police officers ensured that medical provisions for her condition were available. They were also aware that the deceased girl had spent two previous periods of detention in police establishments.

(4) No. She was visited at half-hourly periods and appeared to be sleeping peacefully. There was no cause for alarm until 6 a.m. on 1 March 1981, when mucus appeared about her nostrils and the ambulance was contacted immediately.

(5) I am informed that, whilst it is almost certain Miss Woods died from a heart condition, the pathologist has not yet issued his post-mortem certificate, as tests on all specimens have not yet been completed.

(6) I am informed that frothing at the mouth is consistent with a person's dying from a heart condition.

(7) I am not aware of any such rumours. The post-mortem examination established beyond doubt that there was no evidence of rape or that any sexual intercourse had occurred following her detention by the police.

34 & 35. HIGH SCHOOL, NORTHERN BEACHES AREA

Mr Tenni asked the Minister for Education—

When will the high school on the Northern Beaches of the Barron River electorate be constructed and has settlement on the purchase of the land taken place?

Answer:—

Education Department ownership of land under consideration for future construction of a high school in the Trinity Beach area is not yet secure. Officers in my department are advised by their counterparts in the Department of Works (our agents in all site acquisitions) that, owing to some difficulties with the originally selected site contiguous with the new Trinity Beach Primary School, an alternative site had to be considered. It is reported that the technical site survey has now been completed, and I await a proposal from my colleague the Honourable Minister for Works and Housing for my approval to acquire if the report is satisfactory. Subsequent acquisition procedures will then be conducted through the Land Administration Commission. When acquisition has been completed and the site is fully secure, I shall be in a position to request my colleague the Honourable Minister for Works and Housing to order the design work for a new high school to fit that site.

Mr Tenni asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

Has the Education Department made finance available to purchase land and construct grade eight accommodation and an administration block for the Northern Beaches High School, so that it will be available for the 1982 school year?

Answer:—

At the request of the Education Department, my Department of Works is at present investigating a site at Smithfield as to its suitability for acquisition for high school purposes. Subject to a favourable report, a recommendation will be made to the client department that the site be acquired next financial year.

The initial decision as to when a new high school will be opened in this area is one for the Honourable the Minister for Education. In any case, it would not be practical at this point in time to provide a new high school to open at the start of the 1982 school year.

36. EYE HOSPITAL, CAIRNS

Mr Tenni asked the Minister for Health—

Has Dr Jim Peters of Cairns applied for a licence to construct an eye hospital in Cairns and, if not, will a licence be granted if such an application were made?

Answer:—

Dr Peters has not applied for a licence to construct an eye hospital in Cairns. The original application was for a twelve-bed hospital in which ENT, plastic surgery, minor gynaecology surgery and minor surgical operations were to be undertaken as well as eye care. This application was

considered by the Joint Commonwealth-State Co-ordinating Committee, which, in view of the number of beds and facilities available in the Cairns area, considered that another general surgical hospital was not warranted.

37. FALSE PRETENCES CHARGE, MR ANDREWS

Dr Lockwood asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) Has Mr Andrews been committed for trial before a District Court in Roma on a charge of false pretences involving the sale of a prime mover and trailer that were subject to a hire-purchase agreement?

(2) If so, what was the date of the original charge and the committal proceedings?

(3) Can any claim for compensation be paid under section 79 of the Auctioneers and Agents Act 1971-1978 before the result of the criminal proceedings are known?

(4) Was such a claim made on behalf of Mercantile Credits on 25 January 1980 and, if so, has the claim been delayed for legal reasons or purely because there is insufficient staff to investigate the matter?

Answer:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Mr Andrews was charged on 13 March 1980 and committed for trial on 27 May 1980 to the sittings commencing on 2 September 1980 at the District Court, Roma. He has been remanded to the sittings commencing on 12 May 1981.

(3) Yes.

(4) A claim dated 25 January 1980 by Mercantile Credits was received at the Office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs on 29 January 1980. The matter is being investigated by inspectors who are currently operating in the Roma district. The investigation is expected to be finalised in the near future, following which the claim will be referred to the Auctioneers and Agents Committee for determination.

38. RACING DEVELOPMENT FUND

Dr Lockwood asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

(1) In each category how much money has galloping, trotting and greyhound racing contributed to the Racing Development Fund since its inception?

(2) How much money has each of these racing sports been allocated from the Racing Development Fund to date by way of (a) loans and (b) grants?

Answer:—

(1 & 2) Under the authority of section 71c of the Racing and Betting Act 1954–1978, three-quarters of a per-cent of all moneys paid into on-course and off-course totalisators conducted on metropolitan meetings and Ipswich Saturday meetings is placed to the credit of the Racecourse Development Assistance Fund, as well as interest and redemption payments on loans made from the fund and interest earned on the balance remaining in the fund. The turnover on these meetings is not broken into galloping, trotting and greyhound sections by the TAB.

Advances by way of loans only made to date under existing legislation from the fund are \$4,997,000 to galloping clubs, \$1,254,000 to trotting clubs, and \$1,159,000 to greyhound racing clubs. Approvals not yet advanced are \$778,000 for galloping clubs, \$70,000 for trotting clubs, and \$408,000 for greyhound clubs, making a total approval of \$8.66m to date.

39. FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM

Dr Lockwood asked the Minister for Welfare Services—

(1) Have detailed discussions been held between Queensland, other States and the Commonwealth Government concerning the combined Commonwealth funding of the Family Support Services Program after the three-year pilot programs run to conclusion?

(2) What is the State Government's opinion of the various pilot schemes that were funded in Queensland?

(3) What will be the fate of the various schemes if the Commonwealth refuses to provide ongoing finance?

Answer:—

(1) No detailed discussions have taken place so far with the Commonwealth concerning continued funding of the Family Support Services Program, but I anticipate that these will follow soon after a meeting of the Council of Social Welfare Ministers in Hobart on 27 March 1981, when I shall be raising the issue.

(2) Generally speaking, the pilot projects under the program have been successful, and I am sure that the honourable member is aware of the splendid work undertaken by the Toowoomba Life Line Home-maker Project as well as the efforts of the Chinchilla Family Support Project and the Roma Family Support Project. All of these are regarded as having been very successful.

(3) If the Commonwealth Government refuses to provide ongoing finance, each project which desires to continue after the pilot phase will have to seek funds from alternative avenues.

40. SAUNDERS STREET OVERPASS, TOWNSVILLE

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

(1) As the Saunders Street overpass in Townsville was scheduled to be completed in October 1980 what problem, if any, is holding up work on this overpass?

(2) When is it now expected that the overpass will be finished?

(3) Because of the continued delay in the finishing of the overpass and the detouring of traffic along Boundary Street, Perkins Street and Morey Street over this extended time and during the long wet period, these streets have suffered a great deal of damage, will he see that the Main Roads Department meets the cost of restoration and that the Townsville City Council is fully reimbursed?

Answer:—

(1) Pavement works on the Saunders Street overpass project are being carried out by contract which was scheduled for completion in mid-December 1980. The contractor is having extreme difficulty in obtaining supplies of satisfactory aggregate for the asphalt production required to complete the pavement.

(2) Completion could occur within six weeks of a suitable supply becoming available.

(3) In accordance with normal departmental policy, arrangements were made with Townsville City Council regarding the council streets prior to works commencing.

41. WOOLCOCK/CHURCH STREETS INTERSECTION, TOWNSVILLE

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

As there have been further accidents at the intersection of Woolcock and Church Streets, and recently one caused the loss of two lives, will he take immediate action and give priority to the reconstruction of Woolcock Street and the installation of traffic lights?

Answer:—

Design of the Woolcock Street duplication is in hand, and the job, including the intersection with Church Street, could be available for release during the next financial year, providing the overall funding situation does not deteriorate further.

42. SOLAR ENERGY RESEARCH

Mr Wilson asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) What is the total Queensland Government funding in the current financial year for solar energy research?

(2) How does this compare with (a) each of the other State Governments and (b) the Commonwealth Government?

Answer:—

(1) The figure was provided to this Parliament on 12 March 1981.

(2) Reasonably, considering our overall energy resources. The Commonwealth Minister for National Development and Energy, on 24 February 1981, provided the following figures on current allocations by the Commonwealth Government and other State Governments for solar energy research—

- (a) New South Wales \$1.069m
- Victoria \$1.000m
- Western Australia \$0.880m
- Northern Territory \$0.133m
- South Australia \$0.104m
- Tasmania \$0.015m
- (b) Commonwealth \$4.1m

43. ELECTRICITY CONNECTION DEPOSIT FEE

Mrs Nelson asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) Has the SEQEB raised the electricity connection deposit fee for small businesses from \$200 to \$750 and for domestic dwellings from \$25 to \$40?

(2) What increased costs within the SEQEB have prompted these punitive increases?

Answer:—

(1) Security deposits were recently reviewed by the South East Queensland Electricity Board and as a result the level for some businesses did increase from \$200 to \$750. However, some increases were less substantial. Domestic security deposits were raised from \$20 to \$40.

(2) The reasons security deposits were increased by the board were:

(a) to recognise the fact that, since the board's last review in 1977, costs of all commodities as well as electricity charges have increased; and,

(b) to provide the board with some measure of cover for outstanding debts.

44. SPEECH THERAPISTS

Mrs Nelson asked the Minister for Education—

How many speech therapists will be appointed to disadvantaged State and special schools and special pre-schools in 1981 and what are the proposed increases in such appointments for 1982?

Answer:—

The present establishment of speech therapists within my department is 55. This will remain the establishment figure for 1981. During the course of the year, my department will make a submission to

the Public Service Board for an increase in the establishment. However, at this time, I have no idea what figure the board may determine as the establishment for 1982.

45. PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES, GYMPIE ROAD

Mrs Nelson asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police—

What planning is taking place within the Main Roads Department to provide safer pedestrian access for residents living on either side of Gympie Road between Rode Road, Chermiside and Beams Road, Carseldine?

Answer:—

The prime function of the Main Roads Department is to provide for the movement of through traffic along declared roads. It is not the function of the Main Roads Department to provide pedestrian access for residents adjacent to declared roads.

However, it is accepted that the department will provide facilities for the safe passage of pedestrians across carriageways where such facilities are warranted and can be funded.

It is within this context that I am able to advise the honourable member that the following locations on Gympie Road have been the subject of investigations which have now reached the planning or design stage:—(1) Darwin Street intersection where there is a proposal to upgrade the existing signals; (2) Gayford Street intersection where there is a proposal to install signals; (3) Aspley shopping centre where there is a proposal to replace the existing signalised intersection with an overpass; and (4) Chermiside Shopping Centre where existing pedestrian arrangements are being reviewed.

With regard to the overpass proposal at Aspley shopping centre, I can advise that a model of the proposed installation will go on public display in the near future. A requirement critical to the adoption of the proposal is the provision of fencing along the full length of the block in which the shopping centre is located to enforce the use of the overpass by preventing pedestrians from crossing the carriageway at random.

This raises an aspect with which I am particularly concerned, that is the abuse or lack of use of pedestrian facilities which have been provided at considerable cost. For example, in the three years 1977-1980, four of the pedestrian accidents which occurred on Gympie Road were in close proximity to existing pedestrian facilities.

Pedestrian safety is largely a question of personal attitude and common sense. No amount of Government expenditure can protect those who fail to use the facilities provided for them.

46. PROSECUTIONS BY COMMISSIONER FOR CORPORATE AFFAIRS

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

(1) How many investigations were carried out by the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs under all the Acts he administers during each of the last five years?

(2) In each of these periods, how many prosecutions were (a) recommended by the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs, (b) actually instituted and (c) successful?

(3) Under what section or regulations of the Acts administered by the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs was each prosecution recommended, or instituted, in each of the above categories?

(4) How many companies were wound up before the Queensland Supreme Court during each year of this period?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) In view of the numerous statistics contained in the answer to the honourable member's question and the complexity of the information, I table the reply in full and seek leave to have the information tabled incorporated in "Hansard".

(Leave granted.)

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid on the table the following document—

(1) 1976-1977, 533; 1977-1978, 733; 1978-1979, 720; 1979-1980, 779; 1980-1981, 451.

(2) 1976-1977 (a) 1124, (b) 556, (c) 547; 1977-1978 (a) 555, (b) 486, (c) 477; 1978-1979 (a) 99, (b) 73, (c) 67; 1979-1980 (a) 421, (b) 393, (c) 393; 1980-1981 (a) 356, (b) 218, (c) 218.

(3) COMPANIES ACT

Section	1976-77			1977-78			1978-79			1979-80			1-7-80 to 28-2-81		
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)
38 ..				1	1	1									
54 ..	1	1	1				1								
61 ..	1	1	1												
64 ..	1	1	1												
81 ..													1	1	1
117 ..	2	2		1	1	1							3		
122 ..													Note 2		
													Note 2		
134 ..	1	1	1				1								
136 ..	1	1	1	4	4	4				2	2	2			
158 ..	6	6	6	419	386	386	1			409	387	387	346	213	213
161 ..	1	1		1											
161A ..	1	1													
166B ..	1	1	1												
167 ..	2	1	1												
234 ..	4	3	3												
343 ..										1	1	1			
374B ..	1														
374C ..				20	12	6				1	1	1			
377 ..				1	1	1									
380 ..	3	3	3												
195 ..	952	401	401	10	10	10									
(Note 1)															
	978	424	420	457	415	409	3	413	391	391	352	214	214

Note 1—This Section refers to the 1975 Amendment Act
(a)=Recommended (b)=Instituted

Note 2—These matters have not been finalised.
(c)=Successful

AUCTIONEERS AND AGENTS ACT

Section	1976/77			1977/78			1978/79			1979/80			1.7.80 to 28.2.81		
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)
14 ..	12	10	10	10	9	9	8	8	8	1	1	1	3	3	3
15 ..	1	1	1				1	1	1						
26 ..	5	5	5	3	3	3							1	1	1
29 ..				1											
52 ..	1														
62 ..				5	3	3	1	1	1						
66 ..				1	1	1									
67 ..	14	14	14												
68 ..	3	3													
71 ..				4	1	1									
71A ..	1														
81 ..	7	6	6	1	1	1				1	1	1			
83 ..	9	7	7	2	2	2	3	1	1						
89 ..	1			25	20	20	35	24	23						
90 ..	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1							
96 ..	11	11	11	5	5	5	13	11	10						
129 ..	10	10	10	3	3	3									
Regulation															
25 ..	3														
27 ..	3	3	3	2	2	2									
28 ..	3	3	3	3	3	2									
29 ..	2	2	1	2	2	2									
30 ..	1	1	1	1											
31 ..	6	5	4	2	2	2									
63 ..	10	10	10	3	3	3	25	22	21						
64 ..							1								
	104	92	87	75	61	60	88	69	65	2	2	2	4	4	4

(a)=Recommended

(b)=Instituted

(c)=Successful

Act Administered	Section	1976/77			1977/78			1978/79			1979/80			1.7.80 to 28.2.81		
		(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)
Business Names	5	2	1	1	2	2	2									
	26 TOTAL:	2	1	1	3	3	2									
Contractors Trust	8	16	16	16	10	5	5									
	14 TOTAL:	32	32	32	10	5	5									
Invasion of Privacy	48A	2	2	2												
	TOTAL:	2	2	2												
Money Lenders	4B							2	2	2						
	6							1	1							
	13 (Reg)							4			6					
	TOTAL:							7	3	2	6					
Hire Purchase	26	1	1	1												
	37	3	2	2	4	2	1									
	41	2	2	2												
	TOTAL:	6	5	5	4	2	1									
Building Societies	221				6											
	TOTAL:				6											
Securities Industries	117							1	1							
	TOTAL:							1	1							

(a)=Recommended

(b)=Instituted

(c)=Successful

(4) 1976-1977, 171; 1977-1978, 149;
1978-1979, 129; 1979-1980, 130; 1980-1981,
80.

47. CONTAINER TERMINALS, FISHERMAN ISLANDS

Mr Burns asked the Premier—

(1) What strange philosophy is behind his statement that operators of container terminals at the new Fisherman Islands terminal will operate on a "Profit guaranteed or their money back" basis?

(2) Will he give details of other Queensland industries that operate on the principle that they can keep the profits and the workers and taxpayers will pay for any losses they incur?

Answer:—

(1) The report which the honourable member has seen relates to the negotiation of a termination clause with the proposed lessees of the container terminals at Fisherman Islands.

As the terminal operators have invested, or will invest, large sums on land which will be leased to them by the Port of Brisbane Authority, they have sought the inclusion in their leases of provisions whereby they can be compensated for immovable improvements which, in the event of the termination of their lease, are put to use

by the port authority. No compensation will be payable in respect of assets which the port authority does not wish to use.

(2) The effect of such a clause is not to meet operating losses incurred by the lessees but to enable them to obtain compensation for the value of improvements which are useful to the port authority or another lessee on the termination of their lease. It could, of course, reduce the loss of their investment in port assets as distinct from operating losses should they encounter unexpected adverse conditions.

Such a provision is not unusual in a lease document and, in the form now being considered, represents an equitable arrangement between the port authority and the lessees.

48. CLOSURE OF COUNTRY TAB AGENCIES

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

What will be his attitude towards the unlicensed betting activities which may arise due to the closure of many country TAB agencies?

Answer:—

The Government's policy towards unlawful betting will remain the same as it always has been. It will not be tolerated and will be stamped out at every opportunity.

The Government is also aiming towards providing better services and facilities at all TAB agencies to attract those who presently feel they should bet elsewhere.

The honourable member assumes that many country TAB agencies will be closed. This is not necessarily so. But if such action is taken in the light of economic practicability, honourable members may rest assured that the Government will do all it can to provide alternative means of betting for those in country areas who wish to involve themselves in this particular sport.

SP betting is costing the racing industry millions of dollars a year and the Government will move positively towards eliminating it altogether.

49. TECHNICAL COLLEGE, GROVELY/
OXFORD PARK AREA

Mr Milliner asked the Minister for Education—

(1) Has he any plans to construct a technical college in the Grovely/Oxford Park area?

(2) If so, what is the location of the proposed college?

(3) What is the anticipated starting date of the college?

(4) When is it anticipated that the college will open?

(5) What will be the estimated cost of the college?

Answer:—

(1) The Department of Education proposes to establish a college of TAFE in the Grovely/Oxford Park area.

(2) The proposed location for the college is in Oxford Park between Dawson Parade and Essex Street and is backed by the Ferny Grove railway line on the southern side of the property.

(3) The commencement of construction of the college depends on the Tertiary Education Council approving this project and recommending to the Commonwealth Government that funds be made available for its construction. With these conditions met, it is anticipated that construction should begin early in 1983.

(4) Should construction proceed in 1983, it is considered likely that the first intake of students will take place in January 1984.

(5) The cost of constructing and equipping this college has been estimated at \$2.495m based on December 1980 costs.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH/STATE TAX-SHARING
ARRANGEMENTS

Mr CASEY: In directing a question to the Premier I ask him to recall that during the McPherson by-election campaign, the Prime Minister described the proposal of the State Premiers for a new Commonwealth/State tax-sharing arrangement as "bland". In view of the Premier's more recent discussions with the Prime Minister on this subject, will he clearly indicate to the Parliament if the Prime Minister still holds that view or whether there is some possibility, at the forthcoming Premiers Conference, of obtaining a new agreement more equitable to the States?

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: The discussions that I, together with the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, had yesterday with the Prime Minister did not reach any finality or definite conclusions. We had lengthy discussions. I outlined very clearly, as did Dr Edwards, that we were determined to make sure that Queensland received its entitlement.

We also indicated that we would not accept the idea that because we received certain benefits through royalties and rail freights we should give advantages to other States. As I indicated to the Prime Minister, it amazes me that Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia are now to be looked upon as the poor relations, and that Queensland and Western Australia should receive less in order to help them. We made that quite clear. No conclusion was reached. I would not know quite what the Prime Minister was thinking, because he did not tell me.

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON AUTHORITIES TO
PROSPECT

Mr CASEY: In asking a question of the Minister for Mines and Energy, I direct his attention to a statement by the Treasurer in today's "Courier-Mail" stating his intention of applying an auction-type system to the letting of future authorities to prospect. I ask: In view of the grave concern being expressed within the mining industry over the apparent inconsistency of State Government policy as evidenced, first of all, by the granting of an authority for Oaky Creek without tenders being called, and now Winchester South where tenderers were not really aware of the Government's requirements, thus creating even more confusion, will the Minister make a detailed statement to this Parliament outlining clearly the guide-lines of the latest Government policy concerning the tendering, auctioning or letting of authorities to prospect?

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I am aware of the article in the newspaper today. I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that this Government will do the best it can to make the

mining industry a healthy and profitable one, and it will reap as many benefits as possible for the people of Queensland. Government policy regarding authorities to prospect and mining leases will be discussed in the near future. I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that the Government will act properly and as a team to ensure the best possible results for the people of Queensland.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOURCES TAX

Mr ROW: I ask the Premier: Does he share the concern of Queenslanders at persistent threats by the Commonwealth Government to introduce a resources tax? What action does he plan to take in relation to this threat?

Mr BJELKE-PETERSEN: I did partly answer that question in my reply to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition. We are aware of a number of statements made by responsible men in Canberra in relation to a resources tax. We have sought to indicate to the Prime Minister that we will not and cannot accept such a suggestion, because we believe the companies concerned are generally paying very heavy company tax and their employees are paying very high personal income tax, and Canberra ought to be satisfied with that. I remind the Prime Minister that on two occasions he has made public statements that the resources tax already being applied to two Queensland companies will be removed.

I can only urge the Prime Minister to work towards the removal of taxes rather than to talk of the introduction of additional taxes. I hope he will reduce taxes as he once said he would.

HAND-HELD RADAR SPEED GUNS

Mr ROW: I ask the Minister for Transport: As chairman of the Road Safety Council and administrator of the Traffic Act, does he agree that there is a divergence of opinion between the RACQ and police technical officers on the efficacy of the hand-held radar speed gun under certain circumstances? I also ask whether the RACQ or the Road Safety Council is under the impression that the gun is to be withdrawn from the metropolitan area?

Mr LANE: The question of whether or not hand-held speed guns will be withdrawn from use in the metropolitan area is, of course, a matter for my colleague the Minister for Police. However, in my capacity as chairman of the Road Safety Council and Minister charged with the administration of the Traffic Act, I feel I have a duty to point out that use of speed guns in high density traffic situations has concerned me for some time.

After considerable difficulty the RACQ was able to obtain a radar gun from overseas for testing.

Its experts carried out exhaustive tests and placed those findings before the Police Department. The Police Department then co-operated fully with the RACQ and accepted the proof presented by RACQ technical officers that inaccurate readings could occur in high density traffic and some other unfavourable conditions. In other words, the Police Department, as was stated in this morning's Press by Assistant Commissioner Purcell, admits that speed guns have their limits.

The assistant commissioner also stated that departmental policy dictates that the use of speed guns is restricted to those areas where traffic density and external physical influences will not affect the correct recording of vehicle speeds.

The divergence of opinion on the efficacy of the gun in certain circumstances to which the honourable member referred obviously does not exist. Where the real divergence lies is whether the gun should be, or is to be, withdrawn from the metropolitan area. Assistant Police Commissioner Purcell says that it will not be withdrawn. The Road Safety Council information suggests that a decision has been reached that it will. The RACQ has a representative on my Road Safety Council.

Finally, may I suggest that, irrespective of what occurs, public interest has been served in making drivers aware of the tests carried out by the RACQ and the admission by the police of the limitation of the use of speed guns. The radar gun is still a very useful evidentiary tool in court proceedings, but the RACQ has served the public well by proving that it has its limitations and that it should be used in all circumstances only by well-trained personnel.

At 12 noon,

In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 17, the House proceeded with Government business.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—THIRD ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 12 March (see p. 226) on Dr Lockwood's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, on which Mr Casey had moved the following amendment—

“Add to the Address the following words—

‘However, it is the opinion of this Legislature that your advisers have failed to immediately initiate both the electoral and Government reform in this State as indicated by them during the election campaign and they have shown no real intent in their legislative program to properly overcome the problems of unemployment and

economic hardship which face all sections of the Queensland community, despite the fact that the boundless mineral and rural wealth of this State has provided them with ample opportunity, and that they have therefore lost the confidence of this House.”

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the honourable member for Toowong, I point out that this is his maiden speech and I expect the same courtesy to be extended to him as is extended to all other newly-elected members.

Mr PRENTICE (Toowong) (12.1 p.m.): We stand on the threshold of a new decade, members of a new Parliament that will take us right up to the brink of that fateful year, 1984. There is very little that one can say with certainty about the 1980s, but there is one prediction that I would make and ask honourable members to consider. I believe that in this next decade our system of democratic government and our maintenance of a free, open society will be put more vigorously to the test than ever before. Failure to meet this challenge and to respond to the problems of the '80s will ensure that the dire predictions of 1984 will overtake us.

As that noted fiction writer John Le Carré said—

“We say in the West that we want to produce the loosest possible system which gives the greatest amount of individual freedom to each individual and minority. But in the defence of the individual we have to turn ourselves into a collective. Whatever wars rage outside, there remains a constant one inside the open society versus the closed one.”

And indeed, unlike previous decades, these new threats will arise from within our society. The threats of widespread unemployment—of unrestrained and uncontrollable union power, of a lack of any community consensus about the values and goals of our society, and of the unrestrained or misapplied use of technology—these we can easily identify.

I cannot offer specific solutions for each of these problems here and now, but what I do want to assert is that here in Queensland a fundamental prerequisite exists without which the solutions to other problems are rendered impossible. That prerequisite is that people of this State must feel that their democratic and parliamentary institutions are worth supporting and are capable of finding solutions which are enduring and sensible and which unite rather than divide our community. In turn, this means that the Parliament should truly represent all the people of our State, and also it should be the master of and not the rubber stamp for the Executive Government.

It is all very well to talk about democracy, but the word is used in so many ways that

its meaning has become distorted. Margaret Thatcher put it very clearly when she said—

“It was Abraham Lincoln, in one of the finest speeches of all time, the Gettysburg Address, who gave us the truest definition of democracy—government of the people, by the people, for the people.”

She went on to say—

“Note well what this does not mean. It does not mean government of a section of the people, by a section of the people, for a section of the people. On the contrary, its aim is to ensure that no section or group predominates over any other, the interests of each and every group are equally entitled to consideration. No interest, no minority is to be discarded or forgotten. Nor is Government's consideration to be limited to those who are represented by some trade association, union or action group. Most people don't belong to such organisations but their rights are every bit as important as those who do.”

I come to this House proud to call myself a Liberal, proud to be a part of the great reforming tradition of Australian politics, the tradition which gave Australians universal suffrage and democratic Parliaments, which was responsible for most of the major reforms in social welfare this nation has seen, and which has given this nation a great party, the Liberal Party, which is beholden to no sectional interest or to the dictates of some faceless organisation, but which is truly the party of all Australians.

I come to this House proud to belong to the tradition of men like Alfred Deakin and Robert Menzies. I believe, as Menzies said in 1944, that the party which I represent “. . . took the name Liberal because it was determined to be a progressive party, in no sense reactionary, but believing in the individual, his freedom, his rights and his enterprise.” It is because I call myself a Liberal that I repudiate both the failed doctrines of socialism, on the left, and of conservatism, on the right. I would also remind honourable members of another comment of Sir Robert Menzies—

“There is no room in Australia for a party of reaction. There is no useful place for a policy of negation.”

But, most importantly of all, I am a Liberal because I believe in the capacity of men and women of goodwill to work together in freedom, and through open and honest democratic institutions, to achieve a better world for this generation, and for the generations to come.

Whilst Governments have a responsibility to act in the interests of the people as a whole, it must never be forgotten that freedom can more easily be lost through increasing bureaucracy, legislation and regulation than through active, vocal and critical participation of the individual in the politics of the State. Lack of knowledge will lead to greater injustice, apathy and anarchy than an open, honest and listening Government can ever do.

It falls to the Government to decide upon the thrust of its legislation and the administration of this State. On looking at this area, there are comments that must be made. All too often governments—and this Government is no exception—see their duty as providing band-aid solutions to problems as they arise. The end result is a piling of legislation upon legislation, regulation upon regulation and statutory body upon statutory body. And this comes from supposedly free-enterprise governments. Indeed, almost all governments, whatever their political colour, seem to be mesmerised by the rule: legislate, regulate or perish!

The fact is that business in this State is becoming hidebound by regulation. Government has a responsibility to restrain its law-making enthusiasm and to actively seek to reduce the restraints upon the lives of individuals and businesses. There are significant initiatives that can be taken by Government and by the Parliament in this direction. I would strongly recommend to the Government that it consider the establishment of a body to investigate and report to Parliament upon such legislation, regulations and regulatory bodies, with a view to removing them from the statute books. I know that establishing a bureaucratic body to cut down on red tape and regulations may appear to be contradictory, yet perhaps in this area it is a matter of setting a thief to catch a thief. It has been done before. In British Columbia between 1975 and 1979 there existed a Department of Deregulation, which was ultimately incorporated into the Ministry of Finance. Notwithstanding that change, I understand that the exercise was successful in reducing the amount of regulatory and statutory interference.

In short, what I am saying is that whilst Government has a responsibility to make laws, it has an equal responsibility to ensure that we as a State do not become so burdened by regulation and legislation as to suffer the loss of so many small businesses and to cripple the potential of so many others. The small businessmen I talk to in my electorate echo this complaint about red tape—form upon form, regulation upon regulation, interference piled on interference. Instead of a multitude of advisory bodies, perhaps we would find that many of the problems of small business would be better solved by letting people do their own thing and freeing them from the stranglehold of Government interference.

Now, it is in this area that I look to the Opposition benches with concern, for that great observer of society Alexis de Tocqueville was right when he wrote—

“Democracy and socialism have nothing in common but one word—equality. But notice the difference: while democracy seeks equality in liberty, socialism seeks equality in restraint and servitude.”

To my colleagues on the other side of the House I say this: whilst I come to this place with certain beliefs and principles which will

guide me in my actions, equally I come with an open mind, for no party holds a mortgage on good ideas; no party or individual can hope to be always right.

What I must stress, however, is my deep philosophical commitment to tolerance and individual liberty, to diversity and personal autonomy, to creativity and enterprise; and, whilst I believe that in a society where tags are applied to people and philosophies—the end result being that some see all unions as being too powerful and undemocratic, capitalists as being fat, uncaring men puffing on big cigars, and those in receipt of unemployment benefits as being dole bludgers—I must state my belief that there need be nothing inherently contradictory between capitalism and compassion; there need be no conflict between profit and people. Indeed, it is only by encouraging the adventurous, the daring, the innovative and the enterprising to flourish and prosper—and to make profits—that we can create the community wealth which gives us the wherewithal to help those who are underprivileged in our community.

Neither the prejudices of party politics nor those that may exist in the community should influence our decision-making. Whilst we live in a time when many people are cynical of the political process, we have a duty to restore their faith and to show that politics is still relevant and can overcome the challenges of the future.

People are tired of the politics of mere words. They have heard all the clichés before. In my view, they are now more than ever seeking a candid, direct response from their politicians. They have had a gutful of that strange rule that seems to say that, if the other party say it, then it must be wrong. It's at about this time that I would expect some to reflect that the real world just is not like that.

Yet my response must be—if not, why not? I seek not to take the politics out of Government, but rather to include the people of this great State in an ongoing debate on the future. And, if the people of Queensland are to be included in our Government, then they must have confidence as to their influence. To gain that confidence they must have a parliamentary process which allows for a full debate on issues of importance which not only permits but also encourages all necessary examination of the action of Government.

The facts are that this Parliament is woefully served in this area. Even though I have been here for but a short time, I see the absolute necessity for this Parliament to provide the wherewithal of open Government, open criticism and informed debate. I am appalled at the lack of opportunity for effective questioning of the Government at question-time, the lack of time set aside where Government business does not take precedence over private members' motions and the restricted time available for consideration of legislation. I am delighted that Mr Speaker in his wisdom has indicated that

he will call together a meeting of the Standing Orders Committee to consider these matters. Given that action, one wonders at the sincerity of an Opposition that seeks ad hoc changes to Standing Orders at the time when they should be seeking to put their views before this committee.

However, the question of parliamentary reform does not end with the Standing Orders. There is a glaring need to provide a better mechanism for the examination of Government expenditure and Government works. A Parliament, however streamlined its Standing Orders, simply does not have the time for effective scrutiny without an effective and wide-ranging committee system. I speak not only of public accounts and public works committees but also of the need for an immediate all-party examination into the establishment of legislative and general purpose committees that can on a continuing basis, not just when the Parliament is in session, keep a close scrutiny on Government action.

We are not elected by the people of Queensland merely to rubber-stamp the decisions of the Executive or to turn a blind eye to Government action or inaction. The people we represent are entitled to demand that we play our part in ensuring that their money (and it's not the Government's money; it is their money) is well spent.

This cannot be done under the existing system. It is not a matter of party politics. It is simply a matter of proper representation.

Open government should be a reality, not a political cliché. The people of Queensland should be able to expect openness, honesty and integrity from their politicians. I have sought to encourage the electors of Toowong to take an active—indeed, critical—role in my representation. From their contribution, together with my observations, there are certain matters which relate to Toowong and Queensland that I feel an obligation to raise.

Firstly, I look to the Government's expressed concern relating to the take-over of Queensland companies. I note the Governor's speech, in which he said—

"With mineral resources promising long-term security, the Government's role is to husband these resources wisely, converting them into jobs, income and improved living standards."

That is a concern that I share. But it is with a sense of indignation that I hear of investment corporations to stop take-overs and unit trusts for Queensland development, on one hand, and then see, on the other, the Winchester South exploration rights being handed to a consortium consisting of an overseas multinational, a southern shopping-centre, and a Queensland with a minority interest—and all this in a brief Cabinet discussion without prior consultation with Treasury! What price Queensland companies now?

The Government cannot have it both ways, and what we should be seeking to do is provide every opportunity for Queenslanders to own Queensland resources. If it is said that the development capital is not available to local companies, then how could a Queensland company have available the necessary finance for Winchester?

Unless this Government is prepared to ensure that such matters are seen to be considered in detail and that they are properly explained to the public, who can blame the public for raising questions about the propriety of tender procedures? The age-old maxim that not only should justice be done but it must be seen to be done carries a serious and timely warning to the Government in its future dealings.

The Government must be prepared to give Queensland enterprise an opportunity to participate, in a majority sense, in Queensland's future. And if in the Winchester arrangements that means doing away with up-front bonuses for the Government, then so be it.

I must say that I talk about the Winchester South arrangements without great knowledge, for even as a member of this Parliament I know no more than what has been in the Press or "Hansard". What could be more appropriate for an effective parliamentary committee system?

Another matter of concern to my constituents is sand-mining on Moreton Island. I am compelled to place on the public record my view that the Government should allow no mining on the island. Moreton Island can provide an area of natural wilderness and tourist potential that will become more and more important as the suburban sprawl spreads through the south-east corner of Queensland. In twenty or thirty years, such an area will be of unrivalled benefit to all Queenslanders. The cost of a mining ban may be great; the benefits will be greater.

I raise one matter amongst many that require urgent Government action in my electorate, and that is the question of traffic and parking.

The Toowong electorate has a rapidly developing commercial district that suffers greatly from a lack of parking facilities. Indeed, at peak hours, parking in this area is virtually non-existent. I would ask that the Government, though the Department of Transport, give careful consideration, in any future development of land adjacent to the Toowong railway station, to the needs of the centre as a whole. It will not be sufficient merely to cater for the interests of rail commuters when so much could be done to alleviate the overall problem.

Equally, I would ask the Government to consider the future of the High Street Bridge in Toowong. This bridge is Railway Department property and has been such a bottleneck that it has attracted the interest of architecture and town planning students for

years. The need for a solution to the problem will increase as the time goes by. That solution—be it an overpass from Moggill Road to Benson Street, or another of the available alternatives—will become essential to future development.

We are all the product of the experiences that have shaped us and taught us. My introduction to politics was through the Young Liberal Movement for two years. It gave me cant voices of Liberal political opinion in Queensland and Australia today. I had the honour to be State president of the Young Liberal Movement for two years. It gave me many friends, and I owe to it a great personal debt.

To all of those young men and women who, like me, become involved in political parties, let me make one recommendation: never be afraid to criticise, and never be afraid to stand up for what you believe is right. A party that cannot tolerate sincere and forthright criticism is not worthy of your loyalty. And for those young people who might despair at the prospects for political reform today, let me recall the immortal words of Robert Kennedy—

“Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or strives to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope.

“And crossing each other from a million different centres of energy and daring, those ripples can build a current which will sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

“Moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence, but it is the one essential, vital quality for those who seek to change a world which yields most painfully to change.”

Finally, Mr Acting Speaker, let me pay tribute to my predecessor, Charles Porter, who was a man of courage and conviction. Charles Porter is now a part of the history of this Parliament. A man who was prepared to hold his principles, he made his mark as a backbencher and then in Cabinet. Although he and I disagreed on many matters, Charles was a member of integrity who was never afraid to express his views openly and forthrightly.

Today I have outlined my thoughts in some detail. I did so because I believe that my constituents are entitled to the fullest account of my beliefs and attitudes. I have invited them in the past to come to me, not only with their problems, but also with their criticisms. I invite them to do so again today.

I do not believe in rocking the boat for the sake of grandstanding. I will not attack my colleagues in the coalition—or, indeed, the Opposition—merely to score political points, but I will in this Parliament express my views openly and without fear or favour. My constituents are entitled to expect no less.

When my contribution to this place comes to be judged, I hope that it will be judged according to the words of Alfred Deakin, who said—

“It is the duty of Liberals . . . to tread as ever the paths of progress. In doing so we will make mistakes but we will leave the world on the whole a better place than we found it.”

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (12.23 p.m.): In taking part in the Address-in-Reply debate, at the outset I take advantage of the opportunity to express my pledge of loyalty and that of my constituents to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. At the same time, I pay tribute to the Governor and his wife for their interest in the State of Queensland. They have continued to travel extensively and have certainly gained knowledge of the basic ideas and ideals that make Queensland tick. They are great people to have in Queensland, people who will do much to accentuate the development of the State and to help it in the future.

I congratulate Mr Sel Muller on his re-election as Speaker. I thank him for the part he played in the last Parliament, which was the first one I took part in.

Since the commencement of this session we have heard much about the amendment of Standing Orders. It has been suggested that various and extensive amendments are needed. I believe that our Standing Orders are not so bad, and that we should be careful in making alterations to them.

I would suggest that the quality of the man elected as the Speaker is most important. In Mr Muller we have a man of whom we will be proud. He will go down in history as one of the great Speakers of our time.

I congratulate Mr Col Miller on his appointment as Chairman of Committees. He has played a big part in the Chamber since I came here. I am very pleased that he has seen fit to accept the responsibilities of his important office.

I thank the people of my electorate for their wonderful support which resulted in my being returned to the Legislative Assembly to take part in debates and to try to help the electorate I am so proud to represent.

The electorate of Warwick, despite some of its problems, has great times ahead of it. Primary industry is perhaps its most important industry, but secondary industry has increased in importance. I believe that that trend will continue. Primary industry has given us the necessary economic thrust. It has been handicapped by drought in the past 18 months. Drought is difficult to fight. Suggestions have been made by those who are perhaps wits that the time to fight a drought is when we are not in a position to do so. That is probably correct, because we have to fight droughts when people are in a really difficult position.

What I want to bring to notice today is the difficulty in having a shire declared drought-stricken. I realise that there must be guide-lines. It could well be that some people feel that they have to be guided by actual rainfall, temperature or something else, but I believe that the criteria should be that cattle are dying and water is scarce. They are the real guide-lines. We should review the guide-lines to see if we can get quicker action.

In these times of high costs and interest rates, people can lose their viability very quickly during a drought. It is very difficult for them to get back into production. We should do everything in our power to streamline the declaration of shires as being drought-stricken. I do not suggest that the decision should be made so quickly that a shire could be declared drought-stricken at the drop of a hat, but people become very frustrated and upset when months go by and their shire is not declared drought-stricken.

Mr Simpson: Parts of shires, too.

Mr BOOTH: That is right. The DPI has been very good in segregating parts of shires and making declarations concerning properties. But that is not the same as having a shire declared because a property declaration has to be renewed at, I think, two-monthly intervals. I prefer the declaration of a shire or, as the honourable member for Cooroora said, portion of a shire.

We should try to streamline the procedures so that shortage of fodder, and shortage of surface water and probably underground water to some extent as well, are the guide-lines for the declaration of drought-stricken areas.

Past droughts have highlighted the need for water conservation. It is only logical that when people are short of water during a drought they ask why the Government has let them down by not providing for more water conservation. I do not think it will ever be possible for any Government to ensure that everyone has sufficient water for irrigation. However, it might be possible to improve things.

I do not subscribe to the greedy and selfish attitude adopted by some irrigators. The water resources of this State belong to the people. Water allocations should be fair and equitable so that as many landholders as possible can be serviced, without a particular irrigator or a group of irrigators getting too much of a good thing.

Mr Tenni: You are dead right there.

Mr BOOTH: I believe that I am. It is something that I have looked at for a long time. Recently I heard a man say that the provision of water is like the provision of money: it does not bring out the best in people, it brings out the worst. We have to try to apportion the water under a system of allocations so that everybody gets a fair and equitable share of what is available.

There are many things that we in the electorate of Warwick would like to see done to help the cause of water conservation, but the first thing I want to see is the completion of the second stage of the Leslie Dam. The abutments have been raised and a definite decision has been made by Cabinet to go ahead with the second stage. Surely then it is foolish to dither around and await developments. Surely if there is money available—and there must be if we are to provide dams in other areas—we should be able to find the relatively small amount necessary to complete the Leslie Dam.

I am not suggesting that its completion would be a bonanza for everyone, but the completion of a project that should have been completed while the men were still on site will help some people. The project should be completed within 12 months, if possible.

We have been promised a resurvey of some prospective dam sites on tributaries which flow into the Condamine River. I will be interested to see whether, if this resurvey takes place, it substantiates the information we already have. I suspect that the information we have is not as accurate as we think and that the capacity of some of these sites may be greater than we anticipate.

I believe Swan Creek, Emu Creek and Merivale Creek should be resurveyed. After all, Emu Creek and Swan Creek are of about the same capacity as the main stream of the Condamine, so if we can obtain sufficient money we have the capacity to impound a fair amount of water. I believe the farmers in the area will be quite happy and able to use it.

These smaller sites might not look as attractive as, say, the Leslie Dam, but they have certain advantages. For instance, the rainfall in the area is much better than that in the area of the Condamine, and it might well be that with the greater rainfall available we might achieve the same or a better yield than we now obtain from the Leslie Dam.

There has recently been a resurgence of interest in the divergence of water from the headwaters of the Clarence River into the Condamine River. I am naturally interested in this matter, because if any work is done most of it will take place in my electorate. This project has been mooted for many years and I think it is high time we started to make headway, but I do not see how we can get anywhere unless we get co-operation from the New South Wales Government. If anything is to be achieved, negotiations would have to take place at a very high level, perhaps on a Premier to Premier basis.

We should also be conducting surveys to get an accurate assessment of just how much water would be available. There appears to be a great deal of conjecture about that, and surely it would be the first thing to clear up.

Two or three schemes have been proposed, and I should think that most intelligent engineers would be looking at a process by which water would gravitate from the upper reaches of the Clarence into the Condamine. If we went further down the Clarence in order to obtain larger amounts of water, it would have to be pumped up to the Condamine. This would involve additional expense and would probably upset the New South Wales Government, which does not want to see the diversion of too much of the water from the upper reaches of the Clarence. So I think the gravitation scheme is the one most likely to succeed, and for that reason I believe an accurate assessment of the likely yield is very important.

People further down river in New South Wales are also very interested in finding out just how much water is available.

Mr McKechnie: Put it into the Dumaresq first.

Mr BOOTH: We could put it anywhere, I suppose. Many people along the Condamine River want the water diverted, and they are prepared to pay for it. I think that the suggestion being made at present that the water be diverted into the Condamine River has a great deal of merit.

If we are to utilise the water available in the best interests of all concerned, substantial agreement should be obtained as to the quantity of water to be used in each State. It is not much use telling the people of New South Wales that water will be available to flow down the streams in that State unless we can be sure about the quantity. I believe that we should be considering the diversion of the Clarence River. First of all, we should try to clarify the quantity of water available; secondly, we should see whether we can reach agreement with New South Wales about the quantity of water that has to flow further down; thirdly, we should try to involve the Premiers to see if we can reach agreement.

I am particularly interested in the second stage of the Leslie Dam. There is nowhere else along the Condamine River where I can see our getting water as quickly as we can with the second stage of Leslie Dam and for the same amount of money.

Mr Moore: Do something about siltation while you are fixing that dam up, too, because there will be no dam in 20 years.

Mr BOOTH: I did not know that siltation was a problem. If the honourable member is sure that it is a problem, the department certainly should be looking at that matter, too.

My electorate of Warwick plays a great part in education. We have a number of private schools as well as an excellent State education system. At the moment there is a new school called the School of Total Education. It operates under a new concept, and we are watching it with interest.

Mr Scott: Would it take you as a student?

Mr BOOTH: It might. With a little bit of help, it might even take the member for Cook—not that I would really want him in the electorate of Warwick. However, if he is dissatisfied with his electorate of Cook, and if he wants to be educated, we might put up with him.

The home economics section of the Warwick High School has been re-equipped and upgraded. That is something that we particularly appreciate.

Mr Tenni: The Aboriginal settlement up there thinks that Mr Scott needs an education.

Mr BOOTH: They are probably doing a not-too-bad job with it; they will improve him.

As I was saying, the home economics section of the Warwick High School has been re-equipped and upgraded. The work will soon be completed. I have been looking forward to this for a long time. That particular section of the high school was well below standard, and we are pleased that the upgraded section is almost ready for occupation. Admittedly, we would have liked to have had it from the beginning of the school year, but I think that the students will be re-occupying it within a fortnight. It is coming along well, and I am very happy with that situation. However, some further maintenance is necessary on the high school, and I will be pressing for that in the near future.

At the present time there is a pre-school operating in a temporary building at the Glennie Heights State School in Warwick. I do not think that it is in the best interests of those concerned that the pre-school is operating in a temporary building. However, it has given all children in the Warwick area access to pre-school education, so some improvement has been made. In previous years anything from six to 12 children were unable to be accommodated at the existing three pre-schools in Warwick. So I am happy to see the pre-school operating at Glennie Heights. It has certainly overcome some of the problems. Despite that, I believe that a new pre-school should be erected at Glennie Heights. There appears to be a sufficient number of children to warrant the construction of another pre-school in that area. I see no reason why those children should not have the facilities that are available to children in other areas. I look forward to the time when a new pre-school is built there.

I pay a special tribute to teachers working in the field of special education. Warwick is reasonably well endowed with facilities for special education, although three years ago it was not so well equipped. Working in this field at the present time are a number of excellent teachers who are a significant help to disadvantaged persons. The Warwick West unit is a very good building and is going well. Although the Warwick East

school has rather a good set-up, it is much too small, which increases the difficulties of the teachers.

I now touch on something that was mentioned during the election campaign, namely, that the Education Department is planning small TAFE colleges to cater for students from small towns and give them the same benefits as those enjoyed by those who live in large towns without their having the problem of travel. That will be a great benefit in my electorate. The Warwick area is eminently suitable for such a mini-TAFE college. It certainly has the population to warrant it. I will be very disappointed if a mini-TAFE college is not established in Warwick at an early date. I say that because a great number of young people in that area would like to further their education, but travelling to Toowoomba or Ipswich is just too far for them. Sometimes they start a course, but after a while they find it is just not possible to work and continue the courses so they give it away. I will be pushing for the establishment of a small TAFE college in Warwick.

Mr Warburton: Will you continue with it?

Mr BOOTH: Yes, I will continue with it. I believe I will be successful.

Health matters play an important role in any society. I suppose that Warwick has been reasonably fortunate, but one problem is the absence of a nursing home. Although the Warwick Hospitals Board has received Cabinet approval for the erection of a nursing home, the raising of sufficient finance has created some problems. However, I believe that the board is on its way now, and that the million dollar mark has been passed. It is possible that a nursing home will be erected in the near future. The people would certainly appreciate any help they could get from the Treasury in that regard, because there is no doubt that a nursing home is an essential facility in any town.

I was delighted to hear a few days ago the Minister's statement in the House that the State's free hospital scheme will continue. That is one thing that most Queenslanders appreciate. Without doubt the free hospital scheme has tended to bring people to Queensland and to keep Queenslanders here. Such a scheme takes a load off one's mind because if one suffers illness one does not need to worry about the monetary side of things; one can get attention and the use of facilities that otherwise might not be available. If a patient is worried about his ability to meet his financial commitments, his recovery can be delayed.

Pensioners in hospital have been asked to make payments which they feel are a little too high. I, too, think they are a little too high. I am not saying for one moment that the pensioners who are in hospital want free treatment—indeed most of them would

like to pay something—but it is only right that we should have some compassion for them.

If a person has been a smoker all of his life, surely it is only right that he should be able to continue to smoke during the last few years of his life when he is confined in a nursing home. I make a plea that something be done to give pensioners a little more independence and can afford to buy cigarettes or tobacco, clothing, fruit, sweets, and the like. I know that hospitals boards have been given authority to alter financial arrangements with pensioners, but that has to be substantiated. More suitable guide-lines should be laid down for the use of hospitals boards in an effort to reduce charges for pensioners. Rather than the seven-eighths that has been suggested, I believe that two-thirds, or 66 per cent, would be much fairer, and it would enable pensioners to maintain their present way of life and to retain a greater degree of independence in their old age.

I wish to speak about the problems confronting people in institutions such as Chalinor Centre. I know that some of them are unable to take part in outside activities, but others have the ability to enjoy an outing. If they do not have sufficient left from their pensions after they pay their charges, some of the programs designed to help them will break down. If we claim to be people of compassion who are trying to help humanity in general, we should be reducing the charges and ensuring that the residents of those centres have sufficient money to enjoy some of the better things of life, including the outings they have been accustomed to. I hope that some progress can be made along those lines.

I turn now to main roads. Warwick, being a highway junction, has quite a few highways radiating from it. It is only natural that we should have an excellent road system, and I can say with some degree of assurance that the Main Roads Department has continued to repair, maintain and construct to a reasonably high standard the highways that pass through Warwick. It is now working on the junction of the Toowoomba and Brisbane highways, which has been a bugbear. A number of accidents have occurred in that locality. The restructuring of that junction is long overdue, and we are looking forward to its completion before Christmas.

Whilst thanking the Minister for what has been achieved, I bring to his attention a section of road that requires urgent attention. I am speaking about the highway from Maryvale to Fisher Park in the vicinity of Cunningham's Gap. Perhaps the quality of the road is not so terribly bad, but it has an enormous number of bends. The road is comprised of almost continuous bends, and is certainly below recognised highway standards. It should be straightened and rebuilt. That course should be pursued, if for safety reasons only.

Mr Tenni: It is said that you are giving excellent service to that area.

Mr BOOTH: I am certainly doing my best. I am glad to have that support.

Mr Scott: What has he so much to complain about, then?

Mr BOOTH: The honourable member for Cook brings in an interesting point. I believe that my job as the representative of the Warwick electorate is to bring forward those matters that are lagging a little behind. I do not make these suggestions in a knocking fashion; rather I do so in a tolerant and commonsense way. I am surprised that the member for Cook has not appreciated that.

Primary industry is the most important aspect of my electorate. One of the problems people have always had in primary industry—and perhaps they will have it for some time to come—is the lack of a satisfactory margin. Unless the producer receives a satisfactory margin over his present-day costs—and inflation has made this so much more difficult—he is in a great deal of bother.

Another problem—and this might be overcome in the near future—is faced by young persons who want to establish themselves on the land. Some of them have been reared on a farm and have had the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of farm life. Those of us who have had the privilege of enjoying the way of life on a farm would like to see that passed on. However, young people face great difficulty in obtaining finance on satisfactory terms.

We are looking forward to the commencement of the farm purchase scheme for young people. I suggest to the responsible Ministers that they use their utmost endeavours to bring about an early start to that scheme. Young people now find it virtually impossible to obtain the necessary finance to buy their own farm. Even those who receive support from parents, or perhaps from brothers, still find difficulty in making a start. Interest rates are very high and, of course, are levied immediately a loan is granted, which adds to the difficulties.

I turn now to the need for soil conservation and for more Federal assistance. No-one has yet convinced me—I do not think anyone will—that soil conservation is not a national matter. I sincerely believe that soil conservation will never be tackled successfully other than on a national basis and with funding by the Federal Government. It is only natural that a farmer should want to maintain his farm to the best of his ability, but many farmers have difficulty in obtaining finance for soil conservation at the exact time when the work is needed.

Some of the most costly soil conservation work is that which is of general community benefit. A farmer may not see a return from

such work and often has difficulty in raising the necessary finance if he has to carry out part of it. The stage has been reached when the Federal Government should come to the party. It should investigate the need for soil conservation and see whether it can assist in a general way in the pressing situation that has now developed.

One would be foolish to ignore the changes that are taking place in primary industries. For example, the number of sheep in Queensland has decreased by 50 per cent in the past 20 years. Admittedly, the number of cattle has increased, but I do not think it has increased by 50 per cent. Greater areas are now put under the plough. Although cultivation may return greater profits, fluctuations in markets for grain may pose problems. Of course, a number of people are cultivating land in marginal areas, and, although they may have had some success initially, they are now experiencing difficulties. Changes that take place must be watched carefully.

Another industry in which there have been changes is the dairy industry. It is perhaps not as important now in the State as a whole, or in my electorate, as it was years ago.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BOOTH: If the honourable member for Brisbane Central listens, he might learn something.

There has been some talk of reopening the dairy industry, but I believe that careful consideration should be given to that suggestion. In my opinion, it should not be reopened unless those who are in the industry can maintain a reasonable standard of living. It is preferable to have in the industry fewer people if they are receiving an adequate return. We do not wish to see many unhappy dairy farmers.

Mr Davis: The industry must be made more viable.

Mr BOOTH: Yes, it must have greater viability.

The horse-breeding industry has grown tremendously in the Warwick electorate and now plays a big part in its economy. Thoroughbreds, stock horses and exotic breeds are sold to people who take part in horse sports. We are fortunate to have in the district a large number of skilled horsemen and horsewomen, and they get great pleasure from playing sports such as polocross. There are also a number of pony clubs, and endurance and trail riding are increasing in importance. The sale of horses has become significant in the district, and tourists should be made aware of the variety of horse sports so that they may go to see them.

The breeding of thoroughbred horses is still of major importance because of the needs of the racing industry. Although I was happy to see racing separated from the

Treasury portfolio, I believe that the Minister who is presently in charge of racing may be overloaded and overworked. I am not happy with that situation.

Mr Scott: That was a very careful choice of words.

Mr BOOTH: I am picking the words as best I can.

I think the Minister could be overworked and overloaded. We should be doing something to relieve him.

When discussing the racing industry, I should say something about TABs. TAB agencies are very important in the community, and perhaps more so in country electorates. Some operators of smaller TAB agencies believe that their agencies will not be linked with the computer. That will cause problems. If we fail to link smaller agencies with the computer, people in smaller towns will lose a good service that they have enjoyed. At the same time, I am certain that the TAB hold will drop accordingly. If that should happen, less money will be available for distribution to the racing clubs. It will not be in the best interests of the racing industry if the small towns are not linked to the computer.

Mr Davis: Is the Warwick Turf Club to close?

Mr BOOTH: The Warwick Turf Club has been a very good club. Under the prevailing conditions, it has done really well. I am sure it will go from strength to strength. It now has a new president and I see no reason why it should not continue.

I am worried about the smaller TABs not being connected to the computer, as that could well lead to a drop in the distribution to the race clubs—and that is how the Warwick Race Club comes in. References have been made in the media to the desirability of having agencies operated by husband and wife teams. I cannot see any advantage in that. If a husband and wife team were to operate an agency, they would both think they had a right to an income. I see no reason for the change. Agencies should be operated with the aim of giving a living to the people involved. We should not mess around with the system.

A moment ago I said that the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police would perhaps be overworked by taking on the racing portfolio. Many people in local government feel the same way. They are upset with the fragmentation of local government departments. They would have been quite happy to stay with the Minister, believing that the Local Government and Main Roads portfolio is a full-time job. I am inclined to agree with that. If there are problems in this area, we should try to revert to the old system. The people in local government appeared to be happy and it is a pity that changes were made.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr BOOTH: I am not suggesting what the deal was or was not. I am putting what I believe to be in the best interests of the community and local government.

Mr Davis: It's your Government.

Mr BOOTH: That is so, and I am trying to influence it. It is a great pity that the honourable member has not tried to influence his party. If he had done so, no doubt his party would not have done some of the ridiculous things it did.

Tourism in my electorate and in other inland areas has gone from strength to strength. I was delighted to hear of the appointment of the present Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts, who represents an adjoining electorate. I believe he has an understanding of tourism in the inland areas, and I am sure that he will play his part.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BOOTH: I am quite serious about that. I am happy with him as a Minister and I am sure that he will be able to make friends.

The Hermitage Research Station in my area has played a great part in grain production, soil conservation and many other agricultural developments. However, I am disappointed that it has not played a part in developing a dry-land pasture. If anything will help develop the inland areas of the Darling Downs and further west, it is dry-land pasture. Not long ago it was thought that lucerne was finished because of the aphid menace. Lucerne growers have learned to live with the aphid. Nevertheless, much less lucerne is used in pastures. For that reason, there is a pressing necessity to develop a dry-land pasture.

I sincerely believe that an officer should be stationed at the Hermitage Research Station with no other brief than trying to find a dry-land pasture. Throughout the world, thousands of dry-land pastures are in use. It could be that many of them have been tried; some certainly have been. It might be that we have just missed the one that will take on. With increasing costs of fuel, land must be utilised to its fullest extent. It is important to pursue the idea of a dry-land pasture. I urge the Minister for Primary Industries to update the present situation.

In my area, the bee-keepers are having difficulty. The spraying of sorghum and other crops is causing losses in the bee industry. This problem could be overcome by greater liaison between bee-keepers and grain growers. That would give us the best of both worlds. Many people engaged in agriculture need the bees to pollinate their crops, and I readily think of sunflowers. The spraying companies should be able to tell bee-keepers and others when they intend to spray and what they intend to use. That is

the most important thing. If the spray used is residual, these people should be told when it is being used.

I should like to make one or two remarks on orderly marketing. I believe in orderly marketing. I see nothing wrong with the idea that people should make a reasonable livelihood from the work they do. Almost every profession sets uniform fees. A person needs only to go to a doctor to find that out. Perhaps the honourable member for Cook received the same fees as anyone else when he was in a profession. Wages are set by courts and tribunals. I have no quarrel with that. All I ask is that the primary producer be given the same opportunity as the rest of society.

I again thank the people of Warwick who have supported me. The fact that I have been returned is a great tribute to those who worked so hard during my election campaign. I hope that I can be as responsible this term as I was during the last term.

[Sitting suspended from 1.3 to 2.15 p.m.]

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Akers): Order! Before calling on the honourable member for Mourilyan, I remind honourable members that this is his maiden speech. I ask them to pay him the usual courtesies.

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (2.16 p.m.): On this special occasion it gives me great pleasure to convey the loyalty of the people of the Mourilyan electorate to Her Most Gracious Majesty, our Sovereign, Queen Elizabeth II. This loyalty is extended also to the Governor, Sir James Ramsay, and to her other appointed representatives.

I offer my congratulations to Mr Speaker on his election to that high office. I thank him for his kindness and courtesy when I first came into the building. I congratulate the other newly elected members and all re-elected members after coming through a tough, hard-fought campaign.

I congratulate Mrs Kippin, the previous member for Mourilyan; her campaign committee and her director on fighting a very tough and clean battle. I should like to mention also the two previous members, the late Peter Byrne and Mr Peter Moore and thank them for the benefits they fought for and won that we now enjoy in the Mourilyan electorate.

I offer my sincere thanks to all people involved at Parliament House—the staff and the security officers—who have been most helpful to me as a new member in finding my way round the building and seeking information.

I record a special thanks to my campaign director, my campaign committee, the ALP branches in my electorate, ALP members and supporters. I say a special thanks to senior citizens in my area whom I met while door-knocking and working hard, for their words of advice and wisdom and the cups of tea they offered me, which were gratefully accepted.

I find that after this Government has been in power for so long there are so many things needing to be done that I hardly know where to start. After 23 years of this Government, the future is of great concern to all. This Legislative Assembly is the place where we should look to the future with concern and sincerity and promise to do what we can for others and not merely feather our own nests.

Over the years I have followed parliamentary procedure very closely. I attended sittings in the old building whenever possible, and at times I found a lack of sincere interest in the welfare of the people outside the House.

I hope to take the House on a Cook's tour of my electorate and point out the problems that still exist after many years of this Government's administration. One of the first concerns is in the local authority area. My electorate contains two local authorities, and their problems are not unknown in other areas throughout Queensland. What concerns me is that these problems are known by the Minister for Local Government and all other Government members. They have the numbers in this House to introduce legislation to put local authorities back into their proper perspective, that is, as the guardians of the third tier of government after the Federal and State spheres. They are the people at the grass roots of the community and have to administer and have to provide the benefits that are needed throughout the State.

Many restrictions are placed upon them through legislation. This is why I appeal to the Government to do its utmost to repeal those restrictive laws and to bring pressure consistently on the Federal Government to widen the guide-lines covering local authorities in areas such as the declaration of disasters and emergencies.

Within a few days after an act of God such as a flood or cyclone a council can face severe problems. Perhaps families are cut off from food supplies and health services; children may not be able to get to school and workers may not be able to get to work. Councils can face problems with soil loss, crop damage and damage to residences. Such problems occur almost every year. In my electorate in Far North Queensland it is almost an annual event, and that is why I firmly believe that the State Government should exert pressure on the Federal Government to make more money available to local authorities, particularly in an emergency. After a flood there are usually wash-outs and damage to culverts and bridges that prevent people from going to town for food supplies. Such damage has to be repaired, but the Federal Government says, "You can't get any money until you have an emergency, and you can't have an emergency until you have spent all the money you have." This is contradictory and the State Government should be working hard to try to remedy the situation.

The State Government administers the Acts covering local authorities, and recent amendments have led to an erosion of local authority rights at the grass roots level. Local authorities deal with the people involved, and they know and understand the problems. In the past 12 months there has been a great deal of intrusion by the State Government into the areas of responsibility of local authorities in an attempt to take away some of the authority that rightly belongs to them.

Mining is another area that has been a cause of concern over the past few years. The top end of the Mourilyan electorate contributes a lot of money to State Government coffers through royalties and money spent on the extraction, transport and sale of minerals. The area suffers from a number of problems brought about mainly by the Government's lack of knowledge of the industry. In 1978-79 the Utah company alone made a net profit of over \$160m, yet the Queensland Government received less than \$55m in coal royalties. That one company made a huge profit yet Queenslanders, who own those assets, received just over \$50m in royalties. A number of other companies involved in the coal industry made large profits, the highest being \$80m and the lowest \$12m. Altogether they made a profit of over \$300m from the coal industry, yet the Queensland Government received only \$50m in royalties. To make that even clearer, let us take the case of a person who owns a property and takes it to a commission agent to be sold. What would happen if the agent sold the property for \$30,000 and then told the owner that he had made the sale and he could come in and collect his money, but when he arrived he was offered only \$10,000 because the agent took \$20,000 in commission? There would obviously be trouble. Yet this is exactly what the State Government is doing today. It is selling off our assets, and the people who own the assets and should receive the maximum benefit from them are receiving only a minimum benefit. This is a matter about which I and my party feel very strongly. If we could obtain more money from royalties we could in turn spread the benefits throughout the State by way of more money for education, welfare services, hospitals and better health services for people in isolated parts of the State.

Another area of concern in the mining field is that of the authorities to prospect. Many anomalies exist. Some companies can obtain ATPs without much bother at all, but private individuals have difficulty in obtaining them. ATPs are provided under different conditions. One company has to surrender half of its area after 12 months. An individual can receive an ATP for only 12 months. This is causing a great deal of concern. After discussing this matter with the big companies that have ATPs and the small private individuals who are seeking ATPs, I find that the crux of the matter is that each is trying to outdo the other. The mining companies say that they need

ATPs to protect them from the small miner, to stop him from pegging claims around certain areas and then forcing the big companies to buy those ATPs back from him for exorbitant prices. The small miner says that he does this because he cannot compete with the big companies that have ATPs, and therefore he has to get in and peg as many claims as he can before the Government grants ATPs. The whole matter should be looked at very closely.

Other problems in the mining industry concern the environment and conservation. Wherever there has been mining there has always been conflict between the miners, the environmentalists and the conservationists. I would like to see the Government come up with a system to overcome this problem. We know that it can be done if time and energy are put into research in this area. We live in a technological age, but are we making use of that technology? The Department of Primary Industries conducts research into soil conservation and into the growing of certain timber and plant species in various areas.

Today the big companies with their modern machinery can fill in the holes they dig in the ground. However, the poor little miner with his pick and shovel has to put up a bond of a few thousand dollars. He cannot afford to do this, and it is not fair when his position is compared with that of the big companies. By the same token, big companies need large areas of land. They cannot spend millions of dollars developing a small mineral area unless they have other areas to move onto.

The proposal has been put to me that there should be an inquiry into the mining industry, in conjunction with the Lands Department, and that areas should be set aside under Government control, free from all outside interference. Certain other areas should be made available to the small miner. When the big company works out its area it should be able to apply to the Government and, after consultation with the Mines Department, be given a long-term lease that is suitable for its particular type of mining. The big company could spend its money and receive a return on it. That would be an incentive to everybody, whether he be a big or small miner. We should never take away from people the incentive to better themselves. I believe that that would be the long-term solution to many of the problems in the mining industry today.

The New South Wales Government has come up with a similar proposal for the coal industry. As far as I know, that is the only industry in Australia today where such a system operates. When an area is about to be worked out, the Government is notified and, after consultation with the companies and the unions, it leases another area that is suitable for the extraction of minerals. The Queensland Government should be looking at this matter now. It should not wait until we find ourselves in a mess and then try to sort it out.

While I am speaking of the environment and conservation, I point out that the Mourilyan electorate contains rain forests, hardwood forests and swampy coastal land which produce unique timbers, including maple and black walnut. I know that Australian and overseas scientists have proved that although black walnut grows in Italy, France, some other European countries and also in Canada, which has maple as well, those overseas timbers do not have the same substance and make-up as the Queensland-grown timbers. Other parts of the State have similar varieties with the same name but the timbers in the rain forests of the Mourilyan electorate are unique in Australia and the rest of the world.

Mourilyan is perhaps one of the most diversified electorates in this State. It has mining, various agricultural products such as potatoes, maize, peanuts and sugar-cane in conjunction with beef, fruit and vegetables. There is also a fishing industry and great tourist potential, if the Government will spend some money. The electorate has the only protected harbour on the whole of the Queensland coastline—Mourilyan Harbour. Since the construction of the bulk sugar terminal, no further development has taken place. The development of Mourilyan Harbour has been spoken about for many years, but it has become a myth. In the term of this Parliament I will urge the Government to investigate the potential of Mourilyan Harbour. I believe it has a great future with such things as a fish factory, cold storage, and refuelling facilities for both the fishing fleet and a big game-fishing fleet, which would be part of the tourist industry.

The electorate has rivers and rain forests; with its beaches, rain forests, mountains and rivers, it is situated on the greatest and most beautiful part of the Queensland coastline. Nowhere else on the Queensland coastline can all these attractions be seen in two or three hours. That is a unique feature of the electorate. Other parts of Queensland may claim such beautiful spots but a tourist could not see all of these features in the space of one day. They can do that in my electorate.

The Mourilyan electorate is not excluded from the unemployment problem that exists throughout the State. With improved technology, the sugar-mills are becoming more automated and each year the work-force has dwindled gradually. Not only are the older people affected by this problem but also the young school-leavers, who have been forced by law to go to school to learn. When they have finished their education, they are given a certificate and told that they are as good as the next man and qualified for work. However, nothing has been done to provide jobs for these young people. Most would accept that these are the years in which to train young people. But we will not end up with very confident or happy youngsters to take their places in a society which is rightly theirs if all they can do is go round knocking on doors and living on the dole.

Education suffers from a continual shortage of finance, of teachers and of building improvements. I know of no area in the education system which has a financial surplus. I feel the Government should give great and grave consideration to trying to improve the conditions for our young people by providing enough schoolteachers to enable them to teach properly and not having the children learning in crush conditions. At the moment the children race off school buses, race into a class as the bell rings and go from class-room to class-room. They are beginning to be handled like cattle.

During their early school years children are protected from pressure. But what greater pressure can be put on a youngster than to issue him with a certificate, tell him that he has received his education, that he is now qualified to take his place in the world and then send him out to find his place in society only to discover that nobody wants him. There can be no greater pressure or disappointment than that. I have seen it at first hand.

My four children have gone through the school system. Three of them have had to register for unemployment benefits; so I know at first hand the effect that has on our youngsters. They lose their dignity. All they are asking is the opportunity that we had when we left school—no more than that. The Government should face up to its responsibilities. If we do not do something in the next few years, we will compound the problem. We have already seen how the crime rate has risen since young people have been unemployed, with time on their hands. We blame the young people, but what have we done to relieve their plight?

This Government will have to measure up to its responsibilities in the provision of finance. Whatever our request to a Government department—and in the short time I have been a member I have made requests to the Education Department and the Local Government Department—the answer is always the same: "We are sorry. We know the need. We understand the problem, but we have no finance."

All honourable members are aware of the recent floods in North Queensland. I only wish that our Ministers had been there to witness at first hand the conditions that our schoolchildren had to put up with—walking through water, having to use toilets that would not flush because the grounds were flooded, and putting up with cement that was broken. Jobs that had already been allocated money for next financial year—in excess of \$400—were not able to be started this year to remedy such problems. How could that be so when just recently we saw the Government raise in a very short space of time the sum of \$8m to buy shares to save a Queensland company from southern take-over? In 1977 the Government raised over \$160m in 48 hours to save the building societies from a financial

crash. Such instances make it hard to explain to the people why the Government does not have any money.

This is a continual source of frustration. We approach Ministers and Government departments, but they all say, "There is no money." Recently a contract was awarded for the access road to the Burdekin Dam. The contractor was ready to start. He did not want to let his men go and then have to look for others at the end of the financial year; so he proposed that he spend the \$1.2m and that the Government repay him after 30 June when it received its reimbursement from the Federal Government.

These things have to be pointed out to the Government. The Government has to make statements on these matters. If it cannot provide the money, it has to tell the people why. These are sore points in the electorate. We are dealing with the people on a day-to-day basis. Our local authorities, schools and other bodies worthy of assistance should have Government help, but they cannot get it. That is particularly so at this time of year—and that is a point I would like to push home very strongly.

The smaller towns of our electorates lack Government services. For instance, the doctor's regular visit to Mt Garnet is scheduled for once a fortnight. However, if a public holiday should fall on that day, the town is struck off the list and does not receive a visit for a further fortnight. In other words, Mt Garnet would not receive a visit from a doctor for four weeks. That town has been stripped of nearly all Government amenities. The clinic sister there does a tremendous job and keeps the town going in the absence of a doctor. Other areas have to rely principally on clinic sisters, who provide a much-needed service and do a marvellous job in these small communities. However, the Government has the responsibility to supply better health services in those areas.

A large percentage of the people who settle in those small communities are either pensioners or young people with families. The pensioners have settled there because they could not afford to go to the bigger cities close to medical and transport services. The young people go there for employment. The residents of Mt Garnet and Ravenshoe have no regular bus service. If they have to go to see a doctor, they depend on friends to take them. They have no regular Government services, and the police and the school teachers are the only Government servants in the town.

Ravenshoe is at the end of the railway line. If a person uses the railmotor to travel to Cairns, he has to stay overnight and come back the next day. The services provided today are no better than those available years and years ago in the pioneering days. People who settled there and reared their families now find that, in their later years, they are putting up with the same difficulties and experiencing the same problems that they

worked and saved for years to overcome in an endeavour to give better opportunities to younger people. This is one of the matters that I wish to bring to the fore in this Parliament.

On the coast, towns such as Silkwood and El Arish have similar problems. These towns can be very hot and humid at times, but many people who are in a poor financial situation cannot afford to settle in the bigger towns. Elderly people often settle in outback towns because they are the only places in which they can afford to live.

Let me turn now to health services, and I mention Herberton in particular. There is only one doctor in Herberton, and he has to look after the people of Herberton, Ravenshoe and Mt Garnet. The Government gave approval two and a half years ago for a completely new nursing unit to be built, with a two-bed hospital, but so far nothing has been done.

The people now employed in the health services in Herberton have done everything that could be asked of them. They have provided a service to meet the needs of the people. But the sad fact is that a number of people have passed on while waiting to get into the geriatric unit. They reared their families and lived all their lives in the area, and all they asked in the twilight of their days was a place in which to settle. Unfortunately, they could not find one, because the Government would not allow any more people to be taken into the existing hospital. When construction of the new one begins, certain sections of the old building will be needed during construction. As I said, nothing has been done for two and a half years. To my knowledge, the parents of three people whom I knew personally have died while waiting to be admitted to the geriatric unit at the Herberton Hospital.

When one considers the millions of dollars that come from the Herberton mineral fields, one sees that the services provided by the Government are shameful. The Government closed the TAB agency because it said it was not operating at a profit. Other Government services are not operating at a profit, but we do not hear a scream about them. An attempt has been made to get figures so that some action can be taken, and the citizens have now asked me to ask the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police, who is in charge of racing, to see whether he will allow an SP bookie to be licensed in Herberton. If he will do so, it will make the people of Herberton, particularly the business people, very happy.

At present, there is only one telephone line to Atherton, 19 km away, which has the nearest TAB agency. A person who tries to ring up an hour before a race will not be able to get through, because there is only one telephone line for the whole western end of the Tableland and, obviously, more than one person wishes to place a bet by phone. People are now driving to Atherton on Saturday morning. Mum does

the shopping, Dad does the betting, and they stay on and have a few beers and bet at the TAB all Saturday afternoon. That has had an effect on Herberton, where there is one grocery store and two hotels. As I said, there was a TAB. There are a few miners and retired people in Herberton, and it is really only the two boarding schools in the Herberton area that keep the business houses going.

I believe that the Government could do much to assist the area. Let me give honourable members an instance of what has taken place. When the Mines Department made a request for money to grade 42 miles of road and build six creek crossings and two river crossings, \$10,000 was sent up there. That decision was so blatantly bad that the head of the department was flown up there. When he was on the spot and saw what was needed, he soon rectified the position.

I ask Ministers to spend more time in northern electorates to see the problems first-hand and try to understand them. When Ministers visit the North they are usually met by local authority representatives and given a nice cup of tea. Everyone shakes hands and everyone is friendly and sympathetic, but Ministers then go away and forget what they are told. Thirty years ago in the days of the ALP Government, when only trains were available for long-distance travel, the Premier and Ministers undertook tours throughout the State and spent a day and a night at small railway sidings so that they could meet the people and see and understand their problems. In this modern age of jet travel, no one has the time to do that.

I do not like Ministers, and the Government generally, taking the kindness, the favours and understanding of the people of the Mourilyan electorate as signs of weakness. That is insulting; it is downright outrageous that the kindness, favours and understanding of these people with problems should be taken as weakness. When Ministers visit the electorate, we will be working on the problems. We will ensure that they get a first-hand look at, and knowledge of, the problems. I am sure that that will make Ministers more understanding and more generous towards meeting the needs of the Mourilyan electorate.

I make a final appeal to Parliament concerning the needs of my electorate. In doing so, I am not asking for anything to which we are not entitled. I want benefits to flow to our high schools that are not well equipped for teaching science and other subjects. We have one large high school on the coast and smaller ones at Herberton and Ravenshoe. A new hospital building program is being embarked upon at Innisfail to cost in the vicinity of \$10m. These projects should be given all help and consideration. They will provide a foundation for the future of the electorate.

I believe that before things get better they will get worse. If we do not do something now, it will be virtually too late. The North has a great future. I would like to play my part in helping to build a foundation which, in the years to come, our children will look back on with pride, recalling the foresight of this Parliament and its members.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Powell): Order! As this is the first speech of the honourable member for Mirani, I ask honourable members to give him the courtesy that should be extended to him.

Mr RANDELL (Mirani) (2.47 p.m.): My first duty is to assure Her Majesty of my loyalty towards the Throne and Her Most Gracious person. My next charge is to thank His Excellency the Governor, Sir James Ramsay, for the speech he made when opening this session of Parliament. I congratulate Mr Speaker on his election to office and the Chairman of Committees on his appointment. I am confident that they will discharge their duties to the highest standard.

It is necessary for me to note that my opportunity to enter this House came as a result of the retirement from politics of my predecessor, Thomas Guy Newbery. I should be remiss at this time if I did not place on record my congratulations to Mr Newbery for a job most ably done over the past 15 years. As a private member of this House, and subsequently as a Minister of the Crown, he served the electors of Mirani and the whole of the State with credit to himself and distinction to this House. It will be my goal to emulate, in my own way, the efforts of my distinguished predecessor. I wish Mr and Mrs Newbery all the best in the years to come.

The recent election in Mirani was hard fought. This is no less than the privilege that electors have in our society, where we have freedom of choice seldom seen elsewhere in the world. The result was quite decisive for the National Party. I pay my respects particularly to the Premier, Cabinet Ministers and other parliamentarians who helped me to overcome the first great hurdle that all aspiring parliamentarians must encounter. It would be wrong of me if I did not thank those who elected me and the National Party organisation which assisted me, under the campaign directorship of my chairman, Mr Edgar Cliff, and secretary, Mrs Doreen Young. I express my warmest thanks to all people who assisted me. Regardless of how Mirani electors voted, I will serve the electors of Queensland to the best of my ability.

Last but not least, I must pay a tribute to my wife and family, without whose help and loyalty it would have been impossible for me to even stand for the seat of Mirani, let alone win it.

In the past decade, the Mirani electorate has undergone an immense change. It would have to be regarded as one of the most

significant electorates in the State, if only because of the important role it plays in the sugar industry, embracing six sugar mills and a power alcohol distillery which processes molasses from sugar-cane. The Mirani electorate produces the bulk of the sugar in the Mackay district and, along with the two other mills in the electorate of my good colleague the honourable member for Whitsunday, produces approximately 30 per cent of Australian sugar. This is of tremendous importance to the State and nation because of the central role the Mackay district plays in both the export and domestic sections of the Australian industry.

The 1970s have seen the beginning of a second industry of world importance, that is, coal-mining. The Bowen Basin is the centre of the richest coal-mining area in the world and, in view of the energy crisis, will certainly play a dominant part in world affairs. Australia's largest coal export terminal has been built at Hay Point in my electorate, and we have witnessed the establishment of two new towns—Dysart and Middlemount—to serve the coal-mines at Saraji and Norwich Park which are operated by Central Queensland Coal Associates, and the new mine at German Creek being developed by Capricorn Coal. The coal development is not finished. When the decision by Mount Isa Mines Limited to proceed with Newlands is taken, a third new mining town called Newlands will be established in the Nebo Shire.

In a nation where the drift to the city has been an insidious process it should be noted that Mirani electorate is a growth area with significant population increases occurring west of the Great Divide. This Government's policies of development and decentralisation have reversed the national trend towards centralisation. By any yardstick, the Mirani electorate must be measured as a growth area making huge contributions to the economic welfare in not only Queensland as a whole but Australia as a nation.

I would not have honourable members believe that the role of the elected representative for Mirani is likely to be one of ease merely because there is a strong economic base underpinning the electorate. Mirani has much in major problems to overcome. How can there be such major development without problems? They should be mentioned in my first speech in this Chamber because of the urgent need that exists to resolve them.

The very growth of a new coal-mining industry and the sustained development of the sugar industry have created many problems in both new mining townships, other towns such as Sarina, and all the townships in the Pioneer Valley and the sugar-growing areas. Clearly this growth has been of such rapidity that the Government has not always been able to keep pace in the supply of essential services.

The Mirani electorate differs markedly from many other areas in the State. The average age of the inhabitants of one of our major mining towns is 12 years. This compares with the national average of 30 years. There are accordingly distinct problems for school-leavers that are immensely different from those anywhere else. Job opportunities for women in the work-force are much fewer than those in the rest of the State.

In the field of public works, Mirani electorate surely has more main roads difficulties than those exhibited in most other places because of the crucial roles in farm to market and farm to factory that road transport plays in the sugar, beef cattle and grain industries, and the need for the citizens of the hinterland to travel to the provincial centres of Mackay and Rockhampton for shopping and specialist medical attention.

Pioneer Shire and Mirani Shire have some of the worst roads in the nation because of the peculiar factors of terrain, climate and land use. With the major duplication of the Mackay freezing works at Baker's Creek and the construction of a grain terminal planned for completion at Mackay Harbour next year, the pressures on the already overtaxed road system in the electorate, through increases in transport of livestock and grain, must only worsen. The urgent road problems, particularly in the Pioneer Valley and in and around the new mining towns of Dysart and Middlemount, demand summary if not special solutions.

I place on record my appreciation of the excellent manner in which this Government has supervised the decentralisation and development of Central Queensland in general and the Mirani electorate in particular. It is exciting to view the new towns in the Bowen Basin to which I have referred and to be reassured of the best resources that we have in the shape of healthy young children being born and bred in those towns. Without a doubt this Government and the Premier have shown all other States and Canberra how to get development going and how to create job opportunities for young Queenslanders and, indeed, young Australians as a whole.

I now wish to proceed to discuss some of the matters of crucial importance to my electorate in the area of mining development. I would like to see a more understanding role adopted by the Federal Government, which lately has displayed its inability to understand the problems of the people or the difficulties in the provision of infrastructure through State Government loan borrowings. It is high time that the mining companies noted the need for them to make larger contributions towards the cost of the provision of infrastructure. After all, many of the major problems that this Government and local authorities have to overcome in provision of roads, such as the

one needed to link Dysart and Middlemount, should be the financial responsibility of the companies. As the chairman of the Broadsound Shire Council as well as the member of Mirani, I am determined to ensure that the costs associated with improving the road system being used by the mining industry do not become a burden upon present ratepayers and taxpayers.

A recent traffic survey conducted by the Broadsound Shire Council showed that on one of our major council roads 89 per cent of traffic was directly associated with mining, 8 per cent miscellaneous, which is comprised of visitors to the area and traffic associated indirectly with mining development, and 3 per cent associated with the grazing industry. But it is this 3 per cent that is carrying the cost of endeavouring to maintain the roads. It is true that some mining companies make contributions to the council at irregular intervals, but why should local authorities have to go along cap in hand to beg for funds to alleviate road problems not of their making? This is totally unacceptable to me.

I note in the Press that the mining lobby is going to take up with the Government the question of a better financial go for that industry, but let that industry also note the increasing public concern regarding infrastructure funding. I believe this Government should examine its policies very seriously to ensure that, in future, development projects proceed under stricter guidelines for infrastructure funding. There has to be a recognition that projects outside mining town areas, such as access roads, are part of infrastructure costs.

As I turn to transportation requirements as a whole it is necessary to stress the glaring deficiencies of the main roads system within the electorate. Clearly there has been insufficient funding throughout the 1970s, and the present Government in Canberra appears to be less interested than the Whitlam Labor Government which preceded it. This must be stated, in spite of the dedicated way in which the Minister for Main Roads has always fought for funding justice for Queensland roads. At this stage I must also acknowledge the hard work and dedication of my federal parliamentary colleague, Mr Ray Braithwaite, the member for Dawson, who always fights for our area. It was a great disappointment to me that the Prime Minister did not recognise him as Cabinet material.

The Commonwealth Bureau of Transport Economics in its 1979 report found that expenditure on national highways in Queensland was 64 per cent below an economically efficient allocation of available funds. It was far worse than in any other State. In the light of this finding it is impossible for a Queenslander to reconcile the 1980-81 allocation for national and developmental roads. In this vast, sparsely populated State the road crisis remains one of our major social problems, and I make no apology for that statement as we are rapidly approaching

a crisis situation in our region. Although this Government has done so much in our area, particularly with its present progressive upgrading of the highway along the coast, there is so much more to be achieved.

The problem areas in the electorate of Mirani include the need for adequate bridging on the Marlborough-Sarina road, where traffic can be held up for three or four weeks; the Dingo-Mt Flora road, all of which requires urgent widening; as a matter of particular need a new high-level bridge is required over the Mackenzie River; the lack of suitable bridging on the Mackay-Eungella road; the state of the Eungella dairy roads; the complete absence of a road linking Dysart to the Dingo-Mt Flora road and the pressing need for a road to link the two new mining towns of Dysart and Middlemount.

From my own detailed study I have learnt that planning by both the State Government and local authorities on these matters is well in hand. The initiative and much of the funding rest directly with the Commonwealth Government, and it is for this House to demand that federal funding at least matches the recommendation of the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads if just social and financial decisions are to be made.

The plight of the dairy industry in wet weather merits special comment. Despite the fact that the Mirani Shire Council produced a number of very detailed submissions and obtained the approval of the Industries Assistance Commission for the principle of providing special funding for dairy roads outside the existing Commonwealth roads legislation, the Canberra Government has not seen fit to move on this matter in the past five years. It must be reactivated in order to ensure that a just share of the taxation cake is spent back in the area where the taxes were collected.

It is a disgrace that in 1981 there could be any arguments about the need for an all-weather road access for residents of the western Pioneer Valley and Eungella/Crediton districts. It will be my duty to press for urgent funding for projects to alleviate the problems in this important area of my electorate.

In the hinterland much remains to be done. It is clear that the proposed grain facilities at Mackay Harbour will require a great deal of effort on the part of the Mackay Harbour Board to implement, but once established the terminal must be given a fair go and full receival stations, provision of adequate rolling-stock, and, most of all, consideration in rail freights.

Last, but not least, efforts must be aimed at improvement of accommodation standards for railway workers throughout the electorate. The provision and upgrading of urban facilities at Coppabella, where the present situation leaves much that might be improved, are considered urgent and imperative.

Apart from the transportation question, resource management within the electorate is becoming much more important. This is particularly so in the case of the sugar industry. The sugar industry has justly been described as a triumph in the tropics. Without the sugar industry and its 100 years of struggle and self-improvement, there would be no North Queensland as it is known today. When sugar was first being planted at places like Mackay and Tully, Bowen and Cardwell were the major ports for North Queensland. Townsville and Mackay were yet to become the thriving ports that they are today.

In an age where it is thought normal that the Government should subsidise and protect industries, it is refreshing to reflect that the sugar industry has done much from its own resources in the fields of quality and cost control and the marketing of its own product. That this is so is due to the remarkable partnership that exists between grower and miller, and to the excellent organisations that bolster every activity of this industry. I refer, of course, to the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations, the Queensland Cane Growers Council, the Australian Sugar Producers Association and the Sugar Research Institute. No balanced appraisal of the sugar industry can fail to give full weight to the importance of the roles that the Sugar Board and CSR have played as our selling agents.

As a result of these close liaisons, on-farm performance has improved remarkably since the '50s. In 1960 a harvest yield of 53.2 tonnes of cane per hectare was the norm. In 1979 this had increased to 78.2 tonnes per hectare. This has come about through new types of cane being developed, together with improved on-farm expertise in matters such as drainage, fertilisation techniques and increased irrigation which has guaranteed supply.

Similarly, the milling side of the industry has made great progress. Average mill-crushing rates increased from 200 tonnes per hour in the 1969 season to 330 tonnes per hour in the 1979 season. This is directly due to the initiative of the industry in having its own highly expert body of researchers, and to the great tradition of management expertise so evident in all of our mills, whether they be proprietary or co-operative.

On-farm and in-factory technology has led to costs being contained, and that, together with the adoption of informed policies regarding mechanical harvesting and bulk storage and handling facilities, enables Queensland to justly say that we lead the sugar world in containing cost rises through more efficient methods. Let us clearly acknowledge that the Queensland sugar industry has kept the price of sugar cheap in Australia in relation to costs, and that we have done this because we have built up an export trade.

In saying this, I wonder how many Australians realise this significant difference between the sugar industry and many of our other primary and secondary industries. It may be

said that the Australian domestic sugar market is protected, since there is an embargo on the import of sugar, but the counterbalancing arrangement to this mode of protection is that the price for domestic sales is controlled by a State and Commonwealth Government agreement. The price is low compared with the export sales at the present time. The present export prices cannot last, and we know that when these prices fall the Australian home consumption price will be largely unaffected.

Turning to the export sector—it is noteworthy that the market relies on long-term contracts and also upon a large proportion of export sales based on the world market price. The London market, being a residual market, is sensitive to the world-wide stockpile and supply position. Thus, much of our export industry is a risk industry where the producer faces a likely considerable variation in his return.

The unpredictability of the world sugar market also makes it difficult for growers and millers to anticipate when expansions in the industry are likely to occur and when over-peak sugar is likely to be accepted for marketing. As the IAC report has noted, most cane growers now have more than sufficient assigned land to produce over-peak, although the extent of this excess varies.

As a central district supplier, it is particularly pleasing to me to see the present planned expansion, which was decided upon only after a most searching inquiry. To those who are not keen to take the risk I say, "Where would our great industry be if our pioneers were not prepared to take risks?"

It is also noteworthy that within the electorate of Mirani several mills could be landlocked by the 1990s. I do not canvass the necessity of immediate rezoning as a first step, nor necessarily as a final step, for that is the prerogative of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board and the mills concerned. Efforts should be aimed at having the facts marshalled in a better way. I believe every effort must be made to expedite the land capability study now in hand by the Department of Primary Industries and the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations. The Government is to be congratulated for displaying the wisdom and application to have the appraisal so well under way at this time, for the land capability assessments to which I have referred are essential if we are in the future to approach rationally questions such as water resources, river erosion, mill rezonings and the like. I earnestly hope that additional resources will be made available to speed the work, which is vital.

Of course, the land capability assessment is not necessary to justify the urgent completion of the Kinchant Dam. The poor rate of progress towards the construction of this important water conservation scheme must be viewed with concern. True, the Federal Government met its promised commitment, but I would suggest this is but another

example of Canberra apathy in relation to works of national interest. The State Government has been left to carry the lion's share of this scheme while the Federal Government feels free to make pious political promises in principle regarding other major works such as the Burdekin Dam.

As I have already premised, the problem with any unforeseen expansion in the sugar industry is not one of immediate land shortages; it is one of vertical expansion problems. It surely is a matter of necessity that existing commitments be met before further commitments are entered into in the field of farm water supplies. I regard the Kinchant Dam and the whole of the Eton Irrigation Scheme as a job of the greatest importance to all cane growers in the North Eton and Eton areas in particular, and hence to the nation as a whole.

The third priority to be met in the field of resource management should be to press for increased funding by the State and Federal Governments with regard to the essential work of river trusts. I am convinced that a proper land use management plan must be adopted for the region. Unless our land use policies are on a much better basis than the present ad hoc system, and properly recognise the need for greater anti-erosion and flood mitigation works, it will be difficult to continue to marshal the support from the overall organisations such as the river trusts, mills and Pioneer Valley growers. It is essential to achieve closer co-ordination and planning between the mills at North Eton, Cattle Creek, Marian and Pleystowe, the Upper and Lower Pioneer River Improvement Trusts and the Queensland Water Resources Commission.

It is clear that, without the same sort of subsidy that has been granted for the flood mitigation works at Proserpine and in the Don River—that is, 40 per cent State and 40 per cent Federal—it will be financially impossible for local authorities to fund the more expensive river engineering works that are essential, not only to the needs of mills and the mill suppliers, but also to the townships of the whole of the Pioneer basin.

Clearly, the '80s demand new initiatives to create more jobs. The first priority in the electorate of Mirani should be to facilitate and encourage the development of tourism. Of all new industries likely to be established within the electorate, tourism offers the most labour-intensive opportunities. Yet so much has to be done. The Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation Act provides the corporation with the functions to promote and market tourism and travel, to make tourism and travel arrangements, to provide tourist and travel information services, and to encourage the development of a tourist and travel industry. It has the power to co-ordinate the development of existing or new tourist ventures with all interested persons and bodies, local authorities and the Departments of the Commonwealth and

State Governments, and to oversee tourist ventures at places of significant tourist interest.

I believe that the tourist potential of the Mirani electorate is virtually untapped. Apart from the chalet at Eungella, the facilities for tourists to view the Eungella/Crediton areas and the whole of the Pioneer Valley, including the Finch Hatton Gorge, are insufficient and are long overdue for Government attention. The same type of comments can be applied to the beach areas.

Specific Government action is required in eight areas—

Improved access, including widening "windy corner" on the Mackay/Eungella road;

Complete bitumen surfacing of the Eungella Dam road;

Construction of a modern information centre at Eungella by the National Parks and Wildlife Service;

Improved and extended walking tracks in the national parks areas;

Increased camping facilities at Eungella;

Greatly increased road funding by way of grants to Mirani Shire Council to complete a safe, bituminised road to Finch Hatton Gorge;

Significant increase in funding for small-craft facilities; and

An expanded program of publicity for the area by the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation.

Turning to beaches—my electorate's coastline has at least three or four outstanding sites for tourist development of the resort kind, particularly in the vicinity of Salonika, Sarina/Campwin and Cape Palmerston. All of the beach areas are capable of being reached easily from the existing jet aerodrome at Mackay, or by a full day's drive from Brisbane by way of the Bruce Highway, and are easily accessible from the exploding hinterland mining areas, where it is certain that there will be felt an increasing need for leisure time, particularly during the summer months.

There are still relatively large areas of unsubdivided land where development would be feasible. The stage is being reached when development leases for licensed motels, caravan parks and accommodation units must be considered. There can be no doubts concerning the feasibility of these proposed measures.

I realise that these aspirations for the tourist industry are not likely to be realised in the first year or so. I am quite conscious of the time it has taken, for example, to establish the Whitsunday region tourist industry. However, with planning, a much shorter period for establishment is possible. Publicity of the Mirani electorate's tourist potential is very limited. Accordingly, the matter is one for the Tourist and Travel

Corporation, and it is essential to ensure that this corporation secures additional funding to discharge this function.

I believe also that the time has arrived for better planning by the Land Administration Commission and liaison with the appropriate local authority for seaside development works in the electorate. With the completion of the Bruce Highway, it is only a matter of time before Broadsound Shire and Sarina Shire, for example, experience the same type of development witnessed in northern areas such as Cardwell, where the highway brought the people to an area of national scenic and recreational significance. Hand in hand with this type of development must go the setting aside of reserves for sporting facilities for the obvious increases in population.

While on the subject of land-use planning—it is evident that, with the increasing mining activity certain to occur within the electorate in the '80s, it will also be necessary to ensure that the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development and the private sector have adequate opportunities to establish further industrial estates in the electorate. It is essential that private enterprise be allowed a fair share of land resources available in any town.

With regard to social welfare of the electors, our aim should be to ensure that an ongoing high standard of facilities is provided for all townships in the electorate to ensure the strengthening and fostering of the family unit, which after all is the very basis of our society as we know it, and to see that there is an upgrading of education facilities at all levels as and when required in the electorate. It is time for this Government to investigate the establishment of a centre for tertiary education in the area to avoid the financial and social costs to parents with children finishing secondary schooling. This certainly has to be looked at in view of the unprecedented development and rapidly increasing population in this region.

Other priorities within this ambit of activities include provision of funding for community development officers at Dysart and Middlemount and the new towns of the Bowen Basin. As a matter of great priority I intend to seek an assurance that adequate pre-school centres and day-care centres are provided throughout the electorate.

The 1970s have been a time of marked changes in society. We have seen the increase of the drug problem, a general lowering in moral standards, tremendous pressures on the family unit because of our two-income economy and the consequent entry of women into the work-force.

We have become aware of the energy problem. We have become more conscious of the physical environment. The Mirani electorate has many small country towns and a large rural population, and it is my conviction that the problems of poor opportunity

for employment for women and special difficulties for school-leavers, call for fresh initiatives.

The '70s have produced other problems and difficulties through growth in the sugar and coal industries. Furthermore, in the Mirani electorate, while we are certain to see further steady expansion in the sugar industry and dairy industry, prospects for many of the men on the land will improve only through an increase in opportunities to diversify through the emerging grain industry. As well, the Bowen Basin will continue to be of crucial significance in the field of job opportunities.

It is clear that at least one, and probably two, new mining ventures will come into being by the mid '80s in the Nebo area. Duplication of the Hay Point terminal is now proceeding, following this Government's wise decision to call tenders. If we must take due counsel of our fears, it is equally clear that we must not fail to grasp the opportunities at hand. To do so we will require clear policies and faithful attention to all these areas of the electorate.

I have also sought to stress that basic to the requirements of the Mirani electorate is the need to initiate a great deal more action in the tourist industry. The electorate of Mirani is blessed with great natural resources. Much remains to be done to assist the tourist industry to grow and to flourish, for of all the industries likely to be established in the electorate tourism will provide a source of job opportunities for our young people.

But in all this, we must avoid the trend to over-govern. Rather, we must do for the individual only those things that he cannot do for himself. I sincerely believe that if we are to share the resources of this great State with justice, we must do it within a philosophy founded on the principles of free enterprise; of social changes being brought about within the framework of the law; of justice for all our citizens; and compassion for the under-privileged.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Powell): Order! I call the honourable member for Lockyer. It is the honourable member's first speech, and I ask honourable members to afford him the usual courtesies.

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (3.16 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I stand to pledge my loyalty and that of the people of Lockyer to Our Most Gracious Sovereign Queen Elizabeth II, to her successors and to her representative in Queensland, Sir James Ramsay.

It is indeed an honour to be chosen as a member of this Assembly, and I take this opportunity to thank the electors of Lockyer for the confidence they have placed in me. It is a position that I accept with humility, and I am looking forward to serving them for as long as is mutually acceptable.

The courtesy that has been extended to me by those closely politically affiliated with me —by those who are my coalition colleagues —and by those on the other side of the House are greatly appreciated. A friendly handshake and a greeting was a warm welcome to this Parliament. While we may differ in our outlook on many issues in the future, I only hope that our political differences do not influence or mar the respect that we should have for each other.

There have been two other members for Lockyer since the seat was reformed in a redistribution in 1949. The first was Gordon Chalk, later Sir Gordon Chalk. He served the people of Lockyer and the State of Queensland with distinction. He filled many positions in this House and was Deputy Premier and Treasurer when he retired. Sir Gordon Chalk is a name that was synonymous with Lockyer for many years. It was pleasing to see him at the opening of Parliament, obviously enjoying good health in his retirement.

My predecessor was Tony Bourke, and though I challenged him and defeated him at the last election, I pay tribute to the spirit in which he fought the election and to the service he rendered over four years as member for Lockyer.

It is customary when introducing oneself to make a declaration about previous occupation and background. I was born, grew up and received my primary education in Gatton, and received my secondary education at Downlands College at Toowoomba. I attended the Queensland Agricultural College in Gatton for a period, before returning to the family farm, which is located next to the college.

My ancestors came to the Lockyer area and worked on the construction of the railway line when it was extended from Grandchester, or Biggs Camp, as it was then known, to Gatton in 1866. They settled on a farm block on the banks of Lockyer Creek. There is no doubt in my mind that the respect in which my parents, Andy and Jean Fitzgerald, were held as a result of a lifetime of community work contributed greatly to my being chosen to represent this area.

I am a fourth-generation farmer in the Valley and am at present involved in a family partnership. The problems associated with farming are well known to me and have been a valuable experience in life.

My wife, Bernadette, and I have four children and are well aware of the responsibilities of parenthood. Children make parents aware of many facets of life that other adults tend to overlook. Ours is a changing society, as all parents are aware. However, when challenged by these changes, we have an opportunity to analyse why we do certain things and what our principles really are. They teach us to be tolerant of other points of view without necessarily causing us to change our principles and ideals.

The Governor's Opening Speech pointed out that Queensland is a growing and developing State. The electorate of Lockyer is often referred to as a mini-State in Queensland. Half of the people live in the city. The part of Toowoomba along the range is in the electorate. The other half of the people live in farming and grazing areas. Considerable development is taking place in all areas. Lockyer is a growth electorate.

Because of the establishment of the power-station at Tarong just outside my electorate between Yarraman and Nanango, much development is taking place in Yarraman. As the construction workers move in the population of Yarraman is increasing. The long-term effect will mean considerable growth in that region. When the Millmerran coal-to-oil complex is established to utilise the coal reserves on the Darling Downs, Toowoomba will be subjected to the growth pressures that are currently being felt elsewhere throughout the State. I refer to the pressures that will come on family life, State services and the development of road and rail facilities in this area of Queensland. Gatton is a fast-growing country town. Crows Nest is a picturesque centre of a solid pastoral and dairy district.

The increased population of Yarraman as a result of the development of the Tarong Power Station will put a strain on the resources of the Yarraman High Top school. I point out to the Minister for Education and the Minister for Works and Housing that the area is growing. The mine and the power-station are a reality. The population will increase. The area has a school that caters for education up to Year 10. Planning must begin to expand the school and upgrade it to Year 12. That will benefit the children who come from below Cooya who have to catch buses very early in the morning to attend the Nanango High School. We have no Year 11 and 12 school between Nanango and Toowoomba. That is unrealistic. It is unfair to the children in the area that they have to put up with a shortage of class-rooms because of the Government's decision to build a power-station near their town. The development is welcome, as long as the planning is done to ensure benefits for the local residents.

Tourism will be one of the largest industries in Queensland. Any promoter running tours from Brisbane will have to consider the scenic Lockyer Valley. The farmlands around the Lockyer are among the prettiest in the State and Commonwealth. We also have the spa at Helidon from which mineral waters are extracted and sent all over Australia. Probably they will be exported overseas soon.

The garden city of Toowoomba is a tourist attraction in itself. Along the range to Crows Nest, the panoramic view is something to behold. The round trip to Yarraman, back to Brisbane, is wonderful.

There is always a call for better roads. It is pleasing to see the upgrading of the Toowoomba Range Road nearing completion. The alternative route to the coast from the northern Downs by the Hampton to Esk road is a disgrace. In wet weather it is dangerous to pass oncoming traffic, and the fact that cars pulling caravans frequently use the range road not realising that it is narrow and winding, is a constant worry to the parents of children who ride in the school bus. This road must receive top Government priority.

Toowoomba is an important education centre with the establishment of the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, and its many schools and colleges. The institute has established itself as a leading college in many fields, particularly engineering. However, the present TAFE college needs replacing. The building is unsuitable. In fact, it is the old Empire Picture Theatre. Any extensions or remodelling would be a waste of money. The need is simple: a new college with suitable grounds to cater for students and staff. I bring this to the notice of the Government because this is an area of concern. Recently the Government made quite an issue of the fact that TAFE colleges have a very important part to play in the training of people in technical skills. The cost of providing education for our children is a major Government commitment. This taxes the resources of the Government as, when it comes to education, it is natural for parents to demand the best they can obtain. I accept this.

As there are over 30 schools in the Lockyer electorate, the list of improvements needed is naturally very long, but basically I will continue to bring the major problems to the notice of Ministers so that a program of continual upgrading takes place to ensure that the best education is available at a reasonable cost to the taxpayer. A much-needed library in the Lockyer District High School would be a start in this program.

Employers, especially those who are employing only a few men and an apprentice, are greatly inconvenienced by the fact that apprentices are absent from work for a considerable period each year to do their college training. This is particularly so in most fields in years 1 and 2 when apprentices go away for seven weeks in one period. Consideration has to be given to the option of splitting college training into two sections so as not to upset the work program of their employers. The cost of paying wages for the entire period before a refund is made is, to some small operators, a strain on their resources.

The bearing of the full cost of nurse-training programs by private hospitals is a matter I cannot let pass without drawing it to the attention of honourable members. Mention has been made of this subject in earlier speeches in this debate. Nurses trained in the smaller hospitals are in great demand in many of our smaller country hospitals.

Unless some assistance is forthcoming by way of Government grants or subsidies, the full cost of nurse-training schemes in private hospitals, which at present is being borne by the private hospital patients themselves, will prove to be too great a burden. Private hospital nurse-training will no longer be a reality, and the total cost of training our nurses will be borne by the Government. The Government is getting great value for money now and I should like to see provision for a grant or subsidy contained in the next Budget. I will bring this to the notice of the Government and the Treasurer because I consider such assistance is essential.

In the future our society will be judged on how we care for the aged and the infirm. With a higher percentage of people reaching old age as a result of modern medicine and the skill of our doctors, this area needs more and more consideration. All people should have the right to retire and spend their last years in an environment that they choose. Many wish to remain in their local community.

The home-nursing services of many charitable organisations that have evolved over recent years are an indication that we are a community that cares. The Government has a commitment to the elderly. The provision of more hostel-type accommodation and nursing homes would ensure that hospitals were not used for these purposes. It must be terrifying for a person who is losing his physical powers to feel that he has nowhere to go. Security and peace are basic human desires and these become magnified when declining health becomes another factor to be considered.

While statistically Lockyer looks as if it has enough accommodation for the aged, in fact it has not. Elderly people cannot be guaranteed that, as their health fails, they will have the security of a local complex that cares for their needs. I draw attention to the fact that the Crows Nest community has a model of which it is proud. It points to the need for similar facilities in Toowoomba, and certainly in Gatton. Those who desire to remain in their local environment prove to be a rich source of wisdom. This is important in the development of understanding between the different age groups in our community.

The family is under stress in modern society and any action that contributes to strengthening the family unit must be beneficial to our society. I benefited from growing up in a home based on a strong family bond but I realise that many are not so fortunate. Most, however, will agree that the best foundations of any State are good, solid families. It is regrettable that the already high incidence of marriage breakdown is still on the increase, resulting in more and more children facing life without the security of a loving mother and father in their own home. It is important that all State legislation recognises these pertinent facts.

During the recent election I based part of my campaign on the understanding that a severe water shortage exists in the Lockyer Valley. The subject can be divided into the two areas of rural service and underground shortage and the shortage of adequate town supplies in the Gatton shire. The Lockyer Valley is a unique area. It is a rich farming valley with ribbons of alluvial soil running beside Lockyer Creek and its many tributaries. The development of the surface and underground water reserves over the years has contributed to the growth of Gatton, the major town in the area.

The value of produce from this valley varies from year to year, but at present it is about \$32m per annum. The supply of heavy produce such as potatoes, onions and pumpkins, fills a very important gap in the Australian market. The rapid development of the quick-food industry has meant the development of large sections of the industry producing vegetables suitable for freezing and canning as well as traditional vegetables for the fresh fruit and vegetable markets of eastern Australia.

Lucerne and other fodder crops from this area supply livestock farms such as dairies, stud cattle properties, racehorse and trotting establishments as well as hobby horse farms. In addition, during drought years fodder is supplied all over Queensland and New South Wales. The Lockyer Valley is a vitally important part of the Australian primary industry scene. Adequate irrigation supplies are necessary for this valley to maintain its present output. I repeat that this is the basis on which I fought the election campaign.

The declining water levels in the aquifer and the absence of any flow in the streams over the past two years resulted in some farms being totally without water. Most farms have extreme water shortages resulting in a rapid decline in the quality of the available water. Salt-sensitive crops suffered in many areas. On checking rainfall records and stream-flow data, farmers became aware that this would not be an isolated case and would occur again in the future.

As history repeats itself, the Lockyer faces long periods without replenishment of the water supplies unless steps are taken to improve the situation. The cost of development and usage of a wonderful natural resource has been met entirely by the farmers in this area. The capital cost of providing irrigation on a farm is high, and I have mentioned previously the value of primary production in the Lockyer Valley. The importance of this area in providing fruit, vegetables and fodder in eastern Australia is considerable, as is the tax bill paid by this area.

Unless assistance is forthcoming to guarantee the maintenance of water levels, a disaster is staring this area in the face. We have had good rains recently, and this averted a disaster in 1981. However, rainfall has been above average for most of the past 30 years. Earlier records warn us that we are now approaching a danger period. Surveys

by the Queensland Irrigation and Water Supply Commission released in 1969 and 1970 have done much of the groundwork. Trial weirs were constructed on three streams in the valley to gauge the effect that they would have in assisting groundwater to recharge. They have proven successful.

The survey by the engineers of the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation proved that four dams in the valley would be costly. I cannot accept that the Lockyer needs large dams that would cover much of the alluvial agricultural land. At present a much more comprehensive investigation into the water problems of the valley is nearing completion. The report is at present being compiled, and we are awaiting its release in a few months' time. I shall endeavour to convince the Government that it is in the best interests of this valley and this State to implement a scheme to assist the large-scale recharging of the underground aquifer by building dams wherever possible in the headwaters of the creeks so that water can be reticulated down them during periods of dry weather. Weirs will have to be constructed or other methods such as dredging of the creek-beds will have to take place to ensure water entry into the aquifer. I think it is generally accepted that the best place to store water in the Lockyer is underground. Farmers will have to be encouraged, where possible, to build off-stream surface storages to supplement their supplies.

It must be realised that the viability of towns in the valley is dependent on the supply of water to the farmers. Toowoomba itself is dependent on the maintenance of irrigation supplies in the Downs area as well as the Lockyer. The time has come when all Governments must realise that this is a fact. While it is the responsibility of local government authorities to provide water for the cities and towns in Queensland, the State Government provides grants to relieve ratepayers of some of the costs, and this is appreciated. But in certain cases the cost of providing adequate supplies is a formidable task.

The city of Toowoomba is situated at the top of a range and, as a result, high costs are involved in supplying its water needs. Because water is such a scarce commodity, I do not think that the shire boundaries are the correct delineation for areas of responsibility. Surely the State must accept a bigger commitment in the provision of water for Toowoomba. The Crows Nest Shire Council is also looking at the task of augmenting the supply to the Highfields area, which lies just north of Toowoomba. The Queensland Agricultural College and the towns in the Gatton Shire are totally dependent on water drawn from the underground aquifer. This has caused the areas from which supplies have been obtained to suffer from severe water shortages as the levels in the aquifer have become lower and lower. At present the lack of water in Gatton means that any industry requiring water in town cannot be guaranteed supplies.

During the last dry season Gatton virtually had its water cut off—to use a mediaeval term, and we know what was the reaction to that! As I said before, we can expect longer and longer periods of dry weather in future as history repeats itself.

While I am not an advocate of Government intervention into many fields, I think that the supply of water should be an area of State Government as well as Federal Government involvement. Various schemes will have to be investigated, but I am convinced that a pipeline up the valley serving the various towns and the Queensland Agricultural College is a must. The most economical source of water will have to be determined and a scheme brought to fruition as soon as possible. The increased utilisation of the underground supplies for domestic town water usage that have been traditionally used by farmers is unacceptable, as this causes shortages in that area and increased salinity. Quite often the water is not suitable for domestic purposes.

With the ever-increasing cost of liquid energy and considering the potential of the State to produce electricity at a reasonable cost, I would advocate the progressive electrification of the State's rail system. The sooner the Toowoomba-Brisbane line is electrified, the better. I support any scheme that will mean the upgrading of this line. Services will have to be maintained to ensure that the reluctance of passengers to use our rail services is overcome. Any withdrawal of responsibilities in this area can lead only to a slower acceptance of public transport in a fuel-starved world.

This is the International Year of Disabled Persons. The Government is aware of the high cost in human terms of our road toll and has made third party insurance compulsory. I am particularly concerned about the plight of those who are injured and have no legal right to obtain justice. I speak about those who are injured as a result of criminal activity or just do not have anyone against whom they can take legal action. The State accepts responsibility for protecting the innocent against criminal activity and ensuring that road victims who are injured have a right to compensation. The plight of all who suffer the misfortune of serious injury and have no legal redress concerns me greatly. To remedy this will necessitate major Government changes and changes in community thinking, but it must be done.

In closing I thank honourable members for their silence during this my maiden speech. I understand this privilege is offered only once, and it is appreciated. The people of Lockyer elected me to this House to speak on their behalf. A large proportion of those who voted for me did so because they believe in the policies of the party to which I belong. However, I will endeavour to work for all the people of Lockyer, whatever

their usual political affiliations, with whatever ability I have and with all the energy I possess.

Mr UNDERWOOD (Ipswich West) (3.41 p.m.): This afternoon I wish to thank the electors of Ipswich West for returning me to represent them for a second term. By doing so they have proved once and for all that the people of Ipswich West desire ALP representation. This is evident particularly when one considers the tremendous campaign put up by my two opponents, one Liberal and one National, which was to no avail. In fact, the Labor vote improved. I also thank ALP members and supporters in the electorate for the tremendous job and for the great team effort that they put together. In the forthcoming term of this Parliament I will do my best to represent the people of Ipswich West.

This afternoon I raise once again the fate of the Queensland free hospitals system and other Queensland health services. Last week-end the Minister for Health announced that Queensland would be better off under the proposed block-grant Federal funding system than it is under the current cost-sharing arrangement. I predicted that to the House last Wednesday. I say "proposed" because Federal Cabinet has not yet made a decision on the new funding arrangements. It continues to place this issue into the too-hard basket. It has been placed on the agenda for Federal Cabinet time after time, but no decision has been made.

The new funding arrangement has to be agreed to by 30 June this year, as that is the last day of the current cost-sharing arrangements. Despite the week-end assurances by the Health Minister and the Premier in the "Sunday Sun", I believe that our hospitals will in fact be no better off and indeed the possibility of the introduction of a means test is still with us. The 48 hours since the week-end have shown that the Fraser Federal Government does not intend giving away any extra funds to the States—in particular Queensland. The Liberal Prime Minister (Mr Fraser) is out to take as much as he can from the people of Queensland and give as little as possible in return.

With the abolition of the cost-sharing agreement there is no guarantee that the Queensland Government will not pocket this windfall from the proposed health-funding arrangements by deducting from its current hospital budget the proposed extra \$20m to be granted under the proposed block-grant scheme. The State Government's track record in this area almost guarantees that Queensland will spend the extra \$20m on non-health expenditure. There is no guarantee that Mr Fraser, on discovering this, will not reduce Queensland's block grant the following year.

Anything is possible. We must consider the four changes to Medibank in the past five years together with the Liberal Prime

Minister's promise that he would not touch Medibank. For the Queensland Health Minister to guarantee that the extra \$20m is forthcoming to our hospital system on the say-so of a junior Federal Minister is naive, to say the least. Before I would believe the Fraser Federal Government I would require a signed and sealed contract from it, signed personally by the Prime Minister, with a clause enabling the State to sue for breach of contract—such is the credibility of the current Liberal-led Federal Government. There are too many broken promises: Medibank (remember how it was not to be touched); tax reductions (remember how we were to get those one after the other); unemployment (how it was to go down); interest rates (how they were to go down).

Now the Commonwealth Government is promising us, so talk in the corridors would have it, another \$20m for hospitals. We will believe it when we see it, signed and sealed, particularly when we consider the Commonwealth Government's avowed policy to save money, allowing its cut-back policies to operate by forcing State Governments to bear the brunt of Government expenditure.

The major instrument being bandied about in the health field at the moment is the Jamison report, which I believe will be selectively used by the Federal Government to pursue its policy of cut-backs in Commonwealth funding of health. The tragedy of many of the Jamison report recommendations is that they put Australia back to a system similar to the inequitable health insurance arrangements that existed before 1969, but with even more severe penalties for many such as the unemployed, part-time workers and those with large families on minimum wages. It should be noted that the Australian Bureau of Statistics has shown that more than half a million households and single-income families had an income of less than \$67 per week in 1979. Half of Australia's income earners receive less than \$10,500 a year. It is not possible for families on that income level to afford high health insurance contributions.

In May 1979 the then Federal Minister for Health (Mr Hunt) announced a national inquiry to examine the efficiency and administration of hospitals throughout Australia. That decision was made in the context of a mini Budget and yet another health insurance change, and represented a further Commonwealth attempt to come to grips with the health-care system and its costs. That is now known, of course, as the Jamison inquiry. Subsequent negotiations with the States about the terms of reference widened the inquiry's brief to include not only hospitals but also associated or related services and institutions.

The Commonwealth Government appointed Mr J. H. Jamison, a former public accountant and company liquidator, as chairman, and Mr M. R. H. Holmes a' Court, a Western Australian entrepreneur and businessman, and Dr J. S. Yeatman, former medical superintendent of the Royal Melbourne Hospital,

as commissioners. Holmes a' Court later resigned and Mr C. W. L. de Boos, formerly general manager of the Bank of New South Wales, was appointed in his place. The commission was thus dominated by businessmen without experience or special knowledge of hospitals or the health system as a whole. After 15 months of operation, including receiving submissions and organising public hearings and domestic and overseas trips, the commission presented its report by the deadline of 31 December 1980.

Despite the breadth of the commission's terms of reference, only two dominant areas are emphasised in the 140 recommendations, namely, State/Commonwealth funding arrangements and health insurance. The major flaw of the Jamison report is that it is based on the encouragement and development of private health insurance and private medical and hospital delivery. The report cannot therefore promote efficiency and restrain costs, as fee-for-service medical care and profit-making institutions are an integral part of private health delivery.

The report lays to rest the myth that Labor's Medibank was somehow responsible for the explosion of health costs in Australia in the 1970s. Nowhere in its analysis of the health-cost explosion does the report attach any significant responsibility to Medibank. In fact, there is little mention of Labor's Medibank in the report. The report points out that the cost explosion in the 1970s was an international and not a peculiarly Australian phenomenon. The report is also directly and indirectly quite scathing about the medi-muddle of the Fraser years—the constant and contradictory changes in the health insurance system. In Volume 1 at page 47 the report says—

“Recent changes to the health insurance system have done little to improve the health system.”

Unfortunately, the quality of the diagnosis is not equalled by the prescriptions advanced. The recommendations are too often either muddled, contradictory and in conflict with the report's own analysis or soft-nosed and evasive, failing to come to grips with the problems identified, or simply vacuous motherhood statements lacking in precision, specificity and concreteness required for implementation.

Nowhere is this muddle more apparent than in the discussion of health insurance. After 18 months of work, all that the commission can come up with is a haphazard, ragged and incomplete set of immediate proposals, often contradicting its own criteria, and the extraordinary recommendation that a further working party be established to devise a new health insurance system.

The gaggle of immediate recommendations on health insurance is in no way designed to achieve the commission's alleged goals of equity, open access and universality. They are simply designed to frighten people into private health insurance or to provide

incentives to encourage them to take out health insurance. They are designed primarily to prop up the present health insurance mess and to sustain the private health funds.

If the Government is sufficiently foolish to implement these proposals, then, while they will cause further misery for some individuals, they will do nothing but resurrect the decaying system of private health insurance or reduce costs to the Government. Thus, in 1982, the Government would once again be faced with a third major revision of the insurance system in order to keep it alive.

On the hospital side, the Federal Government is indicating that it will hand over hospitals (and community health development) entirely to the States, to a pre-1975 situation when Medibank was introduced. This goes against the report's recommendations on block grants and in its belief that the Commonwealth had a definite role in funding and overseeing the efficiency and development of our hospital system.

As a nation, we cannot afford to have our public hospitals competing for funds with other State services. There must be broad equality of standards throughout Australia.

"The Commonwealth must also ensure that hospital developments are planned in conjunction with the health insurance system and community health programmes." (Jamison)

A series of recommendations also covered hospital management and efficiency issues. Because of the disorganised layout of the three volume-report, the obvious haste with which the report was prepared, and the many contradictions within it, it is difficult to draw out themes or any further concrete sets of recommendations. Truly, as the AMA has described, the report is a dog's dinner. Indicative of the hasty preparation is the poor proof-reading of the report, although this was apologised for in Volume 2, and the lack of consistency between Volumes 1 and 2.

Unfortunately, many recommendations, although perhaps worthy of consideration, read as little more than platitudes and provide no guide-lines for implementation. For example, recommendation 47 is that—

"The involvement of consumer representatives in consultative machinery be expanded."

How nebulous! Further examples abound in the report, especially in the section on Aborigines and the handicapped.

It is clear that those recommendations most likely to be implemented by the Federal Government are the funding and health insurance ones. The emphasis on these areas highlights the main concerns and the philosophy of the commission: the abrogation of Commonwealth responsibility (part of this Government's "New Federalism") and the support of private enterprise in the

provision and funding of health services. The commission notes that "the private hospital system and the health insurance funds . . . are essential elements in the Australian health system" (Volume 1, page 47), and that their existence had been threatened by the existing health insurance arrangements. Accordingly "arrangements should ensure the future viability of the private hospital system and private medical practice . . ." (Volume 1, page 49).

The report revealed that the commission perceived that its task was to enhance the private provision of health care by propping up an ailing private health insurance system and also to decrease Commonwealth expenditure on health services. The ideology of the commission was quite conservative. For instance, the commission warned several times against "sharp, sweeping changes (which) can be disruptive and impracticable" and argued that "Much can be gained from continual small measures, rather than from sweeping structural change." (Volume 1, page 25.)

Unfortunately, this outlook hampered the commission's review. It is quite obvious from the report that the commission never developed an understanding of the whole health care system. There is no indication of any coherent framework or overall philosophy of providing health care, beyond a strong belief in private enterprise. Possible social and economic determinants of ill-health are ignored and, for example, not one recommendation in Volume 1 relates to prevention.

The focus of the Jamison report is on restraining costs, and the commission recommends a system based on patients meeting the cost of services in an attempt to reduce overall health expenditure. Such an approach is probably wrongly headed, especially since doctors are the ones who make health service decisions that incur costs, and it is certainly inequitable, as the lower-income groups, who often have more illness, would have to pay proportionately more for health services than those on higher incomes.

In the introduction to the report the commission notes that "All citizens who are able to do so must contribute towards their health care, but provision must be made for pensioners, eligible veterans and the disadvantaged in a way that is easily understood." (Recommendation 2.)

Apart from the fact that very little of the report itself is "easily understood", and that the recommended health insurance changes do not simplify the health insurance system at all, this is one of the few occasions when the report mentions the disadvantaged. Beyond page 3 of Volume 1, it is difficult to find another reference to under-privileged people. Despite this statement of principle, the Jamison report does not recommend any change to the existing system of treatment for these groups. The current inadequate provisions will therefore remain.

The health insurance recommendations are those with the most obvious impact on low-income and disadvantaged people. As noted above, the commission's recommendations are designed to increase the role of health insurance in the funding of health services by encouraging more people to insure. The existing health-insurance-based arrangements are inequitable and regressive, to say the least, with poor people generally paying a larger proportion of their income for health insurance than the rich and the uninsured having to become supplicants to doctors to receive free treatment, in other words, begging for charity. The report does not even address these problems. Indeed, by increasing the role of private voluntary health insurance it will exacerbate them. The failure of the commission to take account of the equity effects of health insurance arrangements signals a return to a system similar to that operating prior to the 1969 health insurance changes, a system which was widely regarded as unacceptable and inefficient. However, another issue to be considered is whether the commission's recommendations will be successful in meeting its own goals. That is, will enough people insure to boost the finances of private health funds? The answer is probably not, unless fear and confusion save the day for private health insurance funds.

After all this tinkering with the health insurance system the commission recommends that a working party be established to devise "a new health insurance system which satisfies the principles of equity, freedom of access, payment by those who can afford it and promotes universal participation." (Recommendation 36.)

Can the commission be implicitly admitting that its system does not satisfy its own criteria? Or that the proposed changes will not lead to long-run stability? Or simply that the changes won't work and the system will remain a mess?

The implications for low income and disadvantaged people of the switch to block funding for the provision of health services is difficult if not impossible to predict. Theoretically it may allow greater flexibility in resource allocation, possibly to the benefit of those most in need. However, if funding is on the formula basis proposed in the Jamison report—by age, sex, and Aboriginal—then there is no guarantee that low income or otherwise disadvantaged people will benefit. If true formula funding were adopted two crucial matters should first be determined: the size of the Commonwealth cake, and whether cuts in services might result in some States. Until these issues are clarified it is difficult to ascertain the effects of the proposed formula funding.

Treatment in public hospitals is to remain free (where patients are treated by a hospital-nominated doctor), but the commission has inserted a "longer term development" recommendation that such services be treated as a "benefit in kind", declared as income and paid for as part of income tax

assessment. The commission does propose however, that catastrophic expenses can be averaged and deferred. This ludicrous proposal has no doubt caused some concern to the Federal Taxation Department. The fact that it is proposed at all reflects a fear by the commission that the rich are ripping off the system by receiving free treatment in hospitals. The prejudicial nature of this approach, the evidence that most patients receiving free treatment are pensioners, and the difficulty of implementation, should ensure that this recommendation be ignored.

A proposal with major implications for disadvantaged people is that a charge be made for "non-urgent outpatient attendances", except for eligible pensioners (Recommendation 33). This proposal will decrease access to care, particularly to specialty clinics in metropolitan hospitals. A further problem relates to the definition of "urgent"; pints of blood per second?

For acute patients in psychiatric hospitals there may be a number of implications flowing from the Jamison report although it is particularly difficult to generalise on this issue since the provision of psychiatric services is subject to wide variation between States. The effect of the proposal that the Commonwealth block grant include funds for psychiatric hospitals is difficult to predict; the record of the present Commonwealth Government is not good in maintaining real levels of expenditure in the social welfare area, and a reduction in the size of the grant may well accompany its increased scope. Similarly, the State Government decision concerning the size of the allocation to psychiatric hospitals from the block grant will also vary.

The inclusion of psychiatric hospitals within the general hospital cost sharing arrangements will also mean that acute patients in psychiatric hospitals can be charged on a fee-for-service basis by attending doctors in the same way as general hospital patients, although these fees will be covered by health insurance. Fee for service practice in psychiatry has a number of disadvantages, and this may well lead to increased costs without increased benefits. Accommodation costs will also be covered provided, of course, that patients can afford to insure privately. There are no real implications for nursing home patients in the report.

The recommendations on community health services are somewhat contradictory, but overall seem to recommend that these services be under the control of hospital boards, or of area health boards (in those sections where the commission remembers that it has recommended the establishment of such boards). It is difficult to take some recommendations seriously, such as the area health boards one (Recommendation 89) when, as happens with much of the report, little coherent explanation is offered as to what is meant by an area board, and no guide-lines for implementation appear.

However, the implications of hospital control for community health services are by no means predictable. In some situations such arrangements have worked quite well, but hospital control can mean lack of independence for community health services as well as a concentration on curative rather than preventative services. No recommendations are forthcoming about the nature of community health services—for example, the provision of primary medical care—although the commission seems to see the value of community health services lying largely in the opportunity to cut institutional costs. Most regrettably, the commission, while expressing some unsubstantiated sentiments about the worth of community-based services compared to institutional services, does not recommend any expansion of community health services. It does, however, recommend that communities could raise their own capital “for desired community projects” (Recommendation 120). This recommendation would seriously disadvantage lower income or otherwise already disadvantaged areas such as we have here at the moment with our ambulance services.

The commission randomly, it seems, identified five “matters for special consideration” in recommendation 85: hospital accreditation, ambulance usage and costs, Aborigines, the aged and the handicapped. The commission attempted to explain its selection—

“These were singled out because of emphasis placed before the Commission . . . These need special consideration as a means of improving efficiency . . . If they are dealt with effectively there will be a consequential constraint of costs.”

That is recommendation 85. This explanation, unfortunately, adds little to an understanding of the basis of their selection, particularly for choosing only three of the many readily identifiable disadvantaged groups in the community. Further, the recommendations for the three groups are on no perceivable common basis, namely, equity, access, etc., are often contradictory to other recommendations and just as often is insultingly patronising and platitudinous; for example, the reference to “suitable and educated Aborigines”—that appears at page 610 of volume 2—and the hope expressed by the commission that the report’s “initiatives should help the Aborigines to accept the help they need.” That appears at page 611 of volume 2. Although these three groups have been chosen for special consideration, the report is unlikely to lead to improvements in their position in our society. However, some comments on the relevant sections follow.

The recommendations in Volume 1 display an astonishing naivety about the situation of Aboriginal people in Australia and their response to the authoritarian (white) health care system. Issues include interpreters in hospitals; education to encourage employment in health services; representation on hospital boards; “suitable consultation and co-operation” with Aboriginal people by local councils; and special funding. These recommendations could apply in some measure to

almost any disadvantaged group, such as migrants, women and handicapped people. The commission’s conservative ideology is particularly a hindrance in this area and it shows no insight into the special problems of Aborigines.

In Volume 2, however, some of the submissions put to the commission on Aboriginal health are discussed, and more understanding of the Aboriginal situation is displayed. After a short discussion on the health status and the hospital utilisation of Aboriginal people, evidence presented on the predominant reasons for Aboriginal ill health is reported without discussion, endorsement or comment. Much of this reported evidence was anti-hospital and pro-environmental measures, with a strong emphasis on prevention.

The set of recommendations on “the handicapped” which includes both mentally and physically handicapped people, reads like a sop to 1981, the International Year of the Disabled Persons. While stressing the desirability of decreasing reliance on institutional care, and noting that present funding arrangements have an inbuilt institutional bias, recommendations urging greater reliance on alternative community care have little meaning unless additional services are provided. “Assessment and rehabilitation” and “suitable consultation and co-operation” are catch-phrases in this section. The thrust of these recommendations is once again to decrease costs to the Commonwealth Government, but an unfortunate effect will be the placing of a greater financial burden on individuals and their families or careers.

It is interesting to note that five of the six recommendations on the handicapped in Volume 1 are not recommended in Volume 2. The sixth recommendation is a most surprising one, and promises that the States should “assess their landholdings presently occupied by psychiatric and other institutions to see whether surplus valuable assets can be disposed of or developed by entrepreneurs” in order to provide an “appropriate range of community based facilities”. That is to be found in recommendation 132. This “appropriate range” is not discussed further.

A recommendation that appears in Volume 2 and not in Volume 1 is that a review of funding of handicapped services be undertaken by the Department of Social Security. That is to be found on page 631 of Volume 2. It is not clear what a purpose for this review would be.

The recommendations on the aged are probably the most comprehensive and plausible of those on the three selected population groups. Predictably, “appropriate assessment and rehabilitation” is stressed, but whether such processes should be hospital or community based is not clear. Volume 2 reports on the projected population explosion of the elderly and factors

such as utilisation of beds and discusses, rather cursorily, the role of hospitals and nursing homes.

Two interesting recommendations appear in Volume 1 but are not discussed at all in Volume 2. One advocates "intense, irregular, without notice" Government inspections of institutions caring for the elderly and the handicapped. That is to be found in recommendation 140. The other rather oddly and inconsistently recommends the review of the use of "Commonwealth subsidised privately owned for profit organisations for the care of aged, or . . . handicapped people". That is to be found in recommendation 139. There is no further comment on those recommendations on the aged in this report.

This afternoon I had intended to refer to the report on the ambulance service that was brought down in December of last year by Cabinet, but as I have only nine minutes left I shall leave the remarks that I intended to make on behalf of the ALP to a later date. The report on the ambulance service deserves more consideration than nine minutes. However, I will say at this stage that the report, in essence, is a very good one. There are some aspects of it with which we would disagree, namely, funding, the structure of the administrative committees and the proposed QASB. I believe that the Government could immediately act on the recommendations about the training of ambulancemen. It could do so by using the existing funding and organisational arrangements under the QATB because it has the authority to train ambulancemen. At the moment there is a desperate need to upgrade the training of all ambulancemen. Under the present hotch-potch arrangement, quite often ambulancemen carry out their own training in their own time. A minimum amount of training is provided at the service's expense.

I would advocate that the Health Minister immediately act on the recommendation in the report to train ambulancemen. We in the ALP support the report. We believe that some of the problems raised in some areas by individuals or ambulance committees are basically parochial and can easily be overcome by local discussions.

This report has been a long time coming. The recommendations were first made in 1964, again in 1974 and now again in 1980. These are necessary changes to ambulance services. These inquiries have recommended similar, if not the same, changes to ambulance services in Queensland. This Government feared political backlash if it implemented the recommendations. The time has long past for dallying and dithering about improving our ambulance services because there is a vast need for improvement. The recommendations of this report are very important to the health of the people of Queensland, as well as to the people who are employed in the ambulance industry, because they deal with the proposed reorganisation of the

industry, including the rationalisation of the administration of operational procedures, communications, training, the availability of relief staff, motor vehicles, improved professional supervision and the provision of a career structure for ambulance officers. All of these are improvements that are long overdue and that this Government should set about implementing as quickly as possible.

I believe the Minister for Health should set the end of April as a deadline for all interested individuals and groups to submit the proposals, recommendations or thoughts on the current report so the State Government can immediately construct the necessary legislation to improve the ambulance system.

Mr Austin: We cannot be accused of not seeking various opinions, can we?

Mr UNDERWOOD: No. I must congratulate the Minister on the way that in January this year all interested individuals and groups were contacted. I urge the Minister to get those people to submit their recommendations. They have had time enough and now the Government should act immediately, because for the last 17 years, with the knowledge of this Government, ambulance services have been lacking and improvement is long overdue.

Mr AKERS (Pine Rivers) (4.17 p.m.): I congratulate Mr Speaker on his re-election to his high office in this Parliament. I have taken his place a couple of times in the last few days—

An Honourable Member: You did a very good job of it, too.

Mr AKERS: Thank you very much. I now realise the importance of the position. I have been lucky to have taken his place during maiden speeches, but I know the feeling. I know that the Speaker's job is very important.

I also congratulate the Chairman of Committees (Mr Miller, the member for Ithaca) on his election to that position.

On behalf of all the residents of the Pine Rivers electorate and myself, I again pledge allegiance to Her Majesty The Queen and to her representative in Queensland, His Excellency The Governor (Sir James Ramsay).

I also welcome to this Chamber the 12 new members of this new Parliament and congratulate them on their election. That is a very significant change to this Parliament. I think it is very interesting to note that only 28 members of this Parliament have been here more than six years.

Mr Burns: It is a high-risk industry.

Mr AKERS: Yes, it is.

Only 34 per cent of the members of this Parliament have the experience of more than six years in this place, and many of those 28 have been here for only a little longer than six years. Twenty-two have been here six years and 32, including the 12 new members, have been here for three years or less. For those who are talking about this Parliament or watching what is happening here, that is a very important consideration. The members of this Parliament should understand that it is a relatively inexperienced House.

I thank all of the people of Queensland who have contacted my new wife and me, especially the members of this Parliament, and expressed their good wishes. It has been a tremendous boost to me personally to know that there is such a very large amount of goodwill around for people in our positions.

I especially thank members of this House for their good wishes, especially one of the new members of the Opposition who saw fit, before he had even met us or seen the way the Parliament works, to send his good wishes. I refer to the member for Mourilyan.

Mr Burns: That's the end of him.

Mr AKERS: Last night the Pine Rivers Shire Council replaced someone who has given good service, but for only a reasonably short time—former councillor Alf Shaw, who was elected as an endorsed Liberal councillor to the Pine Rivers Shire. He resigned recently and has been replaced by Councillor Allan Baxendell, whom I know personally. I know that he will do a good job for the people of the Pine Rivers Shire. I believe that in the years to come a lot more will be heard of that gentleman in politics throughout Queensland.

Today we are debating a motion moved by the member for Toowoomba North (Dr Lockwood) to forward an address in reply to the Governor for his Opening Speech to this Parliament. Because that speech was a very general one, members are therefore able to canvass a wide range of subjects in their contributions to this debate. They certainly have made full use of that opportunity. Most—especially members of the Opposition—have complained about Government actions. Some members have praised their political opponents: others have condemned them.

I wish to congratulate my life-long friend, who recently became my political opponent, Mrs June Willmot, on the campaign she waged in the recent State election. I suppose my saying she is a life-long friend adds her to the people on the list of the member for Lytton of ALP people with a death wish. However, she is an excellent person and, except for her politics, would have made a very good member of this House. I thank June for her good manners and, although it was pretty tough at times, for the total fair play that existed at all times throughout that campaign.

I thank also the voters of Pine Rivers for their confidence shown in me by increasing my majority to two and a-half times the figure in the 1977 election. I certainly look forward to serving the people of the Pine Rivers electorate for another three years. I see that support as a vote of confidence and approval of my stance in this place on matters that I have seen as of personal principle.

I have already detected a significant change for the better in the Government's attitude to this place and to decisions that are being made by it. Attempts to save the Hoffnung building; the successful negotiations with an obstreperous city council over the Anzac Square issue, from which I believe that an excellent result will be achieved; the proposal by the appropriate Minister to introduce legislation in this place to help protect buildings of historical significance in Queensland—all of those things I attribute to the stand that was taken by this Parliament—and, I am very pleased to say, by me—on such matters as the Bellvue demolition. No-one in Government will admit that connection. But I believe that it is there; I know it is there.

I believe, too, that the protection of the rights of individuals being proposed to the joint parties by Ministers is a direct result of stands taken on such matters by several Liberal back-benchers in this House. The stand does not have to be taken here now. The Government has learned its lesson, and I believe that it will continue to do that. Certainly, I intend to give the Government a chance to carry out its policies of reform. However, I warn that it is a wait-and-see policy.

Because I, and I believe others, are being quiet at present, it does not mean that we are not watching. We are making sure that things are happening in the best interests of Queenslanders. If the trait that became apparent in the Government, especially in the last couple of years of the last Parliament, is again apparent, I am afraid that the same sort of debacle that took place in this Chamber will continue.

I see the vote at the recent election also as a support of the Government's provision in the Pine Rivers electorate of the tremendous number of services that are required from a Government in a rapidly growing electorate such as Pine Rivers. It grew from about 15 500 voters in 1977 to close to 20 500 voters in 1980.

Mr Mackenroth: Do you take the credit for that?

Mr AKERS: It is enormous growth. I do take the credit, together with Ministers such as the Minister for Works and Housing, for providing the facilities that the Government has to provide to keep pace with the needs of such areas.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr AKERS: For the benefit of honourable members opposite who scoff, let me point out a few things. First, there is the TAFE college at Bald Hills—an excellent structure. About \$12m or \$13m worth of work has been done in the area to provide tertiary education for those interested in trade-oriented occupations. Young people not only in the Pine Rivers area but also in the northern suburbs of Brisbane have benefited. It is an extremely important move. The people of Pine Rivers saw it happen and supported the Government, through me, in that matter.

The people of Mt Nebo saw the actions of the Minister for Works and Housing and myself in providing them with the facilities that were desperately needed at the tiny school. It had absolutely nowhere for children to play and, through the Minister for Works and Housing, I was able to arrange for them to have an excellent facility, and the people of the area finished off the project. I urge any honourable member who goes to the north-west of Brisbane to visit Mt Nebo and have a look at that beautiful little school.

A new school at Strathpine West is providing great relief for the Bray Park and Strathpine schools. The people saw that its construction was under way, they knew it was to be opened this year, and they thanked the Government by voting for me at the election.

Construction of the new Albany Creek High School is about to begin, and the Minister for Health, who was here a moment ago, informed me that the Bracken Ridge Hospital is well advanced in documentation and that tenders will be called soon. Certainly, there are many other fields of Government expenditure in the Pine Rivers electorate, such as the enormous expenditure on main roads and the constant upgrading of roads throughout the shire of Pine Rivers.

I see the vote also as support for the Government's positive actions for the State of Queensland as a whole. Unemployment in Queensland, although the percentage is still unacceptable to all of us, must be looked at in the light of the enormous growth in the population and the workforce. The unemployment rate in Queensland is as good as, or better than, that in most other States, and the number of employees is growing rapidly. Sir William Knox recently announced figures showing that enormous growth.

Mr Yewdale: That is not much consolation for the unemployed.

Mr AKERS: No, it is not much consolation for the unemployed. If the honourable member had been listening, he would realise that I had made it clear that I am not happy that a large number of people are unemployed. Without the great growth in the number of people coming here to seek

work, unemployment in Queensland would be almost non-existent. If people did not come from New South Wales and Victoria—

Mr Yewdale: Give us some positive figures.

Mr AKERS: I do not have to do that. They have been set out clearly.

The growth in employment is a result of the Government's policy of encouraging development in Queensland. People from other States realise that and are coming here in droves to find jobs. The unemployment rate in New South Wales would be much higher if all those people had not cleared out to get away from the Labor Government and the shambles in New South Wales. If they were counted in New South Wales rather than in Queensland, the figures would be vastly different from what they are.

Last Friday I looked at the railway system in Brisbane and the electrification that is progressing very well in Queensland. I was very impressed by the large amount of work going on throughout Brisbane on the railway system. The very twisted and dangerous track to Beenleigh should be upgraded very quickly. The electrification of the rest of the lines is proceeding at a rapid rate. I congratulate the Queensland consultants and the Queensland workmen on carrying out this work. The facilities to be seen at places like the Enoggera interchange are very impressive.

I also inspected the new port facilities at Fisherman Islands that were built by the Government and the BATL company. I certainly will not go into the rights or wrongs of giving that part of the port to that firm. I am concerned at the way in which the decision was made, but most certainly I congratulate all concerned, the consultants and workmen, on changing what I saw as a swamp less than five years ago into such an exciting area. Within the next couple of weeks these magnificent facilities will be handling ships, unloading cargo. This will be very important in creating employment and helping industry generally.

One serious matter I must raise in this debate concerns the way that permission is given to land-owners to use the poison "1080" in close proximity to residential areas. This morning I received a phone call from a resident of Brisbane Road, Strathpine, an area right on the edge of the highly developed Strathpine area. The woman who spoke to me told me that a property owner adjacent to the subdivision had been given permission by the relevant authorities to use "1080". The owner was running a goat farm and he had lost a few sheep. This lady told me she had lost three domestic dogs in three days—obviously to "1080". One of them went out of the house for only a few minutes last night. It could not possibly have gone to this property up the road and

returned in that time. It came back into the house and died in front of her and her family.

It is well known to everybody in Queensland that "1080" is a poison for which there is absolutely no antidote. It is well known that birds, such as kookaburras, crows and magpies, will pick up pieces of meat that have been poisoned and drop them in other places. That may be all right on a property that is 100 miles from the adjoining property.

I will not go into the arguments for and against "1080" generally. However, it is certainly not right to use it close to a residential area, and definitely not in close proximity to a brand new residential area with large numbers of very young children. Everybody knows that babies will pick up things and, no matter what they are, put them into their mouths. Obviously, in this case, meat poisoned with "1080" was in this lady's yard for her dog to have picked it up last night. It could well have been one of her young children who picked it up.

I demand that the Ministers responsible—I think they are the Minister for Local Government, the Minister for Lands and Forestry and possibly the Minister for Health—take some positive action to make sure that this cannot happen again. Even if one child is lost to save a number of goats, sheep and calves, it is not worth it. The inspections and control on the use of "1080" must be tight. The controls on the use of "1080" in residential areas must be so tight that it cannot be used unless a person stands there and feeds it to the dog out of his hand.

Mr Neal: Was it definitely "1080"?

Mr AKERS: The owner of the land says that he has approval to use "1080", and no other poison would kill a dog so quickly in those circumstances. I cannot say definitely and clearly that it was "1080", but it was so obvious that it was. Even if it is possible that it was "1080" the situation should not have arisen.

The final complaint that I must raise is against the Main Roads Department and its proposal to carry out work that I have been urging for some time, that is, the reconstruction of the Samford-Dayboro road through the Closeburn area. The existing road alignment is very twisty and dangerous. It has one corner known as "The Devil's Elbow" which has claimed a few lives. Such a corner would seldom be seen except on a roller-coaster at a fun park.

The Main Roads Department is spending far more money than necessary to change the route to suit one person. Unfortunately, that person has become quite infamous in Queensland over several matters in the past few years. His name is Needham.

Originally, the road was to go through Needham's property. It has been redesigned to bypass most of his land and go through the properties of several small landholders, including a recently widowed lady whom I know personally. She is very well respected in the Closeburn district. To make matters worse it doubles the length of road in that vicinity and adds at least \$300,000—it could possibly be \$500,000—to the cost of that road because it now will traverse two gullies and two cuttings will be needed. One of those cuttings will be 30 or 40 feet deep, and it will have to be made through a hill that everybody in the district knows is extremely hard rock. The cost of that cutting will be enormous, let alone the difficulty and hardship it will cause to other people. The original route was across totally flat country. It would have needed some building up above flood level, but it is land on which Mr Needham has constructed a horse-training track.

Mr Prest: Oh, that's the gentleman!

Mr AKERS: That is the one. The track is totally unusable for weeks after any reasonable amount of rain in the district, so this points out the stupidity of the action of the Main Roads Department. So instead of a straight, safe road with clear vision Queensland drivers who want to go from Samford through Samsonvale to Dayboro will have to drive up to one kilometre further than they should, around two curves and through two cuttings, with the obvious consequent loss of visibility and road safety.

I call on the Minister to investigate this matter and find out why Mr Needham was able to build a fence along a curving line that could only have been the proposed resumption line when the design of the road was not completed, or was certainly not available to anybody else, and to find out why this enormous increase in cost is necessary when the land the road was going to traverse is useless. It is swamp land. The grass on it cannot possibly be pasture because it will grow only in a swamp. It is certainly not the high standard of grass necessary for the race-track that he says it will be.

To compound my worries over this matter, Mr Needham has security floodlighting right around his house at Samsonvale and employs armed security guards. He has been publicly associated with the notorious and corrupt Messrs Nugan and Hand of Nugan Hand Bank fame, so I worry about what is going on. He will obviously go to extreme lengths to protect himself from public scrutiny, so there is almost certainly nothing he would not do to move this proposed road away from his house.

I ask the Minister, and if the Minister refuses, the Premier, to investigate this matter fully in order to protect the rights of the small landholders in the area and to protect the rights of the taxpayers and road users of Queensland by cutting costs and improving road safety.

Mr McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (4.43 p.m.): I rise to express my loyalty and that of my constituents to the Crown. Sir James and Lady Ramsay have made a very worthwhile contribution to Queensland and will continue to do so. I congratulate Mr Speaker on his re-election. I also congratulate the mover and the seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

I wish to speak about Government inefficiency, because I believe that it is causing a lot of problems not only in Queensland but right throughout the Commonwealth. Living on the border as I do I have some dealings with New South Wales Government departments. I propose to give some examples of inefficiency in New South Wales, Queensland and the Commonwealth so that I can demonstrate that it is a problem right throughout the Commonwealth and not just here in Queensland or in any other State.

On 31 October 1980 a lady who had gone through some rather traumatic experiences beyond her control came into my office. Her house had been burnt down and then she broke her ankle after that. She was a beneficiary under a New South Wales estate. I rang the Public Trust Office in New South Wales and was told that it would get some money to her within two weeks. On 19 November I rang again and was told that an industrial problem was one of the reasons for the delay. On 8 December I was promised that she would get a cheque by the end of the week. On 23 December I was told that it would be in the hands of the particular accountant in the department early the following week. On 19 January the person in the department to whom I originally spoke said that he had had a severe case of sunburn and that that was the reason for the delay. He said that he would get the cheque to the city the following week.

On 3 February 1981 I found that I had to deal with a new officer, a new accountant, and had to start again. In fairness to them, they solved the problem on 12 February 1981, and the lady received a cheque on 18 February 1981—some 3½ months after I was told that it would be there within a fortnight. That is typical of some of the problems encountered when one is dealing with Government departments in New South Wales. I have had other dealings with them.

Now I will come to the Federal Government. I understand that there is a massive backlog of applications for invalid pensions. An officer of the Social Security Department told my secretary that it has only one doctor in Queensland to process all the applications once they get down here to the head office.

Mr Vaughan: Not Dr Black?

Mr McKECHNIE: Yes. Another officer told me that the officer concerned, Dr Black,

was getting many more applications per day than he could handle and he was getting further behind.

I have another case involving a man in my electorate who has a terminal disease. Many months ago he applied for a war disability pension. In a letter dated 24 June 1980 he was told—

“Those cases which may be affected by the outcome of cases before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal or the Federal Court are being held in abeyance in the interests of the claimants.”

I stress those words “in the interests of the claimants”. That was stated back in June of last year. Quite frankly, many of these people will be dead before a decision is made. I cannot see how it is in their interests to hold up their cases while waiting for a decision from the court in similar cases. There must be some way to improve the procedures. This person told me that a Veterans' Affairs officer told him that there was a build-up of 500 cases before the court and that it was handling only five cases a week. It can be seen that there is a lot of inefficiency in that area.

Another area of inefficiency in the federal sphere concerns the Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics. All the questions that the bureau asks is driving small businessmen mad. The officers in the bureau tell people that they do not necessarily want to ask all the questions but that industry comes to them seeking information. I think that the Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics has to be a little bit careful before it accedes to requests from industry, because an industry organisation might represent only 10 per cent of the people in the industry. If the organisation is representing large companies that have computers, it is relatively easy for them to get their own information. But it is a nightmare for small businessmen in country areas.

I have an example that concerns our own State Government. A man came to see me on 12 January 1979. He told me that the Railway Department had written to him in September 1978 saying that it would investigate a certain request that he had made. On the same day this man referred to an application for freehold that he had lodged with the Lands Department. These problems still are not solved, and they started back in 1978. Admittedly much of the fault may lie with the person himself through being slow in responding to departmental requests. The fact of the matter is that much of the delay has been caused by the departments.

I now deal with a general question rather than a specific one. I am told that, if somebody in Stanthorpe wants to apply for some irrigation works to be planned for his property, there is a delay of nearly 12 months between the date of the application and the initial inspection date. The actual design would probably take another six months.

I now turn to the electricity industry, one which has to be looked at very carefully. I think it is a reasonable aim for that industry to be able to provide power to somebody living just a little out of town within two or three months from the date of application. That is what should be aimed for, because naturally there has to be a backlog to provide a continuity of employment. However, in my electorate when people apply for electricity quite often it can be up to several months before an offer of supply is received and then people are told that, provided they pay the money immediately, construction may begin in two or three months. That has to be improved upon and in this regard it is time that the Minister for Mines and Energy took a greater interest in trying to solve these problems.

Recently I had an example in which one of my colleagues asked the Minister a very simple question. He wanted access to the electricity board's figures on how costs are arrived at. The Minister is investigating whether or not that member will be provided with those figures. What amazed me was that the Minister did not even know whether or not he had the power to ask the board for those costs. It is time that that particular Minister learned a little bit more about his department and immensely improved the administration of it.

I have given various examples of what I see as inefficiency in governments generally throughout Australia. No doubt if I lived in Victoria or Tasmania I would find such bad examples there. So what is the answer to this problem? First of all, we must start at the top. If we are to have efficiency in Government, we must have Ministers who are efficient. Most of the Ministers are efficient; but there is the odd one who is not. Only one person can solve that problem—the Premier; and that is because he appoints the Ministers.

It is time that we faced up to the problem that people right throughout Australia are sick and tired of inefficiency in government and I call upon everybody in this Parliament to use every means possible to see that this State is run as efficiently as possible. I am not about to embark on public servant bashing. There are just as many good public servants as there are good farmers, good businessmen and good people in other professions.

Mr Moore: Are you going to do it by example?

Mr McKECHNIE: I am always efficient.

The fact of the matter is that there is something wrong with the system of the administration of government right throughout Australia. I do not believe that this or any other Government is doing enough to solve the problem. Senior public servants—in particular, heads of departments—work very, very hard. They work much harder than they should have to. To me this demonstrates part of the problem. They should not have to work that hard. They

should be able to delegate responsibility so that they are not administrators working from daylight to dark, as they sometimes are, making so many decisions themselves. If they have the power to delegate authority, they should do it. If they have not got the power, we in this Parliament should give them that power.

One other thing that demonstrates lack of efficiency in this Government relates to our abolition of road maintenance tax a long time ago, when we promised councils that they would not be financially disadvantaged. Although some catch-up payments have been made to councils, they have not all received all the money to which they are entitled. It is time that this Government made a decision on that matter.

Another thing that can be done to improve efficiency of the Government is to get rid of quite a few regulations that presently operate in the States and the Commonwealth. It is so easy for a Minister to agree with somebody who brings forward a case to put another Government restriction on an industry or to change a law. Each one standing on its own can be justified; but what is the total effect of all these regulations? I refer particularly to the Housebuilders' Registration Board and the Builders' Registration Board, brought about by media pressure because of gerry-built housing in Queensland. What has been the result? I do not often have a chance to watch television, but I still seem to see "Today Tonight" going crook about the Housebuilders' Registration Board's not being effective. The fact is that it does not matter how many laws we introduce to police activities, we still get problems with buildings. I suggest to the House that it compare the number of people who are helped by the Housebuilders' Registration Board with the cost that is added to housing. I would ask the Government to have a very good look at that.

The honourable member for Barron River mentioned a law about protecting snakes. Goodness me! Surely we are overlegislating when we go to that extreme. Some of our coalition colleagues believe quite genuinely in the need to establish a public accounts committee. I do not think that is necessary at all. The reason why I do not think so is, as I have just said, that we have too many regulations. What we need are efficient Ministers with efficient departments under them. If they do not perform, we in Government can handle the matter in the joint Government parties room a darned sight better than we can if we set up another committee with another staff and another set of expense accounts, with people flying all round the country at public expense.

There is another example which I wish to speak about. The shadow Minister for Health mentioned the ambulance inquiry. I would like to tell members of this Parliament that, although I have read only sections of the report, it mentions a centre in my area as being uneconomic. That

centre has \$30,000 in the bank on fixed deposit and has good accident equipment, as have most of the centres in my electorate. Honourable members should go over the border and compare that with the service run from the public hospital. When the hospital in New South Wales wanted to get a patient, it had to ask the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade to ferry the patient because it did not have a car available. When I see the equipment that some of the little ambulance services in country areas have as a result of the money that they have raised by getting the public behind them, I do not want to see the present system go out the door and have the ambulance run virtually as another Government department with an advisory body on the local scene.

Another example of the way in which Governments can waste money is the current proposal of the Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Board to upgrade the barrier fence and administer it itself. The dingo barrier fence must be upgraded. However, local councils can do that much more cheaply and effectively than any Government department.

Mr Underwood: How many ambulance-men in your area have been fully trained?

Mr McKECHNIE: Not all of them have been trained to the degree that the report requests. I am not knocking that section of the report; I am knocking the section that suggests that the local body should be more or less an advisory body. The system now in operation, under which we have the public behind the ambulance service, will provide a much better service than will be provided if the Government takes over.

Let me get back to the barrier fence. The Minister for Lands and Forestry, the honourable member for Balonne and I will be visiting our areas very shortly to look at the fence again. When one lives on the border and sees what it costs the Government of New South Wales to maintain some of the fences in that State and then sees what local authorities can do in Queensland, one quickly becomes convinced of which is the better way to make use of taxpayers' money. I suggest that a similar system should permeate all Government departments. There should be as much local control as possible.

My electorate is largely a primary producing electorate, and it produces a very wide variety of products—fruit, vegetables, wine, wheat, sheep, and produce of broad-acre farming, cattle, angora goats and tobacco. If the industries are profitable, the whole district will be profitable. Recently, my electorate has suffered quite badly from drought in some areas and from low prices in other areas. When I heard this morning a report that the Prime Minister had suggested that perhaps Queensland need not receive quite so much money from the Federal Government because its percentage of

personal income tax reimbursement is higher than that of New South Wales and Victoria, it really made me sick. The fact of the matter is that Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory could cut off the rest of Australia and be a very profitable community. It is the export industries of those States that keep Australia afloat and enable people in southern States to enjoy their present standard of living. The Liberal Government in Western Australia and the National-Liberal Government in Queensland have created a climate to encourage development. If the Prime Minister tries to penalise the Western Australian and Queensland Governments for encouraging development, I think he ought to think again.

Another industry that is growing rapidly in my electorate is tourism.

Mr Vaughan: What about wine-making?

Mr McKECHNIE: Well, wine-making is part of tourism. They go hand in hand. I am very pleased about the rate of progress of tourism in my electorate, and I will certainly do everything in my power to encourage its further development.

In the fruit and vegetable industries, what is needed more than anything else is confidence in the future.

Many primary producers in the fruit and vegetable industry would dearly like to see orderly marketing in that industry. Unfortunately, to introduce orderly marketing, all States must agree. Some of the other States just will not agree. I said earlier that I hope we may be able to do something about the late cold-store and late controlled-atmosphere deciduous fruit coming into Queensland. I am pleased that the efficient Minister for Primary Industries is in the House. I am pleased that he has agreed to look into this matter in detail. I hope that he may achieve results.

The COD is meant to represent the fruit and vegetable growers in my electorate. But does it? Some growers feel that it does and some feel that it does not. I sometimes wonder whether we could get confidence back into that growers' organisation by splitting it into a trading organisation on the one hand and a straight-out growers' organisation on the other hand. That could be done quite simply. Instead of having two growers from each sectional group sitting on the COD as at present, one representative could sit on a trading section and the other on the growers' section. If that were done, and I approached the people in my electorate and asked, "What is the policy of the growers in the area?", they could talk to me without considering the trading side of the COD. At the moment my growers believe that some executive officers of the COD have to consider the trading side and balance that against what the growers really want when they ask the COD to make representations on their behalf. I am not

saying that this must be done, but I think it could be considered to determine whether it is technically feasible, or whether it is even desirable.

Another matter that concerns me greatly is the need to have more rural training colleges in Queensland. The deciduous fruit-growing industry in Stanthorpe is not represented adequately in the training colleges. In the same way, fine wool and angora goat breeding are not properly represented. It is time that the Government reviewed its policy and encouraged the establishment of more rural training colleges. I will be asking for one of them to be built at Stanthorpe.

Most rural members have referred to water in their Address-in-Reply speeches. Australia will never have enough water to insulate primary industries from the ravages of drought. The provision of increased water storages should receive a higher priority than in the past. Because of the shortage of water in drought times in the Stanthorpe region, it is almost impossible for producers to grow the fruit and vegetables that they would wish. Similarly, in the Border Rivers area, Queensland's share of water from the Glenlyon Dam is already overcommitted. It is time to consider building more water storages in the area.

When we speak of the ravages of drought we should not forget the plight of the small businessman and his employees. I am sometimes worried in the knowledge that some primary producers who have access to finance do not choose to avail themselves of it. Because this small minority does not pay its bills the small businessman gets into trouble.

The small business loans which this Government has introduced should be used primarily to help those small businesses that cannot get money. Let us face it: there are some primary producers who cannot get finance and cannot pay. In general, any primary producer who cannot get money from his own bank can get money from the Agricultural Bank if he has a chance of long-term viability. I would like more of them to use this money to help not only themselves but also the small businessmen who very often extend credit beyond their means.

Other honourable members have mentioned the young people's farm purchase scheme. It is an excellent scheme but I am worried where the finance will come from. We have to seek mammoth amounts of finance for this scheme. If we can get some sort of scheme off the ground, the Federal Government might live up to one of its promises in the election campaign before last and help us to solve the problem. There is little point in introducing a young people's farm purchase scheme if we continue to let people from overseas—absentee landlords—pay ridiculous prices for our land when they have no intention of living there. I had a certain amount of research done into

this matter. According to a Parliamentary Library report, in Manitoba in Canada—

"There are no restrictions on the purchase of agricultural land by Canadians and permanent residents of Canada. Non-resident individuals or foreign controlled corporations may own no more than a maximum of 20 acres of agricultural land. . . . A resident here is defined as Canadian Citizen or landed immigrant actually living in Canada."

The report also says—

"In Japan foreign nationals who wish to acquire properties or rights . . . are required to obtain validation from the competent Minister."

Somewhere in between those two lies what we should be aiming for in Queensland. I welcome people who want to start a new life in Queensland or in Australia, as long as they are prepared to live here. I have no sympathy whatever for people who want to play with exchange rates or get money that may be cheaper in other countries purely to speculate in land in Queensland.

I plan during the life of this Parliament to try to convince my colleagues to introduce legislation so that at the very least people who are not prepared to live here have to get the Minister's consent before being allowed to buy land in this fair State of ours, and I am including freehold title. It would have to be done very carefully. They could not be banned outright because, in some instances, it would be good and necessary to have foreign investment here if it would bring a new style of farming or something else that is worth while. The Minister's consent should be given only in very exceptional circumstances.

Mr Jones: It is not really airtight and watertight.

Mr McKECHNIE: No, but people have to start to talk about it and try to come up with some solution in the life of this Parliament.

Previous speakers mentioned division of responsibility in what was formerly the Department of Local Government. A section of that department is now under the control of a Minister who is not the Minister for Local Government. I received a letter from Councillor Rogers, who is chairman of the Queensland Local Government Association. If it can be proved that there is a problem with this division of responsibility, I am happy to represent local government's views, but there is no suggestion in the letter as to what the problem is; it is merely people saying that they do not like it. However, I agree with a previous speaker—I think it might have been the honourable member for Warwick—who said that the Minister for Local Government has too much on his plate. There is no doubt about that. I think that local authorities generally throughout the State feel that he is a good Minister but that now that he has racing attached to his portfolio they will not have the same

access to him. The Government should consider giving the Local Government and Main Roads Departments a portfolio to themselves, because the load on the Minister is just too much.

This morning I asked the Minister for Health a question about nursing training at the Stanthorpe Hospital. In the dying stages of the last Parliament the former Health Minister (Sir William Knox) hosted a luncheon for his parliamentary health committee and the members of the Board of Nursing Studies. We were encouraged by the members of the board to agree to a new style of training for nurses in Queensland. I do not think they convinced any members of the committee, but it appears that the new system is being introduced anyway.

I can appreciate the reasons for its introduction. If we are to have a high standard of nursing in Queensland, and if the credentials of our trained staff are to be accepted interstate and overseas, this new system is necessary; but I question whether this high degree of training is necessary for, say, the Blue Nurses or community health nurses. I also wonder whether these new highly trained nurses will want to go and work in small country hospitals. I am worried that, if in the future these highly trained nurses will not staff such hospitals, that could be used as an excuse for closing them.

I have a compromise solution which I would like the Minister to look at. Perhaps we could have two classifications of trained staff: One for the super-nurses that the board is talking about and the other for those who do not have quite the same training. I know that the nursing federation would not like that, but I do not see that these super-nurses will want to staff small country hospitals in the future. I believe it is a waste of public money to give all this training to students who will become Blue Nurses or community health nurses and whose predominant duties will be attending to the small needs of patients who are not seriously ill. The present training course would enable nurses to do that type of job quite adequately.

The other matter to which I wish to speak briefly—I plan to speak about it at greater length in another speech—is fuel, which has become a real problem in Australia since the Federal Government introduced world parity pricing. It is a fact that fuel is cheap in Australia compared with prices in many other countries. Federal elections have been fought on this subject, and whether we support the policy or not is irrelevant because it is a Commonwealth decision and we are stuck with it. But when it comes to retail margins, if this Government wished to introduce price control, we could control them. I am not advocating that, but I am saying that it is time some retailers stopped blaming the Federal Government and the multinational oil companies for all of their problems. The fact of the matter is that the Federal Government has done one good thing by reintroducing a type of fuel equalisation. It is not as good as the previous scheme, but

it does mean that retailers in country towns buy their fuel either at a set price or at a discounted price if there is a rebate given by the oil companies.

Unless they are in an area where the volume sales are very small, once they begin to sell petrol at more than 4c above their buying price it tends to become very unfair for the consumer. Obviously if they are selling only a few litres a week their profit margin has to be higher. However, that is a topic that I shall discuss at greater length in another debate in the life of this Parliament.

Another matter that is concerning me is the problem of racial discrimination in Australia. Probably the greatest proponent of racial discrimination is Al Grassby. In my electorate there were few problems with racial discrimination before Al Grassby came onto the scene. Just recently Mr Grassby got stuck into a publican in Goondiwindi over a certain matter. I do not think that Mr Grassby's buying into that matter has done anything at all to try to mould the black and the white communities around Goondiwindi into having a mutual respect for one another. All it has done is divide them further. If the Federal Government locked Mr Grassby in a broom cupboard, gave him a biro and let him write reports and nothing else, that would be the best thing that it could do to help solve the racial discrimination problems in Australia.

Another question that this Parliament should address itself to is whether or not we are doing enough to train apprentices. The primary producer organisations have good lobby groups, as has the Confederation of Industry; but the young lad trying to get an apprenticeship has nobody speaking directly for him. I know that the Confederation of Industry takes a great interest in this matter, but it is not quite the same as if young people had their own lobby. This Government should look at ways and means of trying to help more young people to be trained as tradesmen. Tradesmen themselves in their own businesses should remember that perhaps somebody lost a few bob in training them in their early years. It is time that we gave greater consideration to this matter.

I am pleased to have been able to speak in this debate. I have spoken at length on the matter of efficiency in government. I hope that those who were listening and have a responsibility in this matter will take note of what I have said.

Debate, on motion of Mr Wharton, adjourned.

PETROLEUM ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. I. J. GIBBS (Albert—Minister for Mines and Energy), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Petroleum Act 1923-1976 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr I. J. Gibbs, read a first time.

SECOND READING

Hon. I. J. GIBBS (Albert—Minister for Mines and Energy) (5.25 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

This short Bill is mainly a machinery measure designed to correct anomalies which have become apparent in the present Act. However, before I explain the details of the Bill I would like to make a few brief comments on the exploration side of the petroleum industry with which the Bill is connected.

Exploration groups continued to step up the search for petroleum in Queensland during 1980 when the number of wells spudded more than doubled and the distance of seismic line, which trebled in 1979, more than trebled again. A total of 50 wells were spudded and from 24 exploration wells drilled to total depth, three gas discoveries were made. Two of these were in the Surat Basin, and one in the Cooper Basin. Of the 24 appraisal and development wells drilled, 16 produced gas and two produced oil. Very large seismic programs are being carried out and 17 702 km were shot in 1980.

Onshore authorities to prospect for petroleum increased from 45 at the end of 1979 to 63, covering most of the prospective areas in the State. Exploration also commenced on four offshore permits in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Another promising development has been the return of some of the petroleum industry majors, with their sophisticated skills, to Queensland exploration. Prospects for 1981 are bright, and it is estimated that about 100 wells could be drilled this year.

In the regulations under the Act, the State Mining Engineer has wide powers of inspection and supervision of operations in connection with the discovery or production of petroleum. Notices in regard to the appointment of personnel to be in charge of such operations and particulars of proposed drilling must be forwarded to him. He must be advised of all operations concerning the production of water, oil or gas from wells or bores, the regulation of production, as well as details of the effect such drilling will have on other formations and deposits and the general effect of drilling on property and persons in the vicinity.

The authority for the State Mining Engineer to carry out these functions is provided for in detail in the regulations, but the present Act is deficient in so far as it does not include “State Mining Engineer” among the definitions. The Bill proposes that this definition be brought into the Act to give the State Mining Engineer the necessary legal standing.

The Bill then goes on to increase penalties under the present Act. Penalties were last increased in 1962, and it is felt that with the escalation of money values and the increased interest in oil exploration and its possible effects on the community at large, for example the publication of prospectuses and also on the economy of the State in regard to the payment of royalty, that the size of such penalties be increased to amounts which will provide a sufficient deterrent to persons who may have a desire to flout the provisions of the Act.

Officers of my department and representatives of the petroleum industry meet regularly with a view to keeping the legislation abreast of modern requirements and safe practice. One outcome of such meetings was a recommendation that the Petroleum Regulations (Land) be amended in certain aspects. Such amendments were to include replacing the American National Standards Institute Code B 31-4 by the Australian Standard 2018 which is the Standards Association of Australia Liquid Petroleum Pipeline Code. The capacity to adopt standards by the regulations is very desirable in regard to the department’s role in supervising operations in general and safety in particular, but section 65 of the Act, which provides power to make regulations, does not contain the necessary power in regard to the adoption of standards or in regard to other desirable functions.

The Bill provides for amendment of this section to give power in relation to the adoption in the regulations of any prescribed standard or code and for the making of regulations dealing with the storage and use of explosives in connection with the exploration for and production of petroleum, approvals by the State Mining Engineer in particular matters and for the provision of fees and penalties.

Provision is also made in the Bill for the validation of regulations in force immediately before the commencement of the amending act. The amendments proposed are necessary and will greatly assist in the efficient administration of the exploration for and the production of petroleum.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Vaughan, adjourned.

BRISBANE AND AREA WATER BOARD
ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 78) on Mr Tomkins’s motion—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr WILSON (Townsville South) (5.31 p.m.): Most of these amendments are purely machinery and, as such, we do not offer any opposition.

Mr **PREST** (Port Curtis) (5.31 p.m.): Although we have no opposition to the amendments contained in this Bill, what concerns the Opposition and local authorities throughout Queensland is that since the election in November changes have been made that have taken the responsibility for the Clean Waters Act, the Brisbane and Area Water Board Act and the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Act from the Local Government Department to the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs. In so doing, the Government has taken 150 persons who have been employed for a long period in the Department of Local Government to the control of another Government department. Although there is no loss of jobs, it does take away from the Local Government Department responsibilities that it has had for so long.

We have never been told the reasons why this has happened. We do know that the Minister in charge of the Local Government Department is also in charge of the Police Department, the Main Roads Department and racing. It could be that his responsibility has become so overloaded that some of it is being taken from him by dismantling part of the Local Government Department and placing it under the Water Resources Commission. However, these changes are only the thin end of the wedge. Before very long other amendments will be made to the State Development and Public Works Organization Act, as mentioned by the Governor in his Opening Speech on Wednesday, 4 March.

Local Government is very concerned about whether it will lose responsibility for water and sewerage. It could also be that before very long planning, another major function of local government, will be taken from it.

Mr **Burns**: This was only done because Russ Hinze wanted racing, wasn't it, and they had to give Ken Tomkins something to do?

Mr **PREST**: That could be so. This is what we do not know. The question we ask is: Why has this been necessary? We are concerned about this.

At a local government conference held in North Queensland recently, the mayor of Mackay and president of the North Queensland Local Government Association (Sir Alby Abbott) made some very strong remarks about the decision being implemented today.

Motions were moved at that meeting, and the following is the text of a letter sent to the Queensland Premier from the North Queensland Local Government Association, which expressed its concern at the inroads being made by higher authorities into its affairs—

"1. That this Conference unanimously objects to State Cabinet's decision, to remove from the Local Government Department functions which are rightly the responsibility of Local Government.

"2. We the Members of this Association wish to lodge our protest to the manner in which State Cabinet has made this decision 'without notice' to the Local Government Association of Queensland, contrary to the undertaking given by the Minister of Local Government that any action relating to Local Government would not be taken before such matter had been discussed with them.

"3. We are concerned at the continued inroads into Local Government operations without first having communications with Local Government the third tier of Government which is the closest Government to the people.

"4. Conference directs that in view of the seriousness of this matter, that the President of the North Queensland Local Government Association make personal representations to the Premier advising of our protest and that this be followed by written advice together with copy of the President's Report.

"5. That all Local Authority Members of this Association lodge their protest in the strongest possible way to the Premier and their respective members of Parliament for their support and action.

"6. That the Resolution at this Conference be referred to the Local Government Association of Queensland requesting that body to explore every avenue possible to ensure that Cabinet's decision in this matter be rescinded.

"That a letter signed by all delegates present to be delivered to the Premier and a copy of this Resolution be included."

Very strong feelings were expressed by the North Queensland Local Government Association.

Of course, the matter has now gone further than that. I should say that every local authority in the State has sent a letter to the Premier, and their action has received the support of Councillor Rogers of the Local Government Association of Queensland. I am certain that each member of this Assembly has received a letter from Councillor Rogers seeking his support.

Members of the Opposition would like the Minister to explain to the House why it was decided to take water supply and sewerage away from the Local Government Department. We believe that this is only the thin end of the wedge and that, once that has been done, the Local Government Department will become merely a rubber stamp. In the near future, if the Act is amended as envisaged by the Premier and the Co-ordinator-General's Department, the only purpose of local government will be to raise by way of rates from people living in the area sufficient money to pay for the infrastructure that is needed as a result of the Government's granting to industry the right to go to a particular area.

Local government must have restored to it the rights that it has had for many years.

Although, as the honourable member for Townsville South said, the amendments now proposed are only machinery in nature—simply taking the responsibility from the Minister for Local Government and the Director of Local Government and placing it in the hands of the Minister for Water Resources and the Commissioner of Water Resources—and the Opposition will agree to them, we object to the taking of the responsibility from the Department of Local Government in the first place.

Mr POWELL (Isis) (5.39 p.m.): I support the Bill before the House. I have just heard from the honourable member for Port Curtis the greatest piece of fantasy that I have heard for some time. I fail to understand how anybody in his right mind can say that local government is being dismantled or destroyed by the introduction of a simple administrative procedure that makes sense.

An Honourable Member: You should talk to the Local Government Association.

Mr POWELL: I have spoken to members of the Local Government Association, and they cannot give me one logical reason for their objection.

I was more than amused by the Opposition spokesman on water resources saying that he has no objection to the matter and another Opposition member contradicting him. Let us examine the situation sensibly and logically. Queensland, as part of Australia, is a very dry State. Water is one of the resources that we must conserve. Surely the most sensible thing to do is to put all sections of water conservation within the one department so that when people have to work out how water is to be used, where it is to be used and in what proportion it has to be used, one Minister is responsible.

On a number of occasions honourable members have heard me speak about the dryness of my electorate. Unfortunately it is still dry. Water conservation is a very important matter, not only to me but to the State as a whole. Recently a town in my electorate was almost without water and some serious thinking had to be done about getting a new supply to serve the town. If the town had not had sewerage, there probably would have been no problem, but like most modern towns, it has it.

With all the work I did, and with all the assistance of the Co-ordinator-General's Department, I could not get complete, utter co-operation from the two departments I had to go to constantly. I am certain that if the whole of the water undertakings had been as they are now, the people who had to buy water would have been far better served.

It is obvious that those who gave notice through the Local Government Association do not understand the situation. They objected to the changes being made on the basis that they would make inroads into local government which, they say, is the closest form of government to the people.

Why is it that I, like many other members of this Parliament, receive numerous complaints about local government and its arbitrary decisions? I do not claim that local government is closest to the people. All governments should be close to the people. And certainly this government is close to the people.

The people are sick and tired of having to pay higher fees for various services simply because a particular brand of Government or a particular department wishes to empire-build in its own right. I am completely in favour of the changes. I believe that the Water Resources Commission, by right, should be the department that looks after town water supplies as well as farm water supplies.

In our dry State, the supply of water to towns is a vitally important service. It cannot be ignored and it cannot be passed over because of anyone's pettiness. It is my firm conviction that the administrative changes that this legislation will allow to continue throughout Queensland will be for the benefit of the consumer.

I have already spoken to the Minister on a number of occasions about the resiting of a weir on the Mary River so that water from it—it is primarily an irrigation weir, or, rather, barrage—will be available to augment the supply in the Burrum Weir for the town of Hervey Bay. I am determined that the engineers concerned will look at this matter rationally—in the way that is best for the consumers. In the past it was believed that the Water Resources Commission had no responsibility for town water supplies. That is wrong. That sentiment should never have been allowed to prevail.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr POWELL: It is clear that the administrative changes being made are for the benefit of every person in Queensland.

Mr Burns: It has always had control over the Torrens Creek supply, and little country areas like that, and it has the worst water supply in Australia. That is no reason for handing water supply over to the commission.

Mr POWELL: The honourable member also does not understand the changes that are taking place. We are not handing the supply of water over to the Government. The responsibility for providing water to consumers in local authority areas remains with the local authorities concerned.

Mr Burns: I have a letter from the Commissioner of Water Resources written two years ago about the water supply at Torrens Creek. If you want to bet me, put up your electorate allowance.

Mr POWELL: It is not my practice to bet the honourable member for Lytton anything. Torrens Creek is not in my electorate. Therefore I have no responsibility for it.

The point I am trying to make is that the responsibility for the supply of water and the provision of sewerage and such services still lies with the local authorities. The only change is that the local authorities will now go to the Minister for Water Resources for assistance in engineering rather than to two departments, as was the case. I would like somebody to prove to me that it does not make sense.

All I have read is a group of statements from the Queensland Local Government Association, which appears to be carrying on a petty sort of argument when, in fact, it does not seem to understand the changes that are being made. They are purely administrative. The individual local authorities are having nothing taken away from them. The only difference is that they will deal with one department instead of two. Surely that makes sense.

Mr KRUGER (Murrumba) (5.48 p.m.): I want to pass some comments because of what the previous speaker said. The Opposition spokesman said that we were not against the principle of accepting the machinery amendments in these Bills. There are four of them to be discussed and possibly we are looking at the wrong one first. Had we discussed one of the other Bills first, this might have been a flow-on and, when discussing water, that is not a bad way to have it.

The honourable member for Isis tried to make out that there is a rift between our first spokesman and the Labor speaker who followed him. The honourable member for Port Curtis was quite right in saying what he did and he was entitled to say it. It is entirely the honourable member's prerogative to make those statements. We on this side of the House see those problems. Because of the way in which Bills are framed, we cannot go against machinery amendments because those decisions have been made.

Let me deal with the history of the Brisbane and Area Water Board. The Minister for Local Government and Main Roads introduced the Bill. The concept was opposed by quite a few local authorities. The Pine Rivers Shire Council and the Redland Shire Council were opposed to it but I believe that the Redland Shire Council is now going to get into it. The Pine Rivers Shire Council is involved and has a representative on the board.

What we are concerned about is that the board suddenly believes that it should be handed over to the Water Resources Commission. Possibly water storage ought to be controlled by the State Government or the Federal Government and it is quite reasonable to accept that that should be the case. What worries us is that the Government takes these controls from the local authorities but expects the local authorities to do the dirty work of going to their ratepayers with the problem of increased costs and anything else that arises because of Government interference.

A headline in the "Telegraph" of 30 January 1981 reads, "City water grab." The article reads—

"The Brisbane and Area Water Board today moved to take control of Brisbane's \$100 million water headworks.

"The Local Government Minister, Mr Hinze, told members control of the board would change from his department to the Water Resources Commission.

"The headworks include Somerset and North Pine dams.

"The Water Resources Commission comes under the control of the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, Mr Tomkins."

The situation quite clearly is that Mr Hinze is too busy with his other duties at the races and at the trots down at Albion Park and wants to get rid of this responsibility to the Minister for Water Resources. We believe that quite a deal will have to be done to straighten out the problem inflicted on local authorities by the Government only a year or so ago. We believe the local authorities have been left to carry the baby. That is typical of this Government. They did the same with the Litter Act and various other Acts. They made the laws and then left the local authorities to carry the banner.

Because local authorities are closest to the people and ought to be the ones administering such Acts, it is unfortunate to see this type of situation arising. The Government should show some concern for local authorities. There are many local authorities in Queensland and the Government is making such decisions without consulting them.

The letter which has been mentioned a couple of times already indicates quite clearly that the important people in the local government field were not notified of the possible changes. They wrote to the Minister and asked to be notified of any possible changes so that they could have discussions with the Government about what might happen in the future. They were ignored. They tried to make representations to the Premier but were still ignored. That is typical of the standover tactics of this National Party Government. I would go so far as to say that this Bill is a political manoeuvre on the part of the National Party to try to outsmart their colleagues.

The majority representation on the board is from the National Party, and I believe it will be quite a lot easier to keep control of the local authority representatives on the board under this portfolio than it was under the Local Government portfolio. There are quite a few Labor-held authorities. The Liberals have control of the Pine Rivers Shire Council while the National Party controls some others, but under the proposed changes the Water Resources Commission will gain control over a majority of local authorities in the State.

Mr Warburton: Local authorities see it so seriously that they are contemplating having a State conference.

Mr KRUGER: That is true, and I believe it is high time they did, just to show this Government how badly they consider it is operating. I am concerned because I believe the National Party would take this step to try to gain control of the small local authorities and thus keep its numbers up. If it is genuine about water resources, with the amount of State taxes it collects it ought to be making more water available to the people of Queensland. If it does not want to do it then the Federal Government ought to accept its responsibility and do so. When the water has been made available I believe it then becomes the responsibility of the local authorities. This principle ought to have been written into the four related Bills before us this evening.

I believe the Local Government Department could do a better job of administering the performance of local authorities as far as water supply and reticulation are concerned. But it is reasonable to expect funds for increased storage capacity to come from either the State or Federal Governments. It is their responsibility. There are two ways of obtaining the money to do these things, either through taxation or rates paid to the local authorities. Having seen what happened when electricity supply was taken out of the hands of the Brisbane City Council we can expect water rates to go up. The water will be supplied by the commission and the local authorities will then have to administer its distribution. But they will have to pay increased costs incurred by the Government and answer to their ratepayers for it.

It is time the Government woke up to its responsibility to the people and stopped trying to brainwash them with this type of legislation. I do not believe it is a genuine attempt to try to overcome Queensland's water storage problems.

Mr AKERS (Pine Rivers) (5.54 p.m.): It always amazes me to hear the Opposition crying about the powers of local government, because quite clearly it is their policy to abolish local government and the States entirely and then create regions. So for political reasons they start crying about any Government action that involves local government. Nobody in this place has fought harder than I have for the maintenance of the powers of local government.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr AKERS: I know I have had a lot of losses, but I believe that local government is a very important part of the functioning of the government processes in Queensland.

I believe that what we are doing here this evening is half sensible and half illogical. It is sensible to put water resources under the one Minister. For many years it has been crazy to have separate controls over different aspects of water supplies. Rural water supplies have come under one Minister and town water supplies have come under another Minister. It is logical and sensible that they

should come under one Minister. But unfortunately this matter has been handled the completely reverse way to what it should have been. Water resources should have been put under the control of either Primary Industries or Local Government. It should not have been put under the control of a separate Minister.

It is logical that water resources should be under the control of Local Government because under the Brisbane and Area Water Board Act and the Local Government Act local authorities are responsible for supplying water to their ratepayers. It is logical for the responsibility for water supplies to stay with that department. Whatever happens, I do not think the local authorities will be greatly disadvantaged. I cannot imagine that Jim Turnbull, who is a very capable engineer, will change his way of dealing with local authorities just because he comes under a different Minister. I do not think that local authorities should be too concerned about that. But it is illogical to handle the matter the way we are.

I think that Opposition members are putting forward these complaints to stir up the present fears of local authorities. A fault of this Government is that it does not explain what it is doing. It does not tell people the reasons why it does things. Local authorities learn from the Press that something major is to happen to them.

Instead of the Government's writing to them and saying, "This is what we are doing and this is why we are doing it", it lets local authorities hold their own meetings and make their own decisions virtually in the dark. Of course they are afraid of what the Government does. All Governments tend to bear down on the arm below them. The Federal Government tries to wipe out the State Governments, and the State Governments are putting pressure on local authorities in every State. Of course they are afraid of this. They are entitled to be told what is happening, and why.

As soon as the Bill is passed by Parliament, the Minister should supply information to every local authority that will be affected by this legislation to explain to them what is going on. This is an important change. Local authorities are seeing a change in the good relationship that they have had for a long time, and they do not know whether it is for the better or the worse. They fear the worst, and of course they react. I ask the Minister to let them know what is happening.

[*Sitting suspended from 5.58 to 7.15 p.m.*]

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (7.15 p.m.): Like the Opposition spokesman on water resources matters, I felt that the major debate on this Bill should have been on the Water Resources Administration Act Amendment Bill. If the Bills had been placed in different order on the Business Paper we would have first debated the transfer of the administration of water resources and facilities from the Department of Local Government, and the others would have followed from there.

It is now obvious that it was not planned as well as it should have been, and each Bill is to be debated separately.

One of the first things we should talk about is the philosophy behind the Government's action in removing the control of water quality and many other items of local authority responsibility from the Department of Local Government. It is the beginning of the end for local government.

Mr Ahern interjected.

Mr BURNS: I know the Minister for Primary Industries does not agree with me but the plain facts of the matter are that this Government has become enamoured of the idea of creating boards.

I know that in the past Ministers and back-bench members have stood here and said that the Government is against boards and Qangos and that there should be an inquiry into statutory authorities. The Government says that it wants these authorities to be responsible to elected members, but the plain facts of the matter are that whenever it has an opportunity to do so the Government sets out to take something away from local authorities, and when it does it generally sets up a board.

Mr Moore: The Labor States all have water boards.

Mr BURNS: Do not worry about the Labor States. I am talking about the National-Liberal Government of this State and its philosophy.

I know what the Government tells the people but the Department of Local Government and the Local Government Association are starting to find out what the Government believes in and what it intends to do. I believe that this is part of a long-term program that will see the control of such things as water and sewerage taken from local authorities and given to water and sewerage boards. Planning will also disappear from local authorities and local government will be emasculated.

Mr Moore: You give us more credit than we are entitled to.

Mr BURNS: Quite truthfully, I do not give the Government much credit. I must say that, and I continue to say that I see no reason why I should extend the Government any further credit than I have given it in the past.

I know the devious plans of the National and Liberal Parties. Because the people will not vote for those parties they cannot get control of the Brisbane City Council. Because of that over the years the Government has set out to destroy the concept of Greater Brisbane, and one of the ways to do that is first to take away each of the areas that would make it an overall council.

The Brisbane City Council no longer supplies electricity to everybody in Brisbane; it also no longer controls raw water supplies to everybody in Brisbane. There is no doubt

that the water board of which we are speaking tonight will take raw water reticulation from the Brisbane City Council. That is part of the Government's philosophy, and everybody who goes to water board meetings leaves with that idea in mind as a result of the arguments of the people that the Government has put on the board.

The Government will next take the responsibility for sewerage away from the council. That will be another area in which there will be no need for a Greater Brisbane, because it will no longer provide these facilities. The Government will take away planning, and then it will be able to say that it can set up little local authorities all through Brisbane because there is no need for the great organisation, that there are no longer any great savings, and no great economies of scale. Bob Moore will retire and he will sit out at the Windsor School of Arts in his robes, with a gold chain and a liquor cabinet, just like all of those fellows in Melbourne who have a free booze cabinet, and a little car. He will be the mayor of Windsor, and he will be opening the chicken shows and flower shows at Windsor while he is in receipt of his superannuation. Because the Government cannot get hold of the council any other way, that is the way it is going to give Bob his little retirement fund. He will not be Sir Robert, either; he will be Bob—poor old Bob from Windsor—not worth a bob at Windsor.

Mr Moore: I will accept that.

Mr BURNS: Of course the honourable member would. That is part of the plan. I am glad that he agrees with me. I am glad that he accepts what I am trying to say to him.

I say straight out: planning is the next to be taken away from Brisbane. Water and sewerage will be taken out of the control of the Brisbane City Council and all other local authorities. People such as Russ Hinze and the Premier want to take planning away from local authorities. How else will they look after their friends—companies like Hudson Conway, which had developments at Toowoomba and the Gold Coast? The only thing wrong with them as far as the Government was concerned was that they offered money to the council. It is all right to give money to the Government and get a development like the one at the port of Brisbane. It is all right to pay \$25,000, as Williams did, and rort every industrial law with the birdlife park and things like that on the Gold Coast.

It is all right for all those grafters and corrupters who come in and put their money in the dukes of the National Party or the Premier or the other Ministers here; but it is wrong if the council somewhere along the line asks for some return to the people for planning decisions. This is the only reason the Government has for taking planning out of the hands of local councils. How could it dish out the goodies to its friends if it had to go to

some local authority that the people might throw out and replace with a group that the Government could not control? Obviously the Government will continue this philosophy of destroying the concept of local government—of elected responsibility. It will move ahead with the long-term plan of destroying councils or reducing them to ciphers so that they will carry out only the traditional role of the small councils in and round Melbourne where, whenever they do up the footpath outside a home they put the land-owner on a loan rate and he has extra money added to his rates. Their basic concept in life is to open the liquor cupboard.

What about the workers in the Local Government Department? Those 280 people have served this State well. If they haven't why hasn't the Government done something about them? We know that they have. As a result of these changes, the number will be reduced to 80.

Mr Moore: Why?

Mr BURNS: 150 are going off to the Water Resources Commission. Another 50 are going to environment. Let us talk about promotional opportunities. A young man entering a department to work with local councils on local council problems and wanting to develop his expertise in that field is going to say to himself, if he has any brains at all, "Let's get into one of the bigger departments where there are greater promotional opportunities." What opportunity does he have in a department of 80 people, especially when he sees that the Government has made a gradual attack on the department and whittled it away? Doesn't that Government department lose its effectiveness? Where there used to be 280, surely the work-load could be rationalised. When there were more people employed—sure, there was more work to do—they were dealing with the one group of people—local authorities. That system had been built up over the years.

I always had the rather strange idea, based on Labor Party philosophy, that we need stronger local authorities. We need to pass more powers to them. The honourable member for Pine Rivers—I know that he was joking, but laughing does not appear in "Hansard"—commented about the Labor Party's being against local authorities. One of the problems of Whitlam—and one of the reasons why the Premier hated his guts—was that he was prepared to say that we ought to do away with State Governments and strengthen local authorities. The people who saw their own sinecures and their own areas of power under threat got very upset about that.

The plain fact of the matter is that out in the country area are persons who for years have slaved their insides out for low wages on behalf of the local people—persons who have fought and battled to develop local authorities in their area. They are being sold down the drain. The Government is gradually putting them into the hands of

the bureaucracy, manipulating them and moving them from one department to the other, backwards and forwards.

Let me quote from the "Local Government Bulletin" of 23 January 1981—

"The purpose of this Bulletin is to advise Local Authorities of the new administrative arrangements . . . Certain functions have now been removed from the jurisdiction of the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police."

One would have thought that that covered just a few things, but 200 of the 280 staff are being removed. What we are doing here is not minor; it is major. We are talking about large numbers. Responsibility for the Clean Air Act 1963–1978 and the Noise Abatement Act 1978 is now to be handed over to the Minister for Environment, Valuation and Administrative Services. Responsibility for the Clean Waters Act 1971–1979, the Brisbane and Area Water Board Act 1979 and the City of Brisbane (Flood Mitigation Works Approval) Act 1952–1974 is now being vested in the Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs.

Mr Moore: Those people are still employed.

Mr BURNS: Of course they are still employed. The Government of which the honourable member is a member sets out to destroy the concept of Greater Brisbane by saying, "We will take all of the City Council planning, all of the City Council water supply and sewerage, and all the other things that have made Greater Brisbane an economically feasible concept, and we will get back to the little councils." Believe me, Mr Acting Speaker, it will happen while I am in this Chamber. It will not only be to the detriment of the Brisbane City Council and the few aldermen who are elected, because they are just part of the passing scene; it will also be to the detriment of local government throughout the State. For that reason, I oppose these proposals.

Hon. K. B. TOMKINS (Roma—Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs) (7.27 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Lytton and other members of the Opposition, and also members on this side of the House, for their contributions to the debate. It has been quite interesting, and undoubtedly many matters have been exaggerated out of all proportion. The spokesman for the Opposition, the honourable member for Townsville South, put it in a nutshell when he said that it was only a machinery change and he did not oppose it.

The honourable member for Port Curtis made a few awkward comments to which, perhaps, I should refer. He said that the Local Government Association objected to the Bill. That is fair enough; they can object to it. However, their objections have been overruled. I have corresponded with Mr Rogers, the president of the Local Government Association, and, quite frankly, I

am surprised that he should take that view, as over the years water has always been under two headings—water resources and local government or something else. To some extent they both do the same job, and this is tidying up our side of the coin.

I say to the honourable member for Port Curtis and other members of the Opposition that I have had about 15 years' experience in local government.

Mr Davis: A long time ago.

Mr TOMKINS: From 1967 to 1974—

Mr Burns: Before the war—the Boer war!

Mr TOMKINS: From 1967 to 1974 I was chairman of the local council. I do not believe that in those days I did anything to denigrate local government. As a matter of fact, I regard local government as one of the few public authorities on which people can serve and derive a good deal of satisfaction from their efforts. The job is not paid, unlike the job here, and it is jolly good to think that people will take it on. I would not do anything to downgrade local government.

The honourable member for Isis supported the changes, and the reasons that he gave for supporting them were valid.

The honourable member for Murrumba was a little troublesome, too. He said that the Government had only to get control of the small local authorities and the people would then give it more support. A local authority election will be held next year. The Opposition can then do what it likes. The people who get in will be supported by us when they do the right thing. That is all it amounts to.

Mr Prest: You will have to call them "elections for local government and water resources".

Mr TOMKINS: Rubbish! Water resources happens to be a function of local government. That is all I am saying.

Mr Davis: Where are the rest of the Ministers?

Mr TOMKINS: I will not tell the honourable member where they are.

The honourable member for Lytton spoke about water and sewerage administration being taken away from the Minister for Local Government. That is just saying the same thing over and over again. These matters have all been thought out. The Brisbane and Area Water Board deals with raw water, not with reticulation. Opposition members said that local authorities will lose reticulation. That is the worst nonsense I have heard. The Brisbane and Area Water Board has certain defined powers under which raw water will go to the Brisbane City Council, and the council is responsible for reticulation.

Mr Prest: These changes were made effective from February and we are talking about them only tonight.

Mr TOMKINS: What the blazes does the honourable member expect? I do not know what he expects under this set-up, but this is the first time that Parliament has met to tidy up the Act. That is why it is being done in this way.

The Government is doing nothing to be worried about. The Act has been criticised but I believe that its provisions are correct. We are setting right an anomaly. A few years ago, if a local authority dam was to be constructed it had to be handled by one set of people, while a dam for other purposes had to be handled by other people. Quite obviously that was wrong.

I thank all honourable members who contributed to the debate. Nothing in the legislation needs to be worried about. I believe it should be supported.

Motion (Mr Tomkins) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Akers (Pine Rivers) in the chair
Clauses 1 to 8, as read, agreed to.
Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Tomkins, by leave, read a third time.

CLEAN WATERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (See p. 78) on Mr Tomkins's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr WILSON (Townsville South) (7.35 p.m.): In introducing the Bill the Minister said that it provides for machinery matters in respect of the composition and chairmanship of the Water Quality Council of Queensland and rationalises all water-related activities at State Government level into one ministry and one department. I intend to debate that second proposal when the Water Resources Administration Act Amendment Bill is before us, as I believe that it may not be in the interests of the people of Queensland as well as the local authorities.

In relation to this Bill, I question the decision to remove control from the Department of Local Government. It is an obvious move by the Government to centralise control. It is a clear attempt to downgrade the local authorities. The question must arise: if it is more advantageous, why are the local authorities opposing the concept? Is it because the Department of Local Government will lose many of its experts? Is it because the councils will lose the power to

act against industries that pollute their streams? Is it because there will be a departmental breakdown in their having to go to another Minister?

The Minister has a responsibility to explain the reasons for this move. He should explain what discussions he has had with the councils and the Queensland Local Government Association. He should clarify how this will improve the administration of the Act.

I shall leave other aspects to my colleague the honourable member for Lytton who has been interested in water quality control for a vast number of years.

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (7.37 p.m.): I looked in "Hansard" back to 1970 when the Premier introduced a Bill "to provide for the establishment of an Environmental Control Council and for that purpose to amend the State Development and Public Works Organization Acts 1938 to 1964." At that time, in the second-reading debate, on page 2500 on 8 December 1970, he said—

"I cannot agree that each department should run its own affairs and go its own way, as was suggested. Surely it is clear that there should be some co-ordination and working-as-one in this important issue of dealing with pollution in its various spheres."

In 1970, when environment was a big issue, the Premier said that we should all combine. Those who can think back to 1970 will recall that the Premier set up the Environmental Control Council. A director of the Environment, Mr Ellis, was appointed in the Co-ordinator-General's Department and a group of co-ordinating regional councils was set up to plan development.

There were some rather surprising speeches. One came from Mr Porter. He said that we could not simply go ahead with development willy-nilly, that we should be thinking about costs. I do not remember his saying that after he became a Minister. Mr Lickiss defended the proposal and he did it very well.

The end result is that tonight we are being told that air pollution and noise pollution will be under the control of the Minister for Environment, while water pollution will be controlled by the water resources people. There are 50 or 60 Acts or regulations that refer to water quality or pollution of our waterways. I instance the following: section 148 of the Harbours Act, which provides that the board may prohibit the discharge of refuse into the harbour; section 120 of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Act, which deals with the fouling of water; section 210 of the Queensland Marine Act, which deals with the prevention of pollution of water of jurisdiction; the Pollution of Waters by Oil Act 1973; the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act; the Mining Act, especially in relation to sludge abatement; the Forestry Act in relation to sea-beds or waters or things of that nature; and the Fisheries Act in relation to the protection of mangroves and marine plants.

One could just keep on citing Act after Act that refers to the environment and water pollution.

I again remind the House of the Premier's statement in 1970—ten years ago—that people should not act unilaterally. He was arguing in this House that we should all get our act together and do it in such a way that we have one environmental control council and one environment control officer in the Co-ordinator-General's Department. That was the way he was going to bring about a new-found interest in the question of pollution.

I have always been interested in water pollution because in my electorate there is Bulimba Creek, which is probably one of the most polluted waterways in the city of Brisbane. I am sure that if the honourable member for Sherwood was here tonight he would be saying the same thing about Oxley Creek, which is in his electorate. Most of the pollution comes from sewage treatment plants, and they are controlled by the local authorities.

A report of the Water Quality Council suggested that not only should a subsidy be provided to local authorities to provide new sewage treatment plants but that an additional subsidy should be provided for the repair, maintenance and upgrading of existing plants. No-one knows better than the Local Government Department that many of our creeks are polluted today because of lack of long-term planning. In the past small local treatment plants were developed to handle only the number of houses that were originally connected to them, with provision for some projected small increase.

But what has happened? There has been an explosion of development. If one goes out to Carindale, in the electorate of the honourable member for Chatsworth, who is our spokesman on the environment, one finds people complaining about the continual breaking down of the sewage treatment plant. There is a similar plant at Mt Gravatt and another on Bulimba Creek. When they break down, untreated sewage pours into the creek.

There is an argument raging about whether the citizens of Brisbane should spend another \$25m to develop a whole new sewage treatment plant on the south bank of the Brisbane River, which would really handle only primary treated sewage. That is all the treatment plants in this State do; break it down, take the paper out and dump the rest in the river.

Whenever we talk about water quality we come up against the old argument that I heard when I first became the member for Lytton. Polluted matter from the tannery and the meat processing plants was pouring into Bulimba Creek. I complained to the air pollution people about the smell and they said that it was not the air, that it came from the creek and that I should go to see the Water Quality Council. They

said, "It's not us. That's smell. That's air pollution. Go back up the road to the air pollution people."

Finally both bodies came under the control of the one department and it was a little harder for them to pass the buck. But now we are going to separate them again in direct contravention of what the Premier himself said back in 1970 when during election campaigns Cooloola, Fraser Island and many other conservation issues were considered important. Why should not local authorities have control of air and water pollution and things like that? Is it not local authority planning that affects many of the decisions—

Mr Prest: They are going to take planning away from them.

Mr BURNS: Of course the Government intends to take control of planning matters away from local authorities. It has taken away from them control of anything to do with pollution. But is it not basically sensible to have such control in the hands of the local authorities themselves?

Let us just think about that for a moment. Who made the decision to develop the canal systems on many of our rivers? Who decided to pour sewage straight into the sea at Southport? I remember being in America some years ago and seeing cartoons in New York newspapers in which kids said, "Is the sludge running today on Long Island?" It was not "the surf" but "the sludge", because of the breakdown of sewage treatment plants. Then there was the other funny question, "Is he swimming on the beach?" The answer was, "No, he is just going through the motions." If one goes to the Middle East one has to avoid the beaches which are affected by the sewage that is poured into the bays. It is best to pay to use the beaches that are raked, sprayed and disinfected each morning by the local authorities.

Are we to leave planning in the hands of the local authority and then pass the responsibility for controlling it to various other bodies? I believe that local authorities should be greatly involved in the whole question of the environment—not just water quality but noise and air pollution. All of these matters should be handled by one authority. I still believe in what the Premier said in 1970 about the concept of an environmental control council, one body with the responsibility of handling these various pollution-control authorities.

Let us have a quick look at some of the matters concerned with water quality. I am involved in a campaign to clean up the Brisbane River. There have been headlines in the Press about the Minister for Local Government, the Lord Mayor and others wanting to make the Brisbane River a vital part of this community, as it should be. Even some of the dirtiest rivers in the world are used more than we use the Brisbane River. Polluted as are some of the

rivers in the Asian countries, they are still used. I have seen the "blue" Danube, which is probably muddier than any other river that I have ever seen, yet it is used by people.

I know that I have said this before and people have laughed at me, but when I was a lad I used to swim in the Brisbane River. I pushed scissors on the sand on the banks of the Brisbane River in order to get prawns. If a man were to take a child for a swim in places where I used to swim, he would be charged with trying to do away with the child; that is how badly the river has deteriorated.

Of course, it has improved over the last few years. A few mullet and bream are returning to the lower reaches of the river, but there are not the perch up the river or the jew under Grey Street Bridge or the large crowds fishing along the river banks that there were 20 years ago, and 20 years is a short time in the life of a river.

We are talking about cleaning up the Brisbane River, but the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development, the Department of Harbours and Marine and other authorities have tied up every bit of the river bank down towards the mouth of the river for future industrial development. There will be stinking and polluting industries down there. Those industries have used the Brisbane River as a sewer for the past 40 or 50 years.

Mr Goleby: That is the Brisbane City Council's fault.

Mr BURNS: No, it is not. The honourable member is a rural producer, and he knows what companies such as Provincial Traders and Borthwicks and the Metropolitan Abattoir Board have done. The froth used to be 4 ft high outside the Metropolitan Abattoir Board from the rubbish and hot fat that poured into the river. The acid from the stomachs of the cattle was pumped into the river near where the Queensport ferry crosses the river. At one time when the ferry was slipped for a test it was found that a large section of the steel plate had been adversely affected by the discharge from a pipe that had been used to carry the acid into the river near where the ferry was tied up. Those are the facts of life.

That pollution went on for years. If the honourable member for Redlands were to throw his rubbish out in the street the authorities would be there to pick him up. All sorts of fines are imposed on a person who throws a cigarette butt out of a car, but the water polluters of this State who have poured their rubbish into the river for 50 years have never been fined. I ask the Government members to show me a list of the fines that have been imposed under the Clean Waters Act on industries that have polluted our rivers. All they could show me would be a list of the industries that they have let off. They could show me a list containing the names of five

or six hundred companies to whom they have given a permit to pollute, to discharge their rubbish into the creeks and rivers. They could not show me the name of one company that they have ever charged. They could show me a list containing the names of dozens of little people they have charged for littering offences and things like that.

This Government is found wanting when it comes down to matters such as water quality and air pollution. When the Confederation of Industry and other organisations snap their fingers, the Government jumps through the hoops. It does nothing about the pollution that is affecting the river that is essentially the heart of this city.

Mr Hooper: What about the pollution that emanates from Mr Goleby's poultry works at Cleveland?

Mr BURNS: I think that he can answer that one. I have got into enough trouble with interjections tonight.

For some time I have argued, as many other members have, for a 24-hour a day, 7-day a week reporting service. Anybody travelling on the river in his canoe, dinghy, 20-ft yacht, or 50-ft yacht last Sunday who saw a foul discharge going into the river and sailed near it, thus causing those on board to be sick as a result of the stink, would know that there was nobody to make a complaint to until Monday morning. The tide comes in and goes out on Sunday, and by the time the inspector arrives on Monday morning there is no evidence of pollution.

The Government was not very quick in introducing legislation to control water pollution. The Health Department made the first reports of pollution of the Brisbane River in 1910. In 1959 a working committee recommended that legislation be set up to do something about water pollution. It was not until 1972 that legislation was introduced. As I said, nobody has ever been prosecuted under the Clean Waters Act. The Government still will not provide the facility that many businesses can provide. Not a lot of overtime would have to be paid, and there does not need to be a great wastage of public money. The Government could make an arrangement with Telecom for the after-hours telephone number of one of its employees to be available to the public. He could be given an allowance for staying at home to watch television and handle any complaints. If the water quality authority were working properly he would not get any complaints. I could make a complaint every night about air pollution in the area in which I live. If somebody was on call he could inspect the pollution at the time that it was occurring, and he could then act.

It is a funny fact of life that pollution occurs at 6 o'clock on a Friday evening, immediately after the Water Quality Council or the Air Pollution Council closes its doors. The fish killed in creeks are found on a Saturday morning. That is when the pollution that fouls the neighbourhood air is

noticed. That sort of thing occurs regularly. Somehow or other all breakdowns of industrial plants occur on a Friday night, about an hour after the Government workers knock off. That is passing strange, isn't it? It is also passing strange that the Queensland Confederation of Industry was able to induce this Government to make such weak laws. They are now so weak that it is virtually impossible for anyone to be prosecuted for pollution-related offences.

We are one of the few countries in the world that has been very lucky. Years ago I was overseas in Cleveland when the river caught fire because it was so polluted. Whether honourable members go to London on a junket or a holiday, I implore them to make contact with the colonial office people over there before they go to make arrangements to see what has been done to the River Thames. There are stories of white banana boats coming in from Jamaica on a Friday and turning black from the pollution and rubbish in the river before being unloaded on Monday morning. The authority there has that on record. It is also on record that polluters do not get a licence to dump rubbish in streams or creeks; they are prosecuted. Potential polluters are given a set time within which to arrange the discharge elsewhere or to have it converted to a standard that the receiving river can accept.

For this Government to say that it is fair dinkum about pollution is a sham. This Government, from the days of the Environmental Control Council—when it had all its eggs in the one basket—has always backed away. Now it is backing away a little bit further. The fellow in charge of the dams in Central Queensland is supposed to be coming to Brisbane to have a look at the pollution. It is just not on; it is a joke and I oppose the idea whole-heartedly.

Mr INNES (Sherwood) (7.54 p.m.): I rise to speak on this matter because, as will be well known to this House through questions I have asked previously, my electorate has been vitally affected by a water pollution problem over recent months. Oxley Creek must be one of the most polluted water-courses in the whole of Queensland. The principal polluter has been the waste-water treatment plant at the Donaldson Road treatment works of the Brisbane City Council.

I will cut out the chronological history, which is well worth the retelling on some other occasion, and get to the nub of the problems with which the people in my electorate have been afflicted. Something that people have not appreciated is that the safety device for the Donaldson Road treatment works is an overflow pipe. The overflow pipe goes into Oxley Creek. It has broken down or been used as a straight bypass on a number of occasions. The result is a foul, inky-black discharge—some 10 million gallons of discharge per day if it

runs for a whole day. The consequence, of course, is that it kills virtually everything within the creek.

Because the creek no longer has natural flow coming from the catchment area in the upper reaches, which formerly provided virtually continuous flow, the small tide action limits the rate at which that discharge dissipates. Some 1 000 people have to put up with a stench that is so overpowering that it causes physical illness. In fact, people in a certain area of my electorate were regularly exposed to this because they happened to be nearest the source from which it was discharged.

The problem surfaced in a dramatic way last year and, as a result of what happened, representations were made to the Brisbane City Council and to the Local Government Department. I and others who spoke to those authorities were assured that corrective steps were taken. We were assured that the equipment that was being installed would prevent a recurrence of the problem, but within several weeks the problem recurred in an equally dramatic fashion. Among the assurances we were given was the following: its design capacity—I am speaking without notes, so perhaps my figures may be out by a thousand or so, but it will not make any difference—was for some 180 000 persons, but only 120 000 persons were using it. The sludge thickener, which is a device by which oxygen is injected into the treated water to aid the fostering of bacteria and the breakdown of the effluent, was causing problems, but the assurance was given that there was such a safety back up within the system that they should not be insuperable.

People constantly complained that the results of whatever was happening were foul. The smell was foul. The signs in the creek were also of a foul nature and indicative of an untreated discharge. That was discounted. On numerous occasions hundreds of local residents reported complaints through their spokesmen. Some people no doubt gained a bad reputation with the authorities because of the consistency of their complaints. Their complaints were in effect ignored. They were told, "This can't be right. You must be over-dramatising. It hasn't happened." After the second breakdown, it was finally discovered what had happened. Certainly the design capacity was for 180 000 persons, but the Brisbane City Council had licensed an industrial user to pour his waste into the system, and that had built up to a quantity which was equivalent to the waste water of some 80 000 persons.

In other words, the system was running over capacity by 10 000 to 20 000 persons. It was simply not known that 66 per cent more material was going through the system. That was critical to the safe functioning of the entire plant; it was beyond the design capacity, even at a time when the works had ineffective machinery, or machinery that had not been properly commissioned. The people in the area were either

ignored or the extent of their discomfort was discounted. They were later given assurances that everything would be well in the future.

Finally, after two massive breakdowns, it was discovered that all the engineering knowledge in the world and all the statements of good intent by both the BCC and the Local Government Department were for naught. Those who had complained had been right, and the engineers and the people in charge of administration had been completely wrong. Of course, since that time there have been further complaints despite the fact that we have been assured that a more efficient sludge thickener will be imported from Victoria.

I accept the goodwill of all the persons involved in the system. I have no doubt that responsible engineers in the Brisbane City Council and Local Government Department meant what they said. But the reality was that the system was so poorly controlled that a discharge situation was uncalculated and unrecognised—a discharge situation in which one-third more than the expected volume was being treated by the system, which took it beyond its designed capacity.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Are we talking about Oxley Creek?

Mr INNES: Yes, we are talking about Oxley Creek. About 1 000 persons have been exposed to this noisome, foul smell and the destruction of the water in the creek, and anything that happened to be in the water, regularly and for several months. Certain steps have been taken, and, once again, I have no doubt that people have been given assurances by engineers, using their technical know-how with the best intent, that such a thing will never happen again. However, people who lived through the original assurances have every reason for disquiet, and we have every reason to investigate a system that allowed that to occur.

As always, the honourable member for Lytton made some comments which call for examination. His volume production is so great that, statistically, some of his comments must have merit, and, indeed, in discussing matters such as this, he often makes comments that have merit.

A 24-hour-a-day reporting system is needed. But it is not enough to have a reporting system. One can ring the Donaldson Road treatment works 24 hours a day and speak to some of those minions who did not tell their masters what was going on, who did not tell them that they were discharging and by-passing untreated sludge straight into the river. The fellows on the ground could not handle what was coming through. They had been told that the system was supposed to cope with it. In reality, they could not handle it, but they did not tell the people who were in charge of them that they could not handle it and, at night, they were by-passing it straight into the

creek, with the consequences that I have described. If one rings them up, very little action ensues, of course.

Mr Kruger: The trouble is that this Government legislates and expects local authorities to meet the bill.

Mr INNES: No. As usual, the honourable member for Murrumba is off the beam.

In recognition of the Director of Water Quality, I should report that his after-hours number is listed under the Water Quality Control Council in the Government pages of the telephone directory. One can ring Dr Desmond's home—in fact, I did so on one occasion—at any hour of the day or night, or even at the week-end. However, the system is still slow to respond.

I would have thought that we do not wish to foster the growth of massive waste-water treatment plants in situations where the only safety valve is an upstream watercourse. We do not want to use as the only safety-valve the river or creek on which the local community is situated.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: It should not be the river at all out there.

Mr INNES: The honourable member says that it should not be the river. One of the consequences of the way in which we arrange ourselves to govern is that we become blinkered by the administration into certain preconceived slots. It is time for some lateral thinking about matters such as waste-water treatment and disposal.

Earlier today, I heard the new member for Lockyer (Mr Fitzgerald) and the honourable member for Warwick speaking about problems relating to the aridity of land and the problem of harbouring water for use on the rich agricultural land on which we grow the crops on which we depend for food. If I have 10m gallons of water a day that I do not want and 60 to 70 miles away unlimited quantities of water are needed, there must be a connection between those two effects. Generally that water is treated. If there is a bit of nutrient in it, by the time it filters through the ground it has disappeared. If it contains nutrient it is probably beneficial. That is apart from just spraying it on crops without washing or treatment. There must be some solution between those two methods.

At Werribee in Victoria a very primitive waste-water system is used involving vast tracts of country. Most of the water is broadcast for most of the year; at other times it is ponded. The grass growth generated by constant watering supports a very profitable beef and mutton industry. The member for Redlands tells me that it supports ten sheep to the acre. It results in some millions of dollars in meat production each year.

In Adelaide the water is used on playing fields and like facilities where no human consumption is involved to supplement a

desperate water shortage. Surely to goodness we can get smart. If I have a problem in disposing of 10m gallons of water a day I don't want, and someone has a problem in getting 10m gallons on water that he needs desperately, we should reverse the problem we start so readily by pumping water downhill from Somerset Dam or Mt Crosby and pump some of it back to supplement the water supply at places like the Greenbank military area where there are thousands of undeveloped acres of land only six pumping miles from my electorate. In those areas such water could be used. This is not a problem that is confined to my electorate; it is common throughout Queensland. Surely that is an illustration of how to avoid further pollution of Oxley Creek and the Brisbane River with the attendant physical consequences to local residents. We have a possible solution to the problem. A watercourse should not be the only safety valve for the discharge of raw sewage in such volumes.

Firstly, we should not aggravate the problem, and secondly we should be thinking laterally of other ways of dealing with the problem by starting to co-ordinate the authorities involved while undertaking a works program to overcome the problem and in fact to convert it to beneficial use.

I do not really care what authority supervises environmental control, as long as it is doing the job. I see some merit in having environmental monitoring in one bag because many of the problems run over the boundary. The problem that gives me foul water gives me a foul smell. Sometimes a smell is associated with solid air pollution. The Darra Cement Works create another small problem in my beautiful electorate.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: Have you tried to do anything about it?

Mr INNES: Yes, I have. In fact the Government has set up a portfolio within the ministry called "Environment". The only trouble is that the Government has not yet worked out what should be in this bag called "Environment".

I think one Greek view was that there were three elements in the world, that is, earth, water and air. I suppose that the Minister in charge of environment has responsibility for about one half or one third of the environment. Under the Aristotelian system, I think fire was added. Because the Minister controls the fire services I suppose he has responsibility for about one and a half of four bits of the environment. When he attends any function on behalf of the Government he is badgered about matters such as kangaroos and coral. People assume that the environment involves other parts—

Mr Mackenroth: Did the Minister ask you to say that?

Mr INNES: No. It is just logical. I have seen it. If the Minister attends a

function people talk to him about what is normally involved in or embraced by the word "environment".

The Government has to work this through. The best idea would be to have anything to do with environmental monitoring in the one area, with one contact point. Anyone with an environmental problem could then get in touch with somebody responsible for looking into all problems related to pollution from any source.

In short, I do not object at all to the proposals in the Bill. I can see a positive benefit from having water quality within the environmental ministry or department set up by this Government. I should like to see, of course, the controls which support the assessment of quality and complaints about lack of quality beefed up in a practical way, so that the type of situation that occurred in my electorate does not happen again.

It has to involve a quality of planning so that we do not create sources of water pollution or any other type of pollution. Also it has to involve effective monitoring and the policing of the monitoring results. A licence is given now in relation to the Donaldson Road Treatment Works which dictates the quality of the effluent and the point at which it is discharged, which in the future will be further upstream in the Brisbane River.

What I do want to say is that, notwithstanding that it is the Brisbane City Council that is involved, that council should have no more rights than any other industrial user with regard to the discharge of effluent. If the Brisbane City Council breaches those qualities and those standards, it should be prosecuted. As one who has acted for and represented the Brisbane City Council on many occasions, I know that the Government is prepared to do that in relation to the Pollution of Waters by Oil Act.

Why should the Government be, shall we say, so hard on the polluters of water by oil when its track record with regard to pollution of the type I have referred to has not been so illustrious? Local authorities do not carry any special immunity; rather they carry special obligations and responsibilities. There is no reason why they should be treated with any more favour than a private individual or an industrial user. Indeed, in the case of pollution of waters by oil, my experience is that they are not treated with any special favour or latitude at all.

So we have an authority and it is now to come under a new ministry. Let it be effective. If there are any deficiencies, I hope that the Government will propose legislative or procedural remedies. I commit myself to my fullest support for practical, reasonable but effective methods of preventing the type of occurrence to which people in my electorate have been subjected.

Mr WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (8.13 p.m.): One of the responsibilities of a Minister in this Assembly is to tell us not only the

"what" of a Bill but also the "why". This point was raised by the Opposition shadow Minister. We ought to be told exactly why this legislation is before us. This is the same argument that was put up when we were discussing the Brisbane and Area Water Board Act Amendment Bill and a similar argument will be put up in debate on two Bills that will be discussed later.

There is a real responsibility on the Minister. His task is more than to stand up, hand out one sheet and say that it is a machinery matter, that it will simply be a swapping of chairs so that the chief engineer from the Department of Local Government will no longer be the chairman, but will still be a representative, and that the Commissioner of Water Resources will be the chairman. That is just not good enough.

The Minister has a responsibility not only to the Opposition but also to all other members of this Assembly to explain what is being done. I am surprised that Government members simply accepted this; they are condoning it. I note that the honourable member for Sherwood expressed some reservations. But it seems that he is not quite sure, because he said that he was pleased to see that all of these environmental matters would now virtually come under an environmental portfolio.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: The honourable member for Sherwood has never been sure of anything.

Mr WRIGHT: Obviously that is so.

I distinctly heard the Minister say that water resources were to be under one Minister and one department, and that things such as noise and air pollution were to come under the new Minister for Environment, who is Mr Hewitt. There seems to be some conflict of opinion. The Minister told us one thing and the honourable member for Sherwood told us something else. We ought to be told the real "why".

It is important to have some sort of co-ordination here. But, as I said, the Government is not being consistent, because we will now have water pollution under the control of one Minister and air pollution under the control of another Minister. Why? The Government has never been consistent, because if we turn to the Sport portfolio we find that sport and recreation come under one Minister and National Fitness under another. The mind boggles at why this happens. However, it is not just an administrative matter; it is the effect of the legislation.

Other speakers have said that this legislation will break down pollution control, and I believe that to be so. If a matter of pollution comes to the attention of a member, a council or some other organisation in the community, instead of being able to go to one Minister—it used to be the Minister for Local Government—one will now have to go to two Ministers.

I certainly concur with the observation that this legislation will mean the gradual

dismantling of the Local Government Department. It will certainly break the link at the authority level of the Local Government Department. I firmly believe this is one function that should remain with the Local Government Department. I do not just say that offhandedly; I go back to the original amendments to the Clean Waters Act in 1979 and the types of functions the Water Quality Council handled.

For instance, the Act referred to the discharge of waste from premises and the transportation of waste from premises for disposal elsewhere. There were two types of licence given. It is the local authorities who know what is going on. They are the ones who give permits for industry to begin in a certain area. They are the ones on hand when it comes to health problems. Surely then they should have a major say when it comes to licensing, be it at a local level or through the Local Government Department.

If one goes further, one also finds another function handled by the Water Quality Council. That is control of the installation of certain types of septic tanks. Again we go back to this very important role that is linked so closely with local authorities.

The Act also refers to storm-water runoff, both from local household areas and from industry—again a local government matter. Yet we are trying to be convinced here tonight that this is something that ought to come under the Water Resources portfolio. I suggest to the Assembly that it has a greater application for the local authority. It is the body involved in carrying out this role, and therefore it should remain with the local authority.

There is also an important aspect concerning decentralisation. There has been some criticism of local authorities when they have been asked to combat pollution and have referred the problem back to Brisbane and nothing has been done. I see this happening in a far worse way, because at least one could go to the local council and they would refer it to their own Local Government Department with whom they had a rapport; with whom they had some type of liaison. Now they will have to go to a different department under a different Minister.

I see a breakdown in the effectiveness and application of the Act, because we cannot have different Ministers and different people at local government level trying to do a different type of job. It is not just a matter of the functional status of local authorities. Whilst I do not want to see the status of local authorities broken down, we must go back to the people who live in this State. Surely we are bringing forward legislation to protect the people of this State, and if the people are affected by certain laws we must ensure they are affected in a positive manner.

I cannot see how changing this responsibility from one department to another

will be of major benefit. It will certainly break down the concentrated attack we have been making on pollution. There will be a danger of the local authorities becoming nothing more than an extension of the State's bureaucracy. If we do need amendments to this Act, and I suggest we do, let us forget about changing ministries and the chairmanship and come back to some of the provisions of licensing.

In 1979 various companies were given a four-year period in which to comply with licences, but the Governor in Council can increase that period to seven years. How many firms have been fined? How many companies have broken the law? How many companies or industries have not complied with their licences? No-one knows then how effective the Water Quality Council has been.

I believe there will be a continuing breakdown. I cannot see any evidence of the effectiveness of the existing Act, so we ought to start changing it. I can understand why Government members might not want to do that. We know where their money comes from. We know how closely tied financially they are to industry, but it is the people we ought to be concerned about.

I was pleased to hear at least the honourable member for Sherwood make some critical comments about people not complying with the Act. But he still supports the principle here before us. I wonder why Government members continually accept the sort of diatribe that comes forward from the Government. Why is it that they just accept these things as a fait accompli? We have not heard one Government member stand up here and explain why he supports the legislation. We have not heard any evidence as to how effective the Act has been. We have heard no reasons given by the Minister, and I suggest that it is time we did.

Hon. K. B. TOMKINS (Roma—Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs) (8.20 p.m.), in reply: I would like to thank all members of the Opposition and also the member for Sherwood for contributing to the debate. I shall make a few comments, because we are really faced with a fait accompli.

The member for Townsville South, when he began his speech tonight, said that control in this matter was being taken away from the Department of Local Government and that the reasons for doing so should be explained. The explanation in this matter is the same as the one given in the previous Bill. It has been decided that Local Government should bow out of this area and that water control should come under the Water Resources Department. That is the long and short of it.

Members have talked about water pollution, noise pollution and other sorts of pollution. Control of these matters will stay

with the Environment Department. Responsibility for the matter covered by this Bill will be with my department. I do not think that I need to comment much further on that matter.

I liked the tone of the speech of the honourable member for Sherwood. He put forward a very good case as to why we should go steady on this one. He is not worried about it too much, but he wants us to give it a fair go. I say to him and also to the member for Lytton, who spoke earlier, that the Bill does not diminish in any way the role or function of the Water Quality Council in regard to the licensing of effluent discharges and the policing of its regulations. Local authorities have been, and will continue to be, represented on the Water Quality Council. There will be no change in that respect. The Clean Waters Act has never been under the control of local authorities. In other words, we are splitting the department, but we are not doing much else.

Under the new Act it will be necessary for this department to assume certain powers of control over pollution. It remains to be seen how well it will be done. Somebody asked, "Why do you do it this way?" I will use the argument in reverse: We are doing it this way because we believe it is the correct way. It remains to be seen whether it is. If it is found to be not all that good, we will do something about it.

This is a machinery measure. There is very little else I can say about it. Honourable members might talk about what could go wrong. All I say to the Chamber is: Give it a go and see how it functions.

Motion (Mr Tomkins) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Akers (Pine Rivers) in the chair

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Tomkins, by leave, read a third time.

WATER RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 79) on Mr Tomkins's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr WILSON (Townsville South) (8.26 p.m.): It has become quite clear that the Government intends to whittle away the authorities and functions of local government, the third tier of government and the form of government closest to the people. It appears that the State Government, by setting up statutory authorities to control those functions, intends to take away from local

government the functions that are the very reason for its existence. The first board was the Queensland Electricity Generating Board, which has proved costly to the consumer who is also a ratepayer. Now the Town Water Supply and Sewerage Branch of the Clean Waters Section of the Department of Local Government is being transferred to the Water Resources Commission.

Local authorities fear there is more behind the Government's move than the mere transferring of ministerial responsibilities and see it as an erosion of their power. I, too, see this move as the thin edge of the wedge to set up another statutory authority which, like the Queensland Electricity Generating Board, will prove very costly to the rate-paying consumer.

The main item to come out of a conference of the North Queensland Local Government Association held at Malanda on 6 February 1981 was an objection to State Cabinet's decision to remove from the Local Government Department functions that are rightly the responsibility of local government. I quote the conference's unanimous decision as reported in the "Innisfail Advocate" on 9 February 1981—

"The North Queensland Local Government Association has expressed concern at the 'inroads' being made by higher authorities into its affairs.

"The N.Q.L.G.A. held its Annual Conference at Malanda on Friday.

"The following is the text of a letter sent to the Queensland Premier:

"1. That this Conference unanimously objects to State Cabinet's decision, to remove from the Local Government Department functions which are rightly the responsibility of Local Government.

"2. We the Members of this Association wish to lodge our protest to the manner in which State Cabinet has made this decision 'without notice' to the Local Government Association of Queensland, contrary to the undertaking given by the Minister of Local Government that any action relating to Local Government would not be taken before such matter had been discussed with them.

"3. We are concerned at the continued inroads into Local Government operations without first having communications with Local Government the third tier of Government which is the closest Government to the people.

"4. Conference directs that in view of the seriousness of this matter, that the President of the North Queensland Local Government Association make personal representation to the Premier advising of our protest and that this be followed by written advice together with copy of the President's Report.

"5. That all Local Authority Members of this Association lodge their protest in the strongest possible way to the Premier and their respective Members of Parliament for their support and action.

"6. That the Resolution at this Conference be referred to the Local Government Association of Queensland requesting that body to explore every avenue possible to ensure that Cabinet's decision in this matter be rescinded.

"7. That a letter signed by all delegates present to be delivered to the Premier and a copy of this Resolution be included."

Despite an undertaking given by the Minister for Local Government that there would be no changes without prior consultation with local government, the State Government has gone ahead with changes without consulting local government at all.

Because of the Government's attitude and the concern shown by a number of mayors and shire chairmen, a special meeting of the State Executive of the Local Government Association was held on 11 February 1981, when a unanimous decision was made that a meeting be sought with the Premier and Deputy Premier and Treasurer to express local government's total opposition to the new administrative arrangements. The deputation consisted of Mr Rogers, President of the association; Councillor D. C. Sturrock, senior vice-president; Councillor A. Barr, junior vice-president and president of the Cities and Towns Local Government Association; Alderman J. E. Duggan, honorary treasurer; Alderman F. N. Sleeman, Lord Mayor of Brisbane; and Councillor S. J. Collins, an executive member representing North Queensland.

The deputation informed the Premier and Deputy Premier of the strong protests the association had received from its members and urged the Government to reverse its decision as they believed that town water and sewerage should continue to be administered by the Minister for Local Government. They were advised by the Premier that the principal object of the Government was to streamline the administration of all water matters by putting them under the Water Resources Commission. This I believe is the thin edge of the wedge to set up another statutory body which will take over all existing water resources without any compensation to the local authorities and supply water at a price that will leave the local authorities to meet all costs of reticulation, which will be more costly and more expensive to the consumer.

After further protests from the delegation, the Premier asked the deputation to demonstrate or produce evidence of any disadvantage to the local government as a result of the change. This I believe to be dishonest of the Premier in that, if the Premier had any intentions of allowing the local authorities to produce evidence, he would have had the introduction of this Bill delayed and set down a date for the producing of such evidence by the local authorities, especially in the face of the fact that the Local Government Minister had

assured the Local Government Association that no changes would be made without prior consultation with local government.

The Mayor of Mackay, Sir Albert Abbott, summed up the Government's intentions when he said that the Local Government Department would soon be reduced to a purely administrative role. He went on to say that it was the greatest infringement on local government's rights and reduced the council's job to cleaning and sweeping the streets.

Mr Ahern: He had his tongue in his cheek.

Mr WILSON: He was probably well aware of the Government's intentions. After all, he belongs to that side of the House.

One can only wonder if the Government is afraid of Fraser's federalism and is setting out to take unto itself the prerogatives of local government in order to justify its own existence. We of the Opposition support local government in opposing any further inroads into functions that are the prerogative of local government. We oppose the Bill.

Mr KRUGER (Murrumbidgee) (8.34 p.m.): I rise to discuss this matter for, as I mentioned in the earlier Bill debated this evening, there are problems with what we are discussing here. I consider this Bill to be the major one of the four Bills to be debated this evening. They tie in overall.

There is something wrong with the intentions of the Government in this legislation. It is a little hard to define the problem, to define the cause or to define the reasons; but it would appear that for some reason or other this change is being effected not to assist the local authorities, not to assist the people of Queensland, but to assist the Government of Queensland.

It worries me that changes such as this are made in the House, and I have seen quite a few of them in the three years or so that I have been here. I am concerned that the Government should attempt to take over and make changes in this way when, basically, matters should come under the control of local authorities. As I mentioned when an earlier Bill was being debated, the reticulation of water and the disposal of sewage is part of the responsibility of a local authority. It must be organised, implemented and controlled by the local authority concerned, and the Government of Queensland cannot administer from Brisbane operations of that type.

When the Brisbane and Area Water Board was formed—as I said, that ties in completely with the provisions of the Bill now under consideration—there was definitely a move by the Government to undermine the Brisbane City Council. Having seen the results it has achieved in that instance, the Government has suddenly decided that it is high time to undermine other Queensland local authorities.

Possibly it is reasonable to have a commission to control water resources in general, and that should be the responsibility of the State Government. However, I am concerned that the Government will introduce legislation of this type, make changes, and then, when it is ready, throw the responsibility for the collection of rates and taxes, the cost of reticulation, and so on, back on to local authorities. If the Government is to be the body that organises the State's water resources and a commission is set up to administer them, financial assistance must be given to local authorities. The commission should take greater responsibility, because it is no good doing things by halves.

In my opinion, the provisions of the Bills that are before the House this evening are designed to give the Government an inside run to undermine, downgrade and bring down local authorities in Queensland. As I said earlier, it seems to me to be a National Party plot, because the honourable member for Sherwood, who has openly complained about problems in the past, is the only Government member who has been on his feet in this debate. The National Party must be introducing these Bills for a particular purpose. I ask the Minister to spell out honestly the real reasons for their introduction, instead of endeavouring to camouflage the Government's intentions.

Members of the Opposition believe that there are problems, but we do not know what they are. Because of the actions of the Government, we will never know why representatives of the local authorities were not asked for their views on this matter. Local authorities have complained to the Opposition; in fact, they have complained to all honourable members. Apart from one or two who used to be fairly closely aligned with the Labor Party—I am not too sure of their beliefs these days—most of the local government representatives of any standing are National Party supporters. A brother of Councillor Rogers who is a very good friend of mine jokingly said one night, "I had a chance to run over you then. That would be one less of you." He is a National Party supporter. If members of the National Party are complaining, they must see real problems.

I am not concerned about the giggles of the honourable member for Isis, because he would realise how serious the position is in country areas. I reiterate that this is an attempt to camouflage some action that the Country Party is trying to take relative to the Water Resources Commission.

I do not know whether the Minister in charge of the Bill wanted the job or whether it was just handed to him for the convenience of a Minister who was heavily overloaded with other ministerial duties. Although the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Police is a big man, he has heavy responsibilities, and this may have been just one job too many for him to handle.

Hon. K. B. TOMKINS (Roma—Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs) (8.39 p.m.), in reply: I thank the two members of the Opposition for their contributions to the debate, but I point out that they have said the same thing about three times.

Mr Kruger: There is only one more Bill to go.

Mr TOMKINS: I know, and then it will be four times.

All that is happening is that powers are being transferred from the Local Government Department to the Water Resources Commission. Many reasons have been given.

I note that the Opposition picked on National Party members to suit their case. No doubt they picked appropriate members. Like Opposition members, they will realise that we have to give something a fair trial to see how it goes. Without doubt we must give this a proper trial to see how it operates.

I have tried to explain previously that there is no transfer of power in any way, other than from one department to another. Someone pointed out that many people in the Local Government Department are being transferred. That is true but it does not alter the fact that the powers one section had are being transferred to another. I do not believe we have created any record in doing that. There are many reasons why all matters relating to water should go to the Water Resources Department. It has been a specialist department for years. At one time it was the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission. We are slowly transferring some of the powers that it should have had years ago.

The comments by honourable members opposite do not really cut much ice with me. It is up to the Opposition to give this a trial. I do not think it is worth pursuing the argument further. I will leave it at that.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 42

Ahern
Akers
Austin
Bird
Bjelke-Petersen
Booth
Borbidge
Doumany
Elliott
Fitzgerald
Frawley
Goleby
Greenwood
Gunn
Harper
Hartwig
Hewitt
Innes
Jennings
Katter
Kaus
Kyburz
Lickiss

McKechnie
Menzel
Moore
Muntz
Nelson
Powell
Prentice
Randell
Row
Scassola
Simpson
Stephan
Sullivan
Tomkins
Turner
Warner
Wharton

Tellers:
Lockwood
Neal

NOES, 23

Blake	Shaw
Burns	Smith
D'Arcy	Underwood
Davis	Vaughan
Eaton	Warburton
Fouras	Wilson
Gibbs, R. J.	Wright
Hooper	Yewdale
Jones	
Kruger	
Mackenroth	<i>Tellers:</i>
McLean	Hansen
Milliner	Prest

PAIRS:

Edwards	Casey
Glasson	Scott

Resolved in the affirmative.

COMMITTEE

Mr Powell (Isis) in the chair
 Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.
 Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Tomkins, by leave,
 read a third time.

WATER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 79) on Mr Tomkins's motion—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr WILSON (Townsville South) (8.52 p.m.): We believe that these are merely machinery items and are pleased to note that the superannuation scheme is to be maintained.

Hon. K. B. TOMKINS (Roma—Minister for Water Resources and Aboriginal and Island Affairs) (8.53 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for the brevity of his remarks.

Motion (Mr Tomkins) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Powell (Isis) in the chair
 Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.
 Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Tomkins, by leave,
 read a third time.

AGRICULTURAL BANK (LOANS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Agricultural Bank (Loans) Act 1959–1980 in certain particulars and for other purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Ahern, read a first time.

SECOND READING

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) (8.55 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

The Bill is designed with two main objectives. Firstly, it empowers the Agricultural Bank to make advances to small businesses which provide goods or services to primary producers in flood or drought-affected areas. These advances will be available where the profitability of the business has been affected by reason of the effects of drought or flood on primary producers. Secondly, the Bill validates advances of the type proposed in this legislation which have been made by the Agricultural Bank in terms of a decision of Cabinet on 21 October 1980.

It is well known that in times of drought and flood in rural areas there is a serious downturn in the income of primary producers. This situation flows through to the small businesses in areas affected by the drought or flood by virtue of the fact that primary producers are unable to meet their commitments within the normally acceptable time for availability of credit. The provision of credit by small businesses in such circumstances is an accepted way of life in the rural community, but there is a limit to which these businesses can carry such credit.

This situation is well recognised by the Commonwealth Government. During 1980 when much of Queensland was experiencing a crippling drought the Commonwealth agreed to include advances to small businesses under the Commonwealth/State natural disaster assistance arrangements. Cabinet did not hesitate to accept this offer of assistance and on 21 October 1980 approved of the implementation by the Agricultural Bank of a scheme of loan assistance to locally-owned businesses in shires declared drought stricken. This assistance covered sustenance, essential business operations and payment of rates and rents.

The maximum of the loans under this scheme is \$30,000 over a term of up to seven years at an interest rate of five per cent per annum. These terms and other conditions of eligibility are similar to those applying in respect of loans to primary producers. The present legislation under which the bank operates does not permit of advances to small businesses, but because of the gravity of the situation it was decided to proceed with the scheme of assistance and seek legislative amendment in the first session of this Parliament.

The Bill authorises advances of this nature and validates the action taken by the bank in respect of advances approved by the bank since the implementation of the scheme on 21 October 1980. The enactment of this legislation will enable the Agricultural Bank to play a more meaningful role in its service to the community in rural areas.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Blake, adjourned.

AGRICULTURAL STANDARDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Agricultural Standards Act 1952–1972 in certain particulars and for related purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Ahern, read a first time.

SECOND READING

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) (9.1 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

As honourable members will be aware, the Agricultural Standards Act relates to the sale of agricultural requirements in Queensland and is administered by my department. Agricultural requirements are seeds for sowing, stock foods and that wide range of chemicals such as medicines for stock, insecticides for application to animals and plants, fungicides, herbicides and fertilisers.

The Act controls the sale of these goods in two ways. In the first instance, agricultural chemicals and manufactured stock foods need to be registered under the Act before they can be sold. An applicant for registration needs to provide evidence that his product is effective and safe. This evidence and other relevant information is considered by appropriate expert officers. Upon their recommendation registration is granted or refused. The actual registration is carried out by the Agricultural Requirements Board. This process is aimed at keeping off the market those products which are ineffective or which can not be used without causing an undue risk of damage to human, animal or plant health or to the environment.

Secondly, the Act provides that at the point of sale all agricultural requirements

must comply with any standards which might be prescribed. In addition, any statement on a label which refers to the composition of an agricultural requirement must be true. Officers appointed under the Act are empowered to take samples and have them analysed and to seize defective goods and prosecute the seller.

The Act has been in force since 1953 and has not been the subject of any major changes since then. In fact, the Act is a consolidation of several Acts which were in force before 1953. One was the Stock Foods Act, which was introduced as early as 1919. The others were the Seeds Act, the Fertilizers Act, the Pest Destroyers Act and the Veterinary Medicines Act. This legislation has served and still is serving primary producers well but it is in need of updating in some respects.

The main objectives of this Bill are firstly to improve administrative procedures; secondly, to achieve a greater degree of uniformity in terminology and procedures with other States; and, thirdly, to remove redundant, out-moded and some over restrictive provisions of the present Act. In the administrative area, the main change is to the registration renewal process. At present a completely new application for registration has to be submitted for every product requiring registration every three years. Approximately 2 000 products are involved each year, three-quarters of which have to be referred to the Agricultural Requirements Board for consideration and recommendation. With most products there are only minor changes made, if any, when they are re-registered.

The applicants and the department are put to considerable and unnecessary inconvenience and expense by the present re-registration system. The amendments allow for the renewal of registration without the need for a detailed application and without the need for consideration by the board. There is also provision for the registration fee to be paid triennially instead of every year as at present. The amendments will reduce the work-load on the board, and in relation to routine matters they give the board additional powers to consider a wider range of aspects when deciding whether or not to recommend the registration of a product.

Consumers of agricultural requirements and the community at large are also afforded added protection by a new provision whereby the wholesale dealer of a product is obliged to advise the board if he comes into possession of information which contradicts any information supplied by him with the application for registration. He is also obliged to divulge any information which indicates that the product would have a previously unrecognised detrimental effect or for some reason has ceased to be effective. On the other hand, confidential

formulation details supplied to the department by wholesale dealers during the process of registration are given additional protection by deleting the existing provisions whereby such information can be disclosed to any person who claims that he intends instituting legal proceedings. It is proposed to restrict the disclosure of this information to court actions instituted under the Act.

Some other proposed changes in administrative and procedural detail involve granting the Seed Certification Committee the authority to delegate some or all of its powers to its subcommittees or to the chief executive officer, namely, the standards officer. In turn, it is proposed that the standards officer should be empowered to delegate some of his duties. These proposals would enable some of the more routine functions under the Act to be performed by officers with more specialist knowledge and skills and so facilitate administration.

I will now refer to provisions which are aimed at achieving greater uniformity between the States. Each State exercises controls similar to those in the principal Act, and, as expected, there have been complaints that these controls are not uniform. This is particularly so where the one manufacturer is obliged to deal with each State authority separately regarding the one product.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture has considered this matter and agreed that procedures should be made as uniform and as simple as possible. The main problem area has been with registration, different States having different application forms, different registration periods, different renewal dates and different fee structures. The changes to registration procedures which I have already mentioned will go a long way towards solving these problems. The proposal to transfer the details to be shown on application forms from the Act to the regulations will enable the forms to be more readily updated in line with interstate agreements and changing industry needs.

The opportunity has also been taken to alter several of the terms used in the principal Act to the terms used in other States when referring to the same group of agricultural requirements or people. For instance, "veterinary medicine" is changed to "stock medicine," "weedicide" to "herbicide" and "primary dealer" to "wholesale dealer".

The amendments seek to remove a number of provisions which are now outmoded or redundant. Honourable members will appreciate that an Act designed to accommodate conditions that prevailed in 1952 is likely to contain provisions which are not applicable to today's conditions. Firstly, provisions outlining conditions under which the department can carry out investigations into the efficacy of an agricultural requirement

have been deleted. These provisions have been in the principal Act since its inception. No person has ever made use of them. Efficacy testing of new chemicals is carried out by companies using their own resources or the resources of independent research organisations such as universities or colleges of advanced education.

Secondly, provisions requiring the department to analyse a sample of any agricultural requirement submitted by a buyer have also been deleted. The situation has changed from that when the department was the sole reference analytical laboratory for agricultural requirements. However, the department will remain the basic authority for seed analysis and access to this service by interested parties will be maintained through provisions in the seeds regulations.

The amendments also update the requirements for labelling hay and chaff and sealing packages of certified seed. A number of existing provisions are seen to be unnecessarily restrictive and are relaxed in the Bill. It is proposed, for instance, that restrictions be relaxed on references which people can make to the Act, the department or officers of the department in relation to agricultural requirements. It is also proposed that people be permitted to make honest comparisons between agricultural requirements, a practice which is currently prohibited.

These changes are proposed so that the buyers can be better informed about agricultural requirements and their uses. The relaxation of labelling requirements is also proposed. The Bill provides that a minor change can be made to a label without the need for a whole new application for registration. There are also provisions whereby a particular pack size for a product can have more than one registered label. At present this is not permitted.

The Bill also contains some provisions aimed at bringing the Act into line with other comparable legislation. The Bill will restrict inspectors' powers of entry, and entry to a dwelling can only be effected upon obtaining a warrant. Inspectors will be given authority to call other people to their aid.

The Bill also sets out details regarding the method for proceedings under the Act.

I believe that this Bill forms the basis for some significant improvements in the administration of the law controlling the sale of agricultural requirements. The main beneficiaries would be the firms selling agricultural requirements and the Government, but primary producers could also be expected to benefit from the added controls provided.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Blake, adjourned.

HEN QUOTAS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 5 March (see p. 76)
on Mr Ahern's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second
time."

Mr BLAKE (Bundaberg) (9.12 p.m.): I have heard many arguments and many points of view from those engaged in egg production as to the merits and demerits of the legislation and the alleged personal injustices inflicted on egg producers, firstly, by the operation of basic hen quotas, secondly, by adjusted hen quotas, and, thirdly, by temporary hen quotas.

A significant complaint from those within the industry is that those not in the know suffered as a result of the cut-off date that was set for the calculation of quotas. It is claimed by many in the industry that the cut-off date for the calculation of hen quotas was specified by the Minister of the day as being 30 June 1971.

It also is claimed by many that the allocation of hen quotas was based on the higher average production years of 1970-71 and 1971-72. Further, it is alleged that the majority of egg producers who were not in the know were disadvantaged by that, while those who allegedly were in the know were able to expand the 1971-72 production to their lasting quota advantage.

Irrespective of the merits or demerits of these allegations, I must admit that, on my first perusal of the Bill now before the House, I considered that it would only amplify complaints that the industry is still over-producing and that it is suffering periodic cut-backs in attempts to keep production within profitable market expectations.

The main purpose of the Bill is to introduce modifications to the exemption sections of the Act. At present, the Act provides that the appropriate board may refuse—I emphasise "may refuse"—to accept delivery of eggs produced by hens not constituting either the whole or part of a producer's quota flock or temporary quota flock. I must add that exemptions are presently issued to hatcherymen for the keeping of hens for breeding purposes.

At first, it seemed to me that the intention of the Bill to provide for the extension of the exemptions to other poultry producers not engaged in quota-holder commercial egg production could only aggravate the over-production of eggs and amplify unprofitable egg export segments. However, both the Minister and sections of the industry claim that there are necessary, indeed vital, segments of the industry not engaged in commercial egg production that find themselves in conflict with the Act. This applies particularly to pullet dealers and day-old chick producers who rear pullets to started pullet stage.

There is much more specialisation in egg production than in the day of the farmyard flock. The ready supply of started pullets—with suitable characteristics, I might add—is essential to efficient egg production. The present legislation recognises a laying hen—quota-wise, that is—as being six months' old. But nature does not act like clockwork, and in practice some pullets lay eggs before that age. Apparently destruction of these eggs without some return would be both foolish and unproductive. If their sale was forbidden they would probably find their way onto the market anyhow. Perhaps more truthfully, or explicitly, they would find their way onto the black market.

Another factor is that the variation in demand for pullets could, and indeed does, leave a breeder at times with laying pullets on his hands. Obviously the latitude in consideration extended to the acquisition of these pullet eggs by the board will have to be closely monitored. It is also plain that the exempted hen numbers will be closely monitored. I am assured that laying pullet exemptions will not be extended to persons who have a hen quota or an interest in a quota.

The Opposition realises that stringent application of the principles outlined in the Bill is absolutely necessary if abuses are not to be attempted at the expense of quota holders. That responsibility lies with the industry and, of course, responsibility to see that that enforcement takes place lies with the Minister and his department.

After studying the Bill and listening to complaints within the industry I say on behalf of the Opposition that this proposal is well intentioned but very furry around the edges. To get the desired result from the Bill penalties must be provided for those who do not accept their obligations under the legislation.

I note that the Bill provides a flat penalty of \$1,000 for breaches of the Act. I think that is a variation to the provision in the Act which said "up to \$1,000" or "not exceeding \$1,000". I do not know whether that means that any breach of the Act will in future attract a \$1,000 penalty. I do not know whether it is like the National Party flat-rate tax principle. To me, it is quite new to see a mandatory penalty of \$1,000 for a breach of an Act. I should be very pleased if the Minister would elucidate on that.

Mr Ahern: There is no problem with that. Under the Acts Interpretation Act a fine is considered to be up to that figure. All we have to do is to prescribe a penalty and under the Acts Interpretation Act, unless otherwise stated, it means up to that figure.

Mr BLAKE: I thank the Minister, I am relieved to have that interpretation because it seemed to me that irrespective of whether it was a flagrant or unintentional breach of the Act a mandatory penalty of \$1,000 would be very severe.

The intention of the Bill is quite clear but, knowing the variations and complaints about the application of the stabilisation efforts through quotas, it will be very hard indeed—and a very arduous responsibility will evolve upon the Minister and his department—to ensure that the intent of the Bill is actually realised.

Mr GOLEBY (Redlands) (9.20 p.m.): The main purpose of the Bill is to make it possible for exemptions to be granted outside those previously embodied in this legislation. The Minister mentioned allowing hatcheries that are not commercial egg producers to come into being and to supply the chicken market. This is quite good. In the past, it has been confined to those with quotas.

If a disease breaks out on a property, the whole enterprise is suspect. In some cases, if the disease problem is bad enough, the chickens cannot be sold. No poultry producers would want chickens from a contaminated hatchery. This could result in a shortage of day-old chickens for supply to commercial egg producers. On the other hand, there are those people who are entering the industry and supplying householders and others who wish to keep a few hens in their backyard to provide their eggs. The Bill allows the pullet producers, merchants or traders to expand their business. If they have pullets that have reached the laying stage before being sold, they are not placed in jeopardy at all. This, too, is a good thing.

I should like to expand upon one statement by the Minister. He said—

"I take this opportunity to congratulate the industry on reaching agreement on the basis of future quota allocations to the under-supplied areas of North and Central Queensland."

Perhaps I could outline some of the history of the egg industry over the last couple of decades. In 1970-71, the CEMA plan was introduced into Australia. It gave some stability to the egg industry. Prior to that there were a large number of producers of commercial eggs, many of them only small, but there was a heavy oversupply on the fresh egg market in Australia and particularly in this State. Unfortunately, over the years, this necessitated large amounts of egg pulp being dumped.

The equalisation schemes that applied at that time became heavily overtaxed and the egg industry became completely uneconomic. Most of the flocks in Queensland were in South Queensland. It was the fact then, as it is now, that eggs can be produced much cheaper in South Queensland than in North Queensland. It is a simple mathematical exercise. It is cheaper to transport eggs to the North than grain. With the introduction of the CEMA plan, flocks were stabilised and heavy culling took place.

With the stability that was brought to the egg industry, the few small producers in North Queensland—they were small at that time in 1970-71—decided that as the industry

was now economic they should be allowed to produce eggs to meet the demand in North Queensland.

To anybody living in that part of the State, it would be a pretty fair argument. With the CEMA plan in operation, and this Government's being a signatory to it, the overall production of laying hens could not be increased. If North Queensland was to have more producing hens, the reduction had to take place in South Queensland. That is exactly what has happened—and at the expense of the large producers. Very little was taken away from the small producers but the large producers, who had a large input into the industry, carried the brunt of the cuts. One producer in my area—other honourable members may have larger producers in their areas—lost over 25 000 hens in 10 years because of the cuts to allow the northern industry to become viable and, to a large extent, to supply the fresh egg market in that part of the State. This has been done at a considerable expense to those producers.

They will readily say that from time to time when further cuts take place they cannot just reduce their flocks by 10 or 15 per cent without putting off staff. They obviously cannot put off a quarter or a half of a man when their flocks are reduced. Because of mechanisation the producer I referred to could bring the 25 000 birds he has lost back into production today without any increase in staff. If a person is going to produce a commodity he must be efficient, and we do find that the larger producer is usually the one who can become even more efficient and put a cheaper commodity on the market.

One thing the Minister did not tell us in his introductory remarks was that there is to be another 15 per cent cut to producers in South-east Queensland in August this year, which will be spread across the board in Central and North Queensland. I want it to be made quite clear to the House that the CEMA plan has definitely brought stability to the industry in Queensland, but this has not occurred without considerable hardship being caused to the larger producers in this part of the State.

As the Minister stated, the northern producers have reached agreement with the quota committee, and they appear to be satisfied with the agreement. But I understand that the agreement that was reached for additional quotas will still go to North Queensland producers until they reach 90 per cent of North Queensland's requirements. As I have said before, this will continue to mean overall cuts for the industry in this part of the State. We have all heard the saying that it is very difficult to unscramble eggs, and that is the situation we have here in South-east Queensland, but I believe that when everything settles down the industry overall will be able to live with the agreement. On behalf of the producers in my electorate and those in many other electorates in South Queensland, I hope that some

stability will be achieved and that all those involved in the industry will be able to obtain a viable living from it.

Mr KATTER (Flinders) (9.27 p.m.): I could not help reflecting upon the remarks of the honourable member for Redlands. Although he was kind in the sense that he did not actually criticise the Minister for making the move to give these quota allocations to North Queensland, it would be completely unacceptable to the people of North Queensland if they were completely frozen out of an industry and had their goods sent, in the main, from Brisbane, a distance of 1 200 to 1 500 miles to North Queensland. The extra cost burden of transporting the goods that distance should be obvious to everyone in the House.

I have just completed a study of freight costs to North Queensland. It is staggering to realise that the cost of freighting a bag of pumpkins to North Queensland is more than the cost of the bag of pumpkins. The cost of freighting potatoes is 40 per cent of the cost of the potatoes themselves, and ironically with cement the freight is nearly 100 per cent of the cost.

If we accept the principle that North Queensland has to be supplied by South Queensland, we must also accept the principle that an extra cost burden should be placed upon the food consumed by people in North Queensland. The only commodity which we produce and eat in North Queensland is beef. Of course, we cannot get our own back on South Queensland by supplying its people with beef because it supplies its own.

It would be completely unacceptable to North Queensland if we were frozen out of these quotas. I do not want to get into a lengthy debate about just how disadvantaged North Queensland is, but suffice it to say that I very much appreciate that the Minister is applying a little bit of fairness. Some of the fears held by North Queenslanders will be allayed by moves such as this, and I hope that other Ministers follow the example set by the Minister for Primary Industries.

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) (9.30 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their participation in this debate. As I pointed out in my second-reading speech, there are two major provisions in the legislation, although this debate has offered a wider opportunity for comment on the demand and supply management scheme in this industry. The two major provisions relate to an attempt on behalf of the industry to provide a greater opportunity for persons within the industry to purchase started pullets. It is felt that there is an inadequacy at the moment in that people who sell started pullets have to have a quota attaching to their business. It is thought that this is too inflexible and does not give the wider opportunity that is

needed by the industry. That is the purpose of the amendment that has come to us as a request from the industry.

The second provision will provide a greater degree of flexibility to the Hen Quota Appeals Tribunal in dealing with matters that come before it. Under the exact wording of the Act dealing with the tribunal's powers, at the moment it may confirm, vary or reverse a decision, but it is thought not to be proper for it to substitute a decision that the committee might have made. This power is proposed in the Bill. It is not unreasonable. It has been sought.

I wish to assure all honourable members, particularly the member for Bundaberg, that the operation of this scheme will be closely watched. I think the honourable member said that an honest appraisal of the scheme was that it was furry round the edges. Perhaps a more appropriate term might have been "feathery" round the edges. I am certain that it is neither. I think that the undertaking that I gave in my second-reading speech needs underlining. Prior permission will have to be sought by Order in Council. That is something that I, after consultation with my officers and the industry, will have to submit to Cabinet and then to the Governor in Council. Obviously that is the highest safeguard that there is and ensures that the matter will be watched very closely. I am a very strong supporter of this scheme, and it would be far from any intention of mine to see the scheme jeopardised in any way. That is not the intention of the amendment, and it will not happen.

The honourable member for Bundaberg made some reference earlier to some discontent that has been conveyed to him about the operation of the demand and supply management scheme in the industry. As a new Minister, not unnaturally I have had the matter conveyed to me, too. I have spent hours and hours in consultation with my officers in order to satisfy myself that there was no real substance in the allegations that were being made, which related to incidents that occurred, from memory, back in 1971, 1972 and 1973. I am completely satisfied that everything that was done was done absolutely ethically. I think that the scheme that was introduced has achieved what it set out to do.

I would point out to those critics who are taking us back so far in history that this scheme was supported by a ballot of growers, in which 75 per cent of growers voted. That is a very strong support in the industry. Seeing that the scheme has been in operation for some time, I think that that figure would be much higher today. There is no doubt that with any of these demand and supply schemes there has to be an element of disappointment. There are always some people who say that they do not agree with it, anyway. Frankly, it has been a very successful scheme and has operated with

the support of the industry right from the beginning. I suggest to honourable members that it is stronger today.

The amendments that have been made in the intervening period have been enacted after a tremendous amount of consultation. The scheme has obviously been a remarkable success. It is probably one of the most successful demand and supply management schemes in agricultural history of recent times. It has produced profitability in this industry in a very short period of time and in difficult times as far as consumption of the product is concerned. The scheme has taken the industry from a complete loss situation and a hopeless position to one of significant profitability. The regulation has been comprehensive, but it has been worthwhile and it has been supported, and will continue to be supported, by me.

I wish to say something about the remarks of the honourable member for Redlands who spoke about the North Queensland and Central Queensland problem. Honourable members who have been in this place since the start of the scheme would know of the lobbying from time to time in relation to these problems. That led to a rather unhelpful disunity in this industry. In recent times a compromise has been reached. To the honourable member for Flinders, who spoke highly of my role in this matter, I say quite frankly the decision has been one made by the industry. It has been reached by industry members in all areas coming together in consultation. We have seen the importance of industry unity, and to achieve that some compromise was necessary. The industry itself reached that conclusion and I am very happy about that as it augers well for the future.

The honourable member for Redlands spoke of a further 15 per cent cut in quotas that is just around the corner. It should be clearly stated that that cut is purely a seasonal adjustment and will operate only from August to January. It is not a cut in basic quota, but an adjustment to meet seasonal upsurge. This happens around about this time each year.

At the moment the industry has no definite trends and we do not know in which direction consumption trends will go, but I hope they go up.

After consultation with my officers, I can reply to the honourable member for Bundaberg who made reference to the provision in the Bill for a \$1,000 fine. The position in regard to any Act which has prescription for a fine is that, unless otherwise stated in the Acts Interpretation Act, that amount constitutes the maximum fine. So a magistrate who is applying the provisions of the Act will have a discretion in those circumstances.

I thank honourable members for their support of the legislation and I commend it to the House.

Motion (Mr Ahern) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Powell (Isis) in the chair
Clauses 1 to 8, as read, agreed to.
Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Ahern, by leave, read a third time.

EXOTIC DISEASES IN ANIMALS BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Debate resumed from 10 March (see p. 140) on Mr Ahern's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr BLAKE (Bundaberg) (9.40 p.m.): I doubt if there is any other single event that would have such a devastating effect on the economy of Australia as the serious outbreak of an exotic disease such as foot and mouth disease. Of course, the Bill deals with other exotic animal diseases such as African swine fever, swine vesicular disease, trichinosis, Newcastle disease, rinderpest, Rift Valley fever, sheep pox, African horse sickness, vesicular evanthema and vesicular stomatitis, as well as such things as rabies and screw worm fly.

The dire consequences of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease to Australian primary industry, our economy and the whole of the Australian community, for that matter, is mind-boggling in its potential detriment and magnitude. If a disease outbreak prohibited the export of animal products, including wool and such fibres, Australia would lose over \$5,000m in exports annually. The associated effects throughout the internal structure of our economy would reach into every facet and every sector of our society. It would be truly a national disaster.

Apart from that, the magnitude of containing and eradicating such an outbreak in this vast continent presents a physical and economic exercise quite terrible to contemplate. Feral rather than domestic animals would present the greatest obstacle to successful containment and eradication of exotic disease and to the re-establishment of overseas customer confidence and accessibility that we now enjoy and, alas, that many of us take for granted.

It is true that many of the diseases dealt with in the Bill would not have such wide economic ramifications, but all would represent serious economic loss in production and control costs, and be a serious blow to customer confidence and to our relatively commendably clean stock record. Early this century a day's travel took one across a district to visit a neighbour. A day's journey today takes one across the world and into possible contact with the world's inventory of animal, human and other diseases. As a matter of fact, it was revealed by the Minister in answer to my question in the

House this week that during the past year 354 kg of meat of various types was seized at the Brisbane international terminal. Additionally, 187 eggs and 26 kg of egg products were detained, as well as 247 kg of dairy products and 84 untanned skins. We now have international air traffic coming into Cairns and Townsville, and doubtless those figures will rise with the increase of overseas visitors to this country.

I believe that there has been more awareness of and a greater effort to deal with the possible introduction of human diseases than there has been to deal with animal diseases. It must be stressed that in many instances animal diseases have implications for humans. I instance the effects of brucellosis on human beings and the continuing battle of meatworkers in Queensland to have similar recognition of human reactions to brucellosis contact as applies in other States. In my opinion, some people on the opposite side of the Chamber suffer from foot and mouth disease, because every time they open their mouth they put their foot in it.

Recent suspected outbreaks of exotic diseases in Tasmania and New Zealand have beneficially stimulated our awareness of the increased risks and the possible effects. Experience gained during these and other incidents such as the 1977 bluetongue scare in the North should be capitalised upon.

The Opposition welcomes the introduction of the Exotic Diseases in Animals Bill. We have given it the serious consideration that it warrants and understand and support its intentions, which are to repeal the Foot and Mouth Disease Expenses and Compensation Fund Act 1958 and certain provisions of the Stock Act 1915-1978.

There is a need to update the compensation provisions of the present Act, and every responsible member should, and I believe will, support streamlining of present procedures under the Stock Act to more effectively and speedily control outbreaks of exotic diseases.

The necessary authority for an inspector to declare a quarantine zone immediately he suspects the presence of an exotic disease or pathogen in a certain area and for the quarantine to last 96 hours, if not earlier revoked or extended by the Minister, is accepted in the interests of immediate containment within a suspect area. The practical need to isolate or control the movement of stock—that is, stock relevant to that disease or suspected disease—within the zone necessitates the power intended to be vested in the officers designated in the Bill. I say “necessitates” advisedly, because it is very necessary in the interests of effective isolation and control of exotic diseases.

I know that from this point onwards, in terms of proposed controls and powers, many necessary effective powers and controls will inevitably produce doubts and frictions when they are enacted and when they are applied to those unfortunate victims of the consequences of an outbreak, or suspected

outbreak, of such a disease. As a matter of fact, only about a week ago I was approached by a grazier in the Bundaberg area. He complained that because an outbreak of TB had been detected in his pig herd, he had to go to the additional expense of rounding up two paddocks full of bullocks, which usually do not have to be TB-tested, even though he claimed they were eight or 10 miles away.

He argued that, because there had been no contact or no movement of stock between the pig TB-infested area and the other area, they did not need to be tested. He also argued—quite logically, I thought—that if the bullocks were to be tested because of their proximity to the area in which pig TB-infestation was detected, all other stock within a similar radius should also be TB-tested.

He claimed that the costs incurred in each paddock would be about \$270, because he had to pay people to round up the stock and submit them to the testing. I was able to make him realise that, in the eyes of the stock inspector, there was no proof that the stock, being in his possession, had not been in the area where his infected pigs were, and I told him that there was no inference to be drawn against his honesty.

We must all appreciate, of course, that where what might be termed national consequences are involved, it is not practicable for an officer to assume anything. Not only is the honesty of the community at large suspect; at times, reflections and aspersions are cast upon the honesty of members of this Assembly.

I realise that the officers have to do their duty when contamination occurs or is likely, not with complete disregard, but without being influenced by the indignant reaction of well-intentioned people. As I have explained before, the disastrous consequences to the whole community of the incidence and spread of an exotic disease are so great that we cannot legislate for the convenience or the feelings of the individual, but for his industry and the community's good and welfare. We have to ensure, however, that the sweeping powers of direction, inspection, confiscation, extermination and destruction embodied in the Bill are carried out with full regard for the rights, welfare and compensation of the individual who finds his legitimate interests and assets sacrificed in the interests of the community at large.

I make it clear that I am not quibbling about the severity of the penalties that range up to \$4,000 in some instances and up to \$10,000 in other instances for offences knowingly committed against provisions intended to protect the general welfare of the industries, and in some instances, human health. For persons who are thoughtless, selfish and irresponsible, for those who are prepared to jeopardise the general welfare of the industry and the country deliberately, such penalties are not too high, bearing in mind the possible disastrous consequences of ignoring the law.

The Opposition's major concern relates to the responsible application of the powers to be vested in the Minister and his officers, and for fair and adequate compensation for those persons who, due to circumstances beyond their control, find their stock and assets sacrificed in control measures undertaken for the common good, or—I must emphasise and re-emphasise—allegedly taken for the common good. I use that phraseology because of the effect on the assets and the future of those persons whose stock and fittings have been, or may be, destroyed on suspicion—I emphasise the words "on suspicion"—of the presence of an exotic disease.

The Opposition appreciates the need for prompt action to contain a disease, particularly in view of the delay in positively identifying pathologically some of these diseases. Should such destruction take place, or be allowed to take place, on the suspicion and advice of an inspector without quick referral to another officer or officers of equal qualifications? The important point we have to consider is the confirmation of an opinion or the confirmation of more than one opinion, before such drastic action takes place. When I say "drastic action" I am referring particularly to the extermination of stock suspected of having a disease.

It appears from the Bill that, in the interests of speed, (or perhaps I should say "haste") an inspector, on suspicion, can declare an area and order an owner to destroy healthy or suspected stock without reference to any other authority to support his suspicion. If I am wrong there I should be pleased if the Minister would correct me. As it is already Commonwealth/State uniform legislation to exclude from compensation everything but losses for animals and property destroyed, it is obvious that a sole, erroneous decision to destroy could have crippling repercussions on individuals. I refer, of course, to the exclusion of loss of profits, breach of contract, loss of production or other consequential losses that are not compensable under the legislation.

It seems to the Opposition that some confirmatory or supporting opinion should be mandatory before the destruction of stock or property takes place or is permitted, if the incidental but serious other losses referred to are outside compensation.

The right of appeal to a judge of the District Courts in cases of failure by the parties to agree on compensation by the other specified means is quite fair and reasonable. As the Minister acknowledged, the sweeping powers defined in the Bill will be considered abrasive by some and excessive by others.

I am pleased to see that the powers of inspection and what I term the invasion of privacy require the issue of a warrant for such authority. The Opposition agrees that the outbreak or suspected outbreak of an exotic disease represents a serious and

exceptional circumstance justifying serious and exceptional remedial action. However, the Opposition might wish to discuss some of the clauses at the appropriate time.

Mr KRUGER (Murrumba) (9.56 p.m.): I rise to make a few brief comments on this matter. Most of the matters that we on this side of the House are concerned about have been spelt out clearly by our spokesman the honourable member for Bundaberg who has spent a long time in this field.

I hope that all members realise the problems that could occur with the introduction of exotic diseases to animals and birds. The previous speaker said that there is a great need for strong and rigid controls throughout the State. Possibly the responsibility should lie more heavily in the Federal field because Queensland is only a small part of Australia. It might be large in acreage but when considering the introduction of an exotic disease it is only a small area. I share the Minister's concern when he said—

"This concern was undoubtedly heightened by the recent exotic disease scare in New Zealand, which had some features in common with the Tasmanian incident in 1979. Fortunately for the economic viability of both countries, specimens from each outbreak proved negative on laboratory examination."

That is quite true. It created quite a number of problems. I wonder if somebody might have been a little hasty in taking those decisions. I understand the reasons for making sure that such diseases are not allowed to spread.

Like the previous speaker, I am a little concerned about how quickly a disease can spread, and how people will, knowingly or unknowingly, import meat or animal or bird life which can introduce and spread a disease throughout the nation. Bearing that in mind, we realise that we must have strict quarantine control. If a disease is found within our State, we should ensure that it is stamped out as quickly as possible.

We need to move into suspect areas very quickly. Possibly we will have to consider upgrading the standard of the officers concerned. I am not denigrating those who are working for us at present. But if we are to make a decision, and make it quickly, we must make sure that the right decision is made so that we do not have the problem that arose in New Zealand and Tasmania. It is very important that the right decision is made. Possibly a panel should be available. Maybe that is spelt out somewhere in the Bill. Unfortunately I have not had time to delve into the finer points.

Mr Frawley: You should have read it properly before you got up.

Mr KRUGER: Probably the honourable member does not know what I am talking about. He has been half asleep for some time. If the honourable member is quite finished I will continue.

The matter of compensation has also concerned members on this side. As has been proved in the past, we are quite sure that if a certain disease has to be stamped out the Government will pay reasonable compensation for animals that have to be destroyed. As the honourable member for Bundaberg said, we are concerned that the payment of compensation in circumstances where yards and buildings have to be destroyed has not been fully thought through. An owner may receive \$100 for an animal that is destroyed but he might still have to re-establish yards and buildings, and these can be very costly. We all know that such problems are very hard to solve. I understand that a large outbreak could cause the Government severe budgetary problems. It is up to all Queenslanders to take every possible step to stamp out such diseases.

Another problem arises with the movement of stock. Even with what we might call a minor problem such as tick infestation, over the years this has cost the State a lot of money. The movement of stock from a tick-infested to a tick-free area creates problems for property owners in the tick-free area. I wonder how we overcome such a problem in the event of suspected outbreak of an exotic disease. Fair enough if it turns out that the exotic disease existed. We would then be very happy with the stringent controls that were instituted, but in view of the fact that previous experience has shown that it was perhaps not necessary to impose restrictions, in those circumstances I wonder what sort of compensation we could expect.

I do not think anybody in his right mind would argue against the introduction of a Bill such as this. I think it is the duty of every member of this Parliament to ensure that people on the land are protected. We should do the best we can to ensure that diseases that can be transmitted from stock to people are controlled.

Mr Frawley: What do you know about stock? You are just a Kallangur cowboy.

Mr KRUGER: It is very well for the cowboy from Caboolture. He has not been in the bush and he does not know what it is all about. He is supported by Country Party members, but I don't think he knows too much about the country.

This very serious problem has been looked at in a reasonable and realistic manner by the Minister. He and his officers have done a great job, and we all hope that the Bill achieves the desired results.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (10.3 p.m.): I would like to comment briefly on the Bill. The opposition spokesman pointed out that the Bill might look excellent now but we might find some weaknesses when it is applied. I think that was a valid comment. As he usually does, the honourable member for Bundaberg did a fairly good job in summing up the provisions of the Bill.

We have to reassure people that while the Bill is strong medicine, it is necessary to bring in such legislation because of situations that might develop in the future. We all hope that it will never have to be used. When we speak about exotic diseases, we all think of foot and mouth disease, but we have widened the range of diseases that will come within the ambit of this legislation. I agree that it had to be strong legislation and, although I agree with most of the Bill's provisions, I admit that it is so complicated that it is fairly hard to be sure of exactly how it will work.

Certain provisions such as the delegation of authority stand out. Naturally we would want the Minister to have the power to delegate authority, and to do it quickly, and that seems to be straightforward.

Another provision refers to the power to stop, enter and search vehicles. It is not much good trying to quarantine an area if one does not have the power to do so. I agree with the honourable member for Bundaberg that a warrant should be required before an inspector can enter a dwelling, and that is provided for.

The honourable member for Bundaberg was a little worried about the powers of inspectors, particularly the term "on suspicion". I think I can say—and I believe he would agree with me—that if an exotic disease was even suspected in an area, there would be more than one person and one vet in the area. So I do not think there is a great deal of worry in that regard.

As someone who has had a little to do with this type of thing as a farmer and since I have been a member of this Parliament, I think that the matter that will cause the greatest amount of trouble will be compensation and valuation for compensation. There is no doubt that that is always a sensitive area. The Bill appears to be quite specific about compensation and valuation for compensation.

Some of the fears that I might have had when I first heard about the introduction of the Bill have been allayed to some extent. It would appear to me that we should be able to reach a reasonable conclusion.

The Bill is probably the most important business that the Minister has handled since he was elevated to the ministry. Nevertheless, he has had the courage to bite the bullet and introduce the Bill. I think that nothing but good can come from it. There might be some minor problems in its operation; I hope there will not be. A lot of thought has gone into the Bill, and that is why it is such a complicated document—perhaps a little more complicated than some of us would have liked. Nevertheless, I hope that the provisions of the Bill will be enacted. If this legislation has to be used, I hope it will work as we think it should. Once again, I hope against all else that we will not have to use it.

Dr SCOTT-YOUNG (Townsville) (10.6 p.m.): I am pleased that the Minister has had an easy passage with this legislation. His predecessor did not enjoy an easy passage when he tried to introduce a Bill about exotic diseases. It was called the "pigswill" Bill. It caused a lot of trouble and the Minister almost got a bucket tipped over him.

I was very pleased when I read this Bill. It has taken a lot of emotion out of this question of diseases caused by viruses which affect mainly our domestic animals in both the sheep and cattle industries from which this country derives considerable income.

I also notice on page 4 of the Bill that the Minister has spelt out the various diseases and used their clinical names. That is most important. If one picks up an ordinary text book on veterinary science one finds that the sections on exotic diseases are not well done. They have been done in a hotch-potch way. Most people seem to think that they are all the same disease.

Before I go any further, I would suggest to the House that one of the best ways to prevent these diseases from spreading and becoming uncontrolled in our country is to educate the farmers. Various sections of the Department of Health send out coloured brochures of a very high quality, in which they depict various diseases of the teeth and body. The Department of Primary Industries should consider sending out to all cattle and sheep properties pictures of the diseases caused by the viruses. This is most essential because 99 per cent of the vets in this country have never seen the diseases caused by these viruses.

In 1977, a virus was found at a place called Beatrice Hill. Some 3 000 midges were examined and a virus called CSIRO 19 was found. Everyone thought that there was an outbreak of bluetongue in Northern Australia. A line was drawn across the nation at the 18th parallel. The people concerned lost a considerable amount of income. Actually, it was not bluetongue but the vets could not be persuaded of that.

It reminded me of a time in the early days of the war when a trooper was admitted to the 113 AGH with what everyone thought was smallpox. We vaccinated all the troops against smallpox. People said, "Here is a man with smallpox. What has gone wrong with our vaccinations?" An eminent physician named Sir Charles Bickerton Blackburn was called in. He had a look at the man and said, "Giant chickenpox". The panic stopped. The whole thing that stopped the panic was knowledge.

Unfortunately a lot of our vets do not display much knowledge of exotic diseases, with the result that the bluetongue virus scare in North Queensland became a panic and cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. The education of not only the vets but also the graziers and farmers is most essential.

The method of treatment of this disease is either eradication or some form of immunisation. Unfortunately immunisation against these viruses is not very long-lasting. Even with the latest experiment that uses two shots, the immunity lasts for only 12 months, which is not good enough. That means that there is still a great need for the process of destruction of the animal, destruction of bedding, destruction of fodder and even some of the buildings. This is dealt with satisfactorily.

Recently in Tasmania there was an unproven outbreak of vesicular disease in pigs. An unfortunate farmer had his farm burnt down, his sheds and his animals destroyed. His name was Mr Antypas. He said that he expected to receive compensation of \$50,000 to \$60,000 for the loss of his stock and buildings. I believe it is good that the Act lays down specific procedures for compensation. That has been discussed previously by several other speakers, but I think it is very good to have it laid down in the Act. It means that a man does not have to go cap in hand to ask some departmental nabob for compensation; he has recourse to the District Court if he does not get satisfaction through the ordinary channels. That protects the individual. The animals can only be protected by increased education of both vets and farmers.

The quarantine zoning is most important. There should be a very strong stipulation of distance when a zone is quarantined. I believe that the quarantine should be enforced. I refer honourable members to some Press photographs I have of police searching cars in Tasmania during the time of the scare there. It looks very dramatic and tough, but it is most essential, because these diseases are tough diseases. It is essential that a nation like Australia, which depends largely on its primary industries, is protected by all means possible.

I now wish to comment on the role of our native animals in the carrying and dissemination of these exotic diseases. I refer members to the work done by W. A. Snowdon as reported in the "Australian Journal of Experimental Biology and Medical Science, 1968". He discussed his experiments on Australian native animals. He used the red kangaroo, the tree kangaroo, the grey kangaroo, Bennett's wallaby, the wombat, the possum, the potoroo, the bandicoot, the marsupial mouse, the water rat and the echidna. These were all injected with large quantities of the foot and mouth disease virus.

He found that the ulceration and blisters of the tongue and feet appeared only in the tree kangaroo after massive doses far exceeding those they could pick up in their natural environment. One red kangaroo and two echidnas also got it. Despite what we say and think about our native animals, it appears that they are virtually of no importance in carrying foot and mouth disease. If foot and mouth disease ever became

established in some imported animal, our native animals obviously have some immunity that we do not at the moment understand.

With your permission, Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask that I be allowed to incorporate in "Hansard" this article because I think it is most important for future reference.

(Leave granted.)

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid on the table the following article—

The only thing that might render a slaughter policy ineffective would be the presence of a large population of undomesticated animals in which infection could become established and persist over a lengthy period. Although FMD affects primarily animals of the order Artiodactyla, i.e. the cloven-hoofed animals, others, including Man, have on rare occasions suffered from clinical disease. However, until recently, nothing at all was known about the susceptibility of Australian fauna to FMD virus, and whether or not they could play any part in its spread or persistence.

Australian animals sent to Pirbright

To find the answer, it was necessary to send a representative selection of Australian mammals to the Research Institute at Pirbright for susceptibility and transmission tests. The animals used were those listed below:

Red kangaroo	Potoroo
Tree kangaroo	Bandicoot
Grey kangaroo	Marsupial mouse
Bennett's wallaby	Water rat
Wombat	Echidna
Possum	

A number of European wild rabbits were also included in the experiments.

To establish whether or not the FMD virus would survive and multiply in these hosts, all were infected by inoculation; blood, swabs, and autopsy specimens were then tested for its presence. The virus appeared in at least a proportion of each species several days later, indicating that viral multiplication within the host had taken place, but in no case was it recovered from any animal 14 days or more after inoculation.

Clinical signs suggestive of FMD, such as ulceration and blisters on the tongue and feet, appeared only in the tree kangaroo, one red kangaroo, four water rats, and two echidnas. It has been customary to assess susceptibility to FMD virus according to the presence and severity of clinical signs, and on this basis the animals tested were less susceptible than cattle or sheep, despite the fact that a proportion of them developed a high concentration of virus in the blood—as high as would be expected in full susceptible cattle following inoculation.

It is, of course, quite conceivable that some animals could acquire infection naturally, allow multiplication of virus, and transmit infection to other animals without exhibiting clinical signs, and for this reason it was necessary also to study natural transmission between domestic cattle and some feral animals.

Red kangaroos and wombats were held in close confinement with infected steers. Only a few developed even a low-grade viraemia and, when confined with other unexposed cattle and kangaroos, did not themselves transmit infection. Red kangaroos that had developed a viraemia following inoculation with virus were then confined with cattle and uninoculated kangaroos. None of the latter acquired a demonstrable viraemia, and only 2 out of 6 steers became infected.

The significance of this result lies in the fact that only 2 out of 6 steers became infected, instead of all 6, as would normally occur if the inoculated animals had been cattle. That any became infected can be ascribed to the massiveness of the virus dose given to the kangaroos by inoculation compared with the amount they would receive through contact, even when in close confinement with diseased animals.

Although all of the fauna studied could harbour virus for short periods, it is significant that in no instance did FMD spread naturally from one to another, nor did natural transmission from cattle to cattle via any wild animals take place. The degree of contact in these experiments was considerably greater than would occur under field conditions, and it seems safe to conclude that only under the most exceptional circumstances would any of the animals tested play a significant part in the spread or persistence of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Australia.

While we hope that such an outbreak will never materialise, if it does we can take some comfort from knowing that our native wild animals will probably remain unscathed and not impede successful eradication of the disease.

Dr SCOTT-YOUNG: The gist of the article is that the animals I mentioned are not of any great importance in the dissemination of exotic diseases. This is an excellent Bill and I congratulate the Minister for bringing it to the House.

Dr LOCKWOOD (Toowoomba North) (10.15 p.m.): I will address myself briefly to the Bill. At the outset I say that this is a Bill designed to control exotic diseases, whereas the amendments to the Stock Act in 1976, in my opinion, made very little attempt to control exotic diseases. It was merely a Bill enabling a compensation mechanism to be established. That amendment attracted the anger and ire of a great many back-benchers. I think the member for Flinders will support me in that. The member for Townsville, who has just spoken, was an opponent of the Bill. We believed that too many people would place their

utmost reliance on that Bill as a protection for their stock—which of course it never was. I do not believe it ever could have been. I do not believe it should have been regarded as such by members of any of the State Parliaments or the Commonwealth Parliament, all of whom were acting in concert to put through that compensating legislation.

That Bill relied very heavily on quarantine officers detecting all sorts of matter coming into the country which could carry exotic diseases. Of course, it had to include hides, shoes and raw or salted processed meats such as salami—and I think the member for Callide was famous for his outbursts on the importation of salami at that time. Very scanty attempts were made to interview travellers coming into this country as to where they had been and whether they had been in contact with any exotic diseases in their travels. Very few attempts were made to ascertain if their footwear had ever been adequately cleaned after coming out of those areas. This country was vulnerable, and I think it must always be regarded as being extremely vulnerable, to the importation of exotic diseases by tourists, by people who would break the quarantine laws on the importation of semen and other live biological materials and of course by people who would undertake the out-and-out sabotage of this country's primary industries.

The failure of that Bill has, I think, been rectified in this legislation, which introduces the control measures highlighted by the members who objected to the Stock Act amendments in 1976. In those amendments to the Stock Act, I think the then Minister (the Honourable Vic Sullivan) relied tremendously—the member for Townsville (Dr Scott-Young) and I showed that he should not rely on it—on the theory of infinite dilution as a measure of controlling exotic virus disease. We indicated to the Assembly then that foot and mouth disease virus could live for 120 days in a water supply, and that it could travel a tremendous distance down a river such as the Condamine. It was shown that it could get away from areas where vets had discovered it, which was the nub of the swill Bill argument. We argued then that if swill was fed to pigs and pigs were slaughtered through an abattoir, qualified vets would be inspecting the pigs and then could offer an informed opinion as to whether a pig did have an exotic disease.

On the infinite dilution theory, which we said would fail—and of course it has failed in another regard—there would be outbreaks of small numbers of infected animals further down the Condamine, where there would be no vets and where feral pigs or cattle might not be seen by an owner for a long time, and an epidemic among animals—an enzootic disease—would develop. The theory of infinite dilution has since broken down in a human disease—cholera—when cholera organisms were discovered in streams feeding into the Brisbane River, and further south in the Coomera and other rivers.

That theory of infinite dilution does not hold for humans, because humans will be susceptible to the disease even if only a very small number of live organisms enter the body; and so it is with animals. This Bill ignores the routes by which diseases may come into the country and gets to the very real problem of dealing with any suspicious disease upon its discovery.

One of the things that needs to be said—and I think it ought to be repeated—is that there must be a sure viral and bacterial diagnosis and confirmed full virulence of the organism before slaughter commences. Slaughter on suspicion that an organism is in fact an exotic-disease-producing organism is not good enough. There has been talk of drawing on maps circles with a 50-mile radius and slaughtering every cloven-hoof animal within that circle. That cannot be allowed to happen until there is a proven pathogenic organism. It must not be an organism that looks like it; it must not be, as the honourable member for Townsville said, something that looks like bluetongue virus or something that looks like anything else. Minor disasters have occurred in New Zealand and Tasmania where people have gone off half cocked, and I do not believe that is good enough. Certainly, very strict measures of quarantine control and isolation should be implemented until the diagnosis is made.

Mention is made in the Bill of power for inspectors to appoint officers of the Department of Primary Industries, police officers, or even officers of the State Emergency Service, to act under their direction. I hope it is clearly understood that those people will be implementing orders and will not be given the very odious task of making a diagnosis. They will, of course, have to be part of the very large work-force that will be gathered together to enforce the regulations that will come into play to keep quarantine zones or control zones functioning as they are intended to function, that is, in a protective role for the bulk of the nation's stock.

The recent spread to Queensland of European brood disease in bees, which are now regarded as stock, highlighted many of the difficulties in controlling an exotic disease. I see that, according to the Bill, that is not an exotic disease. Nevertheless, all the provisions of the Bill could be called into play to deal with bees. In the instance to which I referred, it was found that people, for their own profit, moved infected bees long distances through southern Australia and through New South Wales, and defied all the known concepts of isolating and quarantining diseases. If men will do that with bees, they will do it with cattle, horses, or any other animal.

The measures that are now being introduced are designed to give those who are charged with controlling an outbreak the necessary powers to search vehicles, inspect animals, reach a conclusion to hold or impound, or, if need be, destroy the whole

lot, including vehicles in which they have been transported. The role of vehicles in transporting disease should never be overlooked. As the honourable member for Townsville said, the straw bedding on which animals lie can transmit disease; so can boards on sheds and trailers. One has only to look at the spread of weeds up and down the highways to see the way in which trucks and other vehicles spread capeweed and other weeds.

Movements must be controlled, and they must be controlled both in and out. We must know who goes into the areas; we must know who comes out of them. But I venture to suggest that there will be little or no control over insects, and the Minister or the Governor in Council might have to order aerial spraying on a massive scale if insects can be shown to be possible vectors. Extensive measures may have to be taken to control some species of native animals and some diseases.

One of the exotic diseases that appear to have been forgotten is anthrax. At all levels of Government those concerned with health must maintain an active interest in, and continuously update their knowledge of, anthrax. It is an extremely virulent disease in which we should be vitally interested because it really affects man. We must be sure that stock inspectors, medical students and all of our doctors can identify it.

Mr Burns: What about the farmer himself, the man who is handy? He has to be trained to identify it more than anybody else?

Dr LOCKWOOD: That is right.

In relation to that disease, I was taught as a medical student that the only thing the doctor was allowed to remove was one syringe of blood for testing and the beast in question had to be incinerated to ashes where it lay. We will have to do similar things when other diseases are suspected.

It is a pity that many diseases take a long time to identify. Identification relies on very complex laboratory diagnosis that cannot be done simply in the field. Effective control will have to be exercised until a diagnosis is made and a report comes back. The receipt of the report will determine the full extent of the measures taken unless the disease has extremely characteristic clinical features that allow positive, beyond-doubt diagnosis to be made.

I come now to the problem of rabies. In this country doctors are concerned about the incidence of dog bites. They are not so much concerned about fangs in human flesh but the positive measures that they will have to take should rabies ever come to this country. That, of course, would include the rounding-up of all dogs, dingoes, foxes and perhaps other biting mammals in a given area. It is of concern to the medical profession that, having all the vectors that could possibly spread this disease (and the fact that the disease is virtually on our doorstep), it could indeed one day be a problem in Australia.

The Bill goes a long way to protect the primary producers of this country who raise stock for the market. I commend the Minister on its introduction.

Mr KATTER (Flinders) (10.27 p.m.): I have two brief points to make on the Bill. Firstly, I bring to the attention of the House the fact that throughout the 1960s half of Australia's beef production was exported, and almost 90 per cent of those exports went to Great Britain. When Great Britain joined the European Common Market in 1972, we exported about 160 000 t of beef to Great Britain and some 50 000 t to all other export destinations. In other words, the linchpin of the Australian beef industry was the single market in Great Britain.

In 1973-74, when Britain joined the Common Market, exports dropped from 150 000 t of beef, which was half of Australia's production, to nothing. That was one of the reasons for the beef crash. In 1975 we exported 5 000 t of beef—a drop from 150 000 t to 5 000 t.

The Australian beef industry should have collapsed, never to recover. It would have done so but for a great and wonderful happening for the beef industry. This came about because the herds of Argentina contracted foot and mouth disease on a massive scale. The huge American market, which stood at 300 000 t and was almost twice the size of the market in Great Britain, closed suddenly to Argentina, and Australia is now selling some 300 000 t of beef to the United States. I leave to honourable members' imagination what happened to the beef producers of Argentina.

In Australia, we would only have to suffer an outbreak of foot and mouth disease to suffer the same fate as that which overcame Argentina. I stress those happenings to illustrate the many serious problems. Beef producers may well lie awake at night worrying about such an eventuality.

My second point concerns the fact that the Gulf of Carpentaria is being used constantly by fishing vessels of various countries, many of them in South-east Asia, that have foot and mouth disease and a number of other extremely dangerous exotic diseases. Unless the Federal Government is prepared to shoulder its burden and exclude these people from the Gulf of Carpentaria and do something to populate that region, we will be exposed constantly to the danger of foot and mouth and other exotic diseases. I doubt very much whether the best legislation in the world will prevent that from occurring.

I support the Bill. Most of us agree with everything it contains. I emphasise the necessity for such legislation.

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) (10.31 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their participation in this important debate. As I have said, the Bill is the best this State can offer in response to an outbreak of exotic disease. Strong medicine is

inevitable when the stakes are so high in the Australian animal industry, which has an annual output of \$3,500m. The industry might be in jeopardy if there were a significant outbreak of exotic disease. There is strong support for the Bill throughout Australia among representative groups, and happily there is strong support for it in this House. Legislation of this type will be presented in other Australian States.

I thank the honourable member for Bundaberg for his support of the Bill on behalf of the Opposition. I point out, however, that there has been a significant misunderstanding of some of the procedures under the Bill. I take the opportunity now to set the matter right.

The honourable member implied that it seemed dangerous to have devolving on one inspector the power to go into an area and order a massive destruction of animals. That is not a provision of the Bill. He indicated that more consultation was necessary. Indeed, that is proposed. This situation obtains in the confirmation of suspicion of exotic diseases. Diagnostic teams, consisting of senior veterinary staff, a diagnostic pathologist and an officer experienced in the particular disease, will be called in.

The inspector's powers to order destruction come into effect only upon declaration of an infected zone by the Minister on the advice of the chief inspector. On suspicion of the outbreak of an exotic disease, a veterinary consultative committee convenes immediately. It is composed of senior veterinary officers of Commonwealth and State animal health services. The committee decides whether a slaughter policy shall apply. In other words, what is proposed for a solitary inspector in these circumstances is the implementation of quarantine, not a slaughter-out policy. There is an established procedure of consultation at the highest level before a slaughter-out policy, with its inevitable compensatory consequences, is implemented.

It is important that we appreciate the intention of the Bill so that there is no misunderstanding. There will be adequate consultation before a decision on a slaughter-out policy is made.

I thank the honourable member for Murrumbidgee for his support of the legislation.

The honourable member for Warwick also indicated support. He drew attention to the need for adequate supervision of the movement of vehicles should an outbreak of exotic disease occur. This has proven to be a very serious matter in other outbreaks around the world. The biggest problem is television helicopters which are able to avoid the barriers drawn around an infected zone. They are able to descend on a site and they scatter all sorts of dust particles and infected material for miles around. This is a major difficulty, and one which will concern us as we endeavour to control a suspected outbreak in the future.

The honourable member made some reference to the suspicion of an exotic disease and expressed some reservations about the powers of inspectors. I point out that this power is presently invested in the Stock Act, and in practice it has not been a problem. I believe that these fears, which were probably validly paraded here tonight, will not be a problem in practice. These powers exist in other legislation, and have not been abused to date.

The honourable member for Townsville made some reference to the need for a publicity campaign to be mounted, and rightly so. I think it has to be understood that at present there is a plethora of publicity material available from the Commonwealth Department of Health and the State Department of Primary Industries through its Division of Animal Industry by way of brochures and movie films. I am advised that these films have been shown throughout the State to at least 1 000 different audiences, including veterinarians, in recent times.

Mr Burns: What about the poor old farmer in the Gulf who doesn't go to the shows?

Mr AHERN: This effort will continue. It is a recognised problem in remote areas, and our efforts in this regard will be improved and extended. But we have a pretty good record to date. I think it also needs to be said to the honourable member for Townsville that as far as native animals are concerned his remarks are understood, but the power to destroy native animals is included in the legislation where, in the opinion of the officers who are supervising the operation, it is necessary for the clearing up of the infection so to do.

The honourable member for Toowoomba North made some reference to the quarantine provisions, which he said need to be very stiff. I think it needs to be said, too, that the quarantine provisions in the Commonwealth health legislation are very extensive. I was very interested to see them applied recently on suspicion in respect of the New Zealand outbreak. Because quarantine procedures are administered by the State on behalf of the Commonwealth, I had a first hand opportunity to see how they performed in practice. I was tremendously impressed by the co-operation of everybody involved. The quarantine procedures were very thorough. The officers concerned did their jobs very diligently. They worked long hours and were exceedingly thorough. I was tremendously impressed with the whole exercise, and it was a good rehearsal, as it were, for us. I need not mention the pigswill factor, need I?

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr AHERN: I dare to on this occasion, just to draw to the attention of honourable members the fact the New Zealand scare occurred in a piggery which was feeding

swill. I understand that the New Zealand Government will now be pursuing a course of action similar to that taken by the Queensland Government in recent times. It is going to ban the feeding of pigswill.

I also thank the honourable member for Flinders for his support. Improved surveillance is now taking place in the Gulf of Carpentaria. There is an understanding of the potential for an exotic disease to intrude from Papua New Guinea or some other country. Because of that, there is now aerial surveillance of this area by the Federal Departments of Transport and Health, and this must be a substantial improvement over the previous situation.

The honourable member for Toowoomba North spoke about anthrax. I am advised that the powers under the Stock Act are considered adequate to control anthrax at the present time. The veterinary officers and inspectors are adequately trained in recognition and diagnostic procedures, and anthrax is not a disease included under the provisions of the Exotic Diseases in Animals Bill. In the opinion of my advisers, this matter is adequately covered under the present provisions of the Stock Act.

The debate tonight has been an extremely useful one. I thank honourable members for their constructive comments. Their views will be taken on board for consideration. I thank all honourable members for their support of the legislation.

Motion (Mr Ahern) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

Mr Akers (Pine Rivers) in the chair; Hon. M. J. Ahern (Landsborough—Minister for Primary Industries) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 7, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—Immediate notice of and separation of infected or suspected animal, carcass or animal product—

Dr SCOTT-YOUNG (10.42 p.m.): At the present time, this country has no facilities for accurate diagnosis of these exotic diseases. The United Kingdom has facilities at Pirbright, the United States has them at Plum Island, Holland has them at Lelystad and Germany has them at Tobingen. South Africa also has facilities at a place I cannot remember at the moment. If we are going to carefully protect our primary industries, I think that there should be more co-operation from the Commonwealth Government. Money should be provided to set up a viral laboratory, which is an expensive and large undertaking. As similar legislation is being introduced in the other States, we should ask the Commonwealth Government to use the Cocos (Keeling) Islands for this purpose. It was going to set up a most elaborate quarantine station. Surely we should be able to use the Commonwealth's money and know-how to set up a laboratory to test for different types of viral strains. I suggest that provision for it be incorporated in this legislation.

Mr AHERN: I am advised that there is currently under construction at Geelong in Victoria a high-security laboratory to research animal viruses. It will open by 1984, and it will provide the best high-security research premises available anywhere in the world. A lot of work has gone into it and I think the honourable member's suggestion will see realisation in that facility—I certainly hope so. It is something that has been sought for a long time by the animal industries of this country. I look forward to the operation of that facility which will provide the ability for research for the future control of these diseases of the very highest standard.

Dr Scott-Young: Is that facility under Commonwealth or State control?

Mr AHERN: It is under Commonwealth control.

Clause 8, as read, agreed to.

Clause 9—Quarantine zone—

Mr SCOTT (10.46 p.m.): I know of the very good job that officers of the Minister's department are doing in the Torres Strait which, without any doubt, is an area of prime concern. Could the Minister spell out what liaison has occurred with the Government of Papua New Guinea? The Torres Strait is a frontier area in the continual concern for screw worm fly. This clause gives control over ingress and egress and that sort of thing. No doubt this would require close co-operation with the Government of Papua New Guinea in the event of that area being classed as a quarantine zone.

Mr AHERN: It is my understanding that an excellent co-operation exists with the Papua New Guinea authorities and that the CSIRO has been carrying out research in that area. I think the honourable member might be referring to the concept that we have been discussing at Australian Agricultural Council level—a livestock free buffer zone in the Cape York Peninsula.

In an endeavour to create a mechanism for isolation from any potential ingress of screw worm fly from Papua New Guinea we have tried to create at the top of Cape York Peninsula a livestock-free buffer zone so that if there is an invasion of screw worm fly into that area there will not be any host animals on which they can survive. That program is proceeding, but I am unable to give a time frame for it. It will give a very real protection from a potential invasion of screw worm fly.

I am advised that there is excellent consultation with the Papua New Guinea authorities and that they have been co-operating with the CSIRO researchers in the area. Frankly, I have been impressed with the consultative machinery that exists between Federal and State officers in relation to this particular program. There is absolutely no

problem at a professional level, and at Australian Agricultural Council meetings I have been impressed with the thorough and very professional mechanisms of consultation that exist.

Mr SCOTT: I appreciate those comments but I am thinking not of an invasion of screw worm fly but of an outbreak of something more virulent. I am thinking in terms of the perhaps unacknowledged movement of people from New Guinea and the migration problem in that area. Under the provisions of the Bill attempts would be made to control the movements of people from the area, I am talking of people, not the buffer zone, although I was pleased to hear the Minister's remarks on that. In the case of an outbreak of a more virulent nature, control would be needed over the movement of people, and I do not think that that is either spelt out or touched upon in the clause. I realise that it probably is not in the State legislation. I think the Minister has given a clear indication that consultation is going on.

Mr AHERN: It would be my understanding that adequate provision exists under this legislation for us to have the necessary powers to carry out the enactment of a quarantine zone that would be required for an outbreak. The resources that might be required in an outbreak would be considerable. We would be hopeful of co-operation between Federal and State authorities to provide the necessary resources to meet the situation as it arose. I know that there is the dreadful problem of the tyranny of distance in the area. That is a big problem, but we would hope that at least we had adequate powers under this legislation to adequately deal with it.

Clause 9, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 10 to 12, as read, agreed to.

Clause 13—Unauthorized movement of animals etc.—

Dr SCOTT-YOUNG (10.51 p.m.): I would like to direct a question to the Minister. Some animals, such as horses, will not get foot and mouth disease. How do those animals get on for moving in and out of an area? Are they quarantined, too?

Mr AHERN: As I indicated in my second-reading speech, provision is made for that to occur. Some exotic diseases do not affect, say, horses. Newcastle disease, for instance, does not affect horses, which are not vectors. So there will be provisions under the legislation to exempt the movement of those animals in those circumstances. I understand that the legislation adequately covers that.

Clause 13, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 14 to 28, as read, agreed to.

Clause 29—Compensation—

Mr WRIGHT (10.52 p.m.): One accepts the rigid controls that have been set in

this legislation. One realises, too, that they must be linked with appropriate penalties—but then, in turn, with reasonable compensation. I refer members to clause 29 and take the point that, when conditions are set down as to when compensation is to be paid, one has to take it for granted that if those conditions do not prevail then compensation is not available. I develop this point by referring also to clause 28, under which a Minister may notify dates of outbreak and the end of an outbreak. The Bill goes on in clause 29 to state that when "any animal or property which pursuant to an order made or given under the authority of this Act or the Stock Act 1915-1981 is destroyed during the period of the outbreak notified pursuant to section 28, for the purpose of controlling, eradicating or preventing the spread of an exotic disease specified in the notification" compensation will be available.

If a notification has not taken place and animals have been destroyed or have died prior to that notification, should not compensation be available if it can be shown that those animals died because of the disease that is then found to have been an exotic disease and declared under the Bill? It could be overcome, I suppose, if that declaration were retrospective, but I cannot find anything in the Bill that gives any type of power or right to the Minister to make such a declaration retrospectively. In the first instance the Minister might advise us whether or not that is so, or am I right in assessing this and saying that if animals do die before the notification—that is, the actual date set down and gazetted—then no compensation will be applicable?

Mr AHERN: It is my understanding that we will have adequate power to view each particular circumstance and to pay where we think it is worthy in the circumstances.

Many of the provisions relating to compensation have been worked out in consultation with federal officers. Because of the immense costs that may be incurred as a result of any outbreak of this type, it is necessary to have arrangements for sharing the cost. For example, if an extensive slaughter-out policy is effected, an immense amount of compensation might be involved. Therefore, the Federal Government has been very much involved in the detailing of this piece of legislation.

I really cannot understand the honourable member's concern. Where the Minister's notification is required, surely the Minister will then be in a position to judge the circumstances of each outbreak. It may well be that no notification will be given.

Mr Wright: If no notification is given, there will be no compensation?

Mr AHERN: Correct. It might well be that, because of the judgment on a particular outbreak, no compensation will be payable because of the history of the infection. For

example, if it was decided that a party imported semen which, having been used on his property, created a disease—

Mr Moore: Illegally imported.

Mr AHERN: If it was illegally imported semen which caused a disease that led to the destruction of the animals, under this legislation the cost would be his. Surely it is not equitable that someone should break the law by importing a live product, infect his own animals, and then expect the taxpayers to pay for it. That is not on, and it is not provided for under the legislation.

One of the flexibilities of the legislation is that the Minister has to notify. Surely the intention of the legislation is that where a slaughter-out policy is effected in the public interest, compensation will be due and payable. The Minister will review the circumstances of the case and ensure that parties who lose their stock through no fault of their own are compensated by the Australian taxpayers in the national interest.

As I said, I really cannot see the reason for the honourable member's concern. The flexibility is there. It is clear that the intention of the legislation is to give the Minister that capability. Obviously, that flexibility would be exercised, and I cannot see the problem. Perhaps the honourable member might like to amplify it further.

Mr Wright: I shall.

Mr AHERN: Frankly, I see enough flexibility in the legislation to ensure that someone who unwittingly, through no fault of his own, is the victim of a slaughter-out policy receives adequate compensation. That is the intention of the legislation; that is how it will operate. No Minister in Australia would attempt to deny anyone that compensation without good reason.

Mr WRIGHT: I cannot accept the point that the Minister has made. If a person contributes to the problem, clause 31 clearly states that there shall be no compensation; in fact, he can have charges laid against him, and the cost of eradicating the disease can be a charge by the Crown against him. I cannot see that that is the answer. If a person contributes to the problem, it is clear that he will not receive compensation under clause 31.

I question why it is specifically laid down that there must be notification periods. The Minister has said that if it is not within the notification period, no compensation is payable. He also hinted that there could be a massive cost to the State or to the Crown. I accept that. If a disease breaks out, we accept that the public will have to pay because of the compensation clauses in the Bill.

However, I say to the Minister, with all due respect, that his observations do not stand up in law. It is what the Act says that will be binding. If a person does lose out, and if animals die prior to a notification

period and no notification is given, he will not receive any compensation. Although the Minister says the provision is flexible, it does not read that way to me.

Mr AHERN: I am advised that the capacity is there for the Minister to predate the notification, so the problem does not exist.

Clause 29, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 30 to 48, and schedules, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr Ahern, by leave, read a third time.

QUEENSLAND TOURIST AND TRAVEL CORPORATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. J. A. ELLIOTT (Cunningham—Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation Act 1979 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Elliott, read a first time.

SECOND READING

Hon. J. A. ELLIOTT (Cunningham—Minister for Tourism, National Parks, Sport and The Arts) (11.3 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

When the Tourist and Travel Corporation Act 1979 was being considered by this House, it was made clear that every endeavour was then being made to protect the rights of those public servants then about to be seconded as such to the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation and who would be required to elect by 1 August 1981, whether they wished to continue after that date as employees of the corporation or remain with the Public Service in some appropriate department.

In 1979 it was not envisaged that the Act could be deficient in regard to covering one possible employment situation, consideration of which could seriously affect those public servants in making the election referred to earlier.

It is now intended that this situation should be rectified by this Bill, which is in effect a machinery measure designed to allow those officers to make their election determination fully informed as to all the implications of their future under such election.

As I have stated, the Act presently requires that those public servants now seconded to the Tourist and Travel Corporation (and who have all the experience and knowledge acquired during their service with the former Queensland Government Tourist Bureau) must elect by 1 August 1981, whether they wish to remain as officers of the corporation after that date or return to the Public Service in some other capacity.

Many are reluctant to make the election to stay with the corporation because, while the Act provides they should continue as contributors to the Public Service Superannuation Fund, it does not cover the situation where at any date after 1 August 1981 they could be retrenched or dismissed by the corporation, thus forfeiting their security of employment as public servants and the superannuation benefits they would expect on retirement.

With this shadow hanging over the heads of these people and their future in this area unprotected, the corporation could well lose the services of over half of its experienced officers, with the Public Service Board having the concomitant problems of deploying them throughout other Public Service departments. The situation of the corporation could be well imagined in that eventuality.

The purpose of this amendment is to create a climate whereby public servants could make an election to stay with the corporation knowing that, should the corporation (which after 1 August will operate as an independent employer) retrench them or dismiss them for offences which may or may not have warranted dismissal under the Public Service Act, they would be immediately readmitted to the Public Service.

It is not expected that, in the event, there will be many such retrenchments or dismissals but the corporation and the Public Service Board are of the view that prior to officers making their election they should have this reassurance that the rights to which they thought they were entitled when the Act was first introduced have in fact been now statutorily established.

In the event of an officer's being retrenched or dismissed and returned to the Public Service, the Public Service Board would examine the offence in the case of dismissal and, if it were one which would warrant Public Service dismissal, take that action accordingly. If it did not warrant Public Service dismissal the officer's behaviour and conduct would still be monitored for a period.

It is pointed out that, if an officer had committed an offence as an employee of the corporation of sufficient seriousness to warrant Public Service dismissal and is then readmitted to the Public Service and then dismissed, he would still retain the right of appeal against that decision which he would not have had as an employee of the corporation.

Where officers commit minor offences while employees of the corporation and are disciplined for them (short of dismissal) and perhaps subsequently readmitted to the Public Service for some other reason, for example, retrenchment, those offences would not be held against them on their return to the Public Service as they would have already been punished once for them.

In the event of any officers being readmitted to the Public Service, the Act provides that they would bring with them such leave credits as had accumulated during their time with the corporation.

The foregoing is covered by three simple amendments to the 1979 Act and the Bill is, in effect, a machinery one.

With the Bill becoming law before 1 August those public servants presently seconded to the corporation will be able, as previously stated, to make an election to stay with the corporation with the knowledge that, excepting in cases of major misconduct, their security of employment and superannuation entitlements will be protected whilst employees of the corporation. In the light of this knowledge it is anticipated that the very great proportion of those public servants will make a positive election to stay with the corporation.

The measure is a valid one. It is one which will rectify an anomalous situation not foreseen at the time of the original Act's introduction. It is one which will be of tremendous assistance to the corporation and the Public Service Board, and it is expected that it will result in a very great proportion of the corporation's present Public Service staff electing to give their experienced and enthusiastic services to the corporation for the rest of their working lives.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Warburton, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. A. WHARTON (Burnett—Leader of the House): I move—

“That the House do now adjourn.”

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr SCOTT (Cook) (11.10 p.m.): When I first entered this Parliament, one of the first matters on which I spoke was northern development. I recall that at the time of the 1977 election campaign the lights in the northern development office went out. Northern development was a campaign issue of some significance in the North.

The seat of Cook changed hands after the 1977 election. That seemed to stir up a lot of National Party supporters. All they could talk about was racism. But at that time nothing was done about northern development; it simply lapsed. There was no Minister responsible for it and no action was

taken. In the run up to the 1980 election, northern development again did not rate a mention except in so far as it was made an issue by the Labor Party. We campaigned on the issue, as we have always done.

There were some very complacent people on the other side. The former member for Mourilyan (Mrs Kippin) was an extremely complacent member who forget her electorate. She did nothing about it. The member for Townsville West, the former Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism, was another complacent member. In fact, the whole party was complacent about an important subject.

Where are those people now? Mrs Kippin was beaten by an extremely hard worker, Bill Eaton, who will remain in this Chamber for a long time. I listened with great interest to his maiden speech. It was an extremely good speech, made almost without reference to notes. Mr Hooper was beaten by my colleague, Geoff Smith, who will also remain in this Chamber for a long time and do a very good job.

There was a quite high vote in the Far North for the Labor Party, and the reason for this was that the Government had overlooked the important issue of northern development. I might add in passing that there was a big swing to Labor in Cook.

In a very belated way the Government has now recognised the importance of northern development and has created a new ministry of Northern Development. But where does the new Minister (Mr Bird) live? He lives in Brisbane! I can envisage the new style of northern development. When the Minister feels like a holiday in the sunny North, he will gather some of his parliamentary colleagues or departmental officers and go for a trip. And that will be northern development! I warn the Government that it will lose even more seats in the North if it does not mend its ways.

The occasionally vocal member for Flinders devoted quite a large portion of his maiden speech to complaining about the cost of construction and housing in the North. He has certainly done nothing about it in the intervening period.

Mr KATTER: I rise to a point of order. There has been an accusation that I have done nothing about housing. That is entirely erroneous. It is a reflection upon me and I ask the honourable member to withdraw the statement.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Flinders finds the words offensive and asks that they be withdrawn.

Mr SCOTT: I make an unqualified withdrawal.

The honourable member for Barron River can be referred to in exactly the same vein as those former members to whom I referred. He is another totally incompetent member. In his speech during the Address-in-Reply debate he referred to the lack of education

facilities in the North. Education is an important part of the development of any society, but all we heard was criticism of his Government because nothing was being done in his electorate.

He also criticised his own Government over the condition of roads in the North. If there is anything that will lead to the development of the North it is the provision of improved services, not only in education but also roads and rail facilities. One thing that is needed to develop the North is a lowering of freight costs, and this can be achieved only if the Government takes note of that need and makes a decision to do something about it.

So the National Party has had its warning. It has been the dominant party in this House for a very long time, but its future is limited. Because it is doing nothing worth while in this State, it will not last too much longer.

In my speech in the Address-in-Reply debate I referred to the fact that the Government is concerned only about the major coal-mining companies. Bauxite is being mined at Weipa. Anything that is done at Weipa is done by Comalco, not by the Queensland Government. All the Government is concerned about is ripping the coal out of this State, not developing it. The so-called flow-on that is supposed to come through to the working people of this State is not happening, and the people are very much aware of it.

The Government has had its warning. Seats in the Far North were lost because the Government is doing nothing for it. More seats will be lost at the next election for the very same reason.

(Time expired.)

TELEX MACHINES

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise) (11.15 p.m.): I wish to bring to the attention of the House a racket that has come to my knowledge on the Gold Coast, and which is probably quite widespread throughout most of the electorates of this State.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: If the honourable member listens he will probably find that many businesses in his electorate are also affected.

I refer to the use of telex machines in businesses throughout the State. I am sure most members appreciate the importance of telex machines. Telexes have revolutionised the accommodation industry, the reservations industry and the car-rental industry, and they play a large part in businesses, both large and small, throughout this State.

Over the last couple of years a series of false and phoney international telex directory accounts have been circulated in this State. They are being circulated again at the present time. I draw the attention of the House to a document that arrived on my desk the other day, following complaints from several

of my constituents. It is called the "International Telex Directory—World Telex Trust". Underneath it reads—

"Telex International—Listing in part Australia of 1981 World Edition, Delivery May 81."

It goes on to say—

"Payment of the entry fee to be made either by bank transfer to account World Telex Trust Migros Bank Zurich/Switzerland or by cheque remittance to the order of World Telex Trust."

Mr Davis: Have you got the account?

Mr **BORBIDGE**: Yes, I have. This account that has been submitted as a pro forma account then seeks \$282. For payment within 15 days there is a 3 per cent discount amounting to \$8.50, leaving an amount payable of \$273.50.

My complaint is that this account and others like it look official, as they are obviously meant to look. On the back of the document this appears—

"In the event of any error being made there will be no refund of payment, yet a free entry will be included in the subsequent year's edition.

"Uncancelled entries are automatically repeated in the respective subsequent edition. Notice of cancellation must be given until end of the respective calendar year."

It goes on to try to extort money from businesses in this State. It would be very easy—and it was very easy in this particular case—for the receptionist who attends to the accounts to send off a cheque for \$290-odd to this phoney bunch. It is a shocking and shabby way of soliciting business.

There are other companies involved. They call themselves International Telex Directory and World Telex Trust. One mob even calls itself Telkom. The accounts are for amounts up to \$300 and \$400. There is a great danger that many people might be caught unawares by them.

The Overseas Telecommunications Commission advises that there is no official international telex directory. All international telex numbers are in fact available through the Overseas Telecommunications Commission free of charge. I believe that the tactics being used by this company and other companies should be investigated by the Consumer Affairs Bureau. The bureau has looked at it in the past and it has struck problems because it is an offshore operation.

Mr Burns: What about free enterprise?

Mr **BORBIDGE**: Free enterprise has been caught by offshore companies. This is an area of great concern. I bring it to the attention of the House and I hope that the Government may consider taking appropriate action.

SUGAR BOARD PUBLICATION "SUGAR"

Mrs **NELSON** (Aspley) (11.20 p.m.): I rise to speak about a publication of the Queensland Sugar Board called "Sugar", which seeks to present a good image of a product which has been found, if taken in high consumption, to be dangerous to humans.

Very recently on a radio program in this city a representative of the Sugar Board made quite extraordinary statements about the virtues of sugar. This booklet also extols the virtues of sugar, and that is fair enough. There is no argument about extolling the virtues of sugar as a product. There is no argument about the Sugar Board's spending \$100,000 to publicise the product.

What one has to look at is its responsibility in the area of the booklet that it has produced and why in fact the booklet was produced. The telling argument comes when one looks at page 12 of the booklet, which reveals that there has been a significant decline in the consumption of household sugar. In fact, the only reason that the sugar market has maintained its position is that there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of sugar in manufactured foods. It is my opinion that many consumers do not know that they are in fact taking increased sugar in their diet because they are unaware of the sugar content in the manufactured foods that they buy. I hope that legislation brought into this House this session will overcome that.

I submit that the reason for the diminished intake of sugar in household use is that people are aware of the very real dangers to their health if they consume too much sugar. Page 9 of the booklet mentions dental health and outlines a very strong case that sugar has absolutely nothing to do with dental caries which, on any evidence available through the Dental Association of Australia, the AMA, and many other organisations, is simply fiction. The booklet goes on to speak about obesity and the fact that it has no relationship to a high consumption of sugar. Through carbohydrates it obviously has a clear relationship to a high consumption of sugar.

I wish also to briefly speak of heart disease. There is significant medical evidence available through the AMA and research bodies in Australia to prove quite conclusively that a high dosage of sugar has an influence on coronary disease.

Most tragically I regret to say that the paragraph in this booklet concerning diabetes mellitis, commonly known as sugar diabetes, also seeks to stress the fact that diabetes has nothing to do with the consumption of sugar, when in fact it is another well known medical fact that an excessive consumption of sugar can lead to diabetes mellitis.

I do not seek the withdrawal of this publication. I hope that an organisation that seeks to improve the sales of its product—and it has a legitimate right in our

society to do that—would act responsibly when it prints such a publication. Any product for human consumption in our society which is approved by the Department of Primary Industries should be guaranteed as safe to be consumed in moderation by any citizen as long as he does not have hereditary diabetes. For this organisation to put out a booklet which tacitly lies about dental care, diabetes, heart disease and obesity, apart from coronary disease, is immoral. It is wrong because it will alienate those very people in the community, such as housewives, whose support the organisation seeks.

Mr Scott: You can tell who signed it, of course.

Mrs NELSON: Yes, I can read C-a-m-m. and I am quite aware of who the signatory is.

I have no argument with the sugar industry in Queensland, but the industry must be seen to be responsible if it wishes to present an argument in favour of its product. It must be honest. The industry wants its sales to increase in household use but it is simply misrepresenting medical facts, and trying to overlook the fact that a high consumption of sugar will lead to significant increases in disease.

An Opposition Member: Would you say that outside the House?

Mrs NELSON: I would be more than happy to say it outside the Chamber. I believe that the industry will suffer as a result of this booklet.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN TOWNSVILLE

Mr SMITH (Townsville West) (11.25 p.m.): It is very difficult to take seriously the Government's stated intention of doing everything in its power to combat all forms of crime when the matter of proper housing of the Townsville Police Force has been the subject of neglect for such a long period. On 27 February an editorial appeared in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" entitled "Impediments of Justice". On the previous day there was an article entitled "Justice in Jeopardy". The headings to those two articles probably reflect accurately the concern and feeling expressed by people in Townsville, particularly those people closely concerned with some of the shortcomings in the area of law enforcement.

Turning first to the situation with respect to police numbers—three years ago, a study by the Police Force Planning and Research Department showed that at the time Townsville required a further 30 to 35 policemen. The State Government has seen fit to ignore that recommendation and Townsville has not received any significant increase in staffing levels in spite of the very significant growth and demands on the services of those officers stationed in the Townsville area. A recent study by that same department revealed that the desired staffing level for

Townsville would now mean an increase of a further 55 police. For reasons best known only to the Government, nothing has been done, in spite of firm commitments made, to alleviate the conditions under which the Townsville police work.

The conditions have been described as substandard and unhygienic, and are seen as a measure of the respect and confidence shown in the Police Force by the Queensland Government. Police feel that working under such conditions has a dehumanising effect on them and has sorely tried their dedication and morale. Promises have been made over a period of five years that a start on a new police station would be made, but still nothing has happened and Townsville police are justifiably becoming increasingly cynical whenever the subject of a new building is raised.

The previous member for Townsville West, the then Minister for Maritime Services and Tourism (the Hon. M. D. Hooper) in fact gave a firm election promise—and here I have the document—that a new \$2.5m building would be started in May this year.

Mr Akers: He isn't here to carry it out, is he?

Mr SMITH: The Government should still honour its promises.

I listened with great interest the other day when the Minister was speaking on proposed new buildings for police. While I heard that buildings for new police headquarters were scheduled for Broadbeach, Ipswich and Gladstone, Townsville again missed out. Another broken promise by the Government!

I have recently looked through the Townsville Police Station and I can only describe it as a rabbit warren in which very few people with an expectation of working under reasonable conditions would be prepared to carry out their duties for any length of time. The Queensland Government has recently missed an opportunity to take over Lowths Hotel, a multi-storey building only a stone's throw away from the existing police headquarters, which would have been eminently suitable as police headquarters for Townsville and the northern region. There have also been other opportunities, such as when the site of the old Wintergarden Theatre was offered—again only a stone's throw away from the existing police station.

The Police and public of Townsville wonder just how long these conditions will be allowed to continue. On the other hand in Walker Street there is a magnificent building complex that embraces the Supreme Court, the District Court and the Magistrates Courts. However, there are problems, particularly in the Magistrates Courts, where staff shortages are impeding the application of justice. This is in no way a reflection on the two full-time magistrates, Mr Davies and Mr Windmill. There is certainly an antiquated and slow way of taking evidence. It is unfair on the officers that they should have to perform their task without modern equipment.

It has become the norm in civil cases to experience delays of up to seven months on simple matters. This, surely, is not good enough. I understand that the staffing situation is so serious that the only way that criminal matters have been dealt with in a reasonable time in recent months was by cancelling all leave of the staff associated with the Magistrates Court and putting back the civil cases.

I have said before that Townsville has a magnificent building, and these courts were designed to include tape-recording facilities—equipment that was promised in the Governor's Opening Speech in 1976—but, because there are no recording or alternative reporting facilities, court hearings are still slowed down while evidence is recorded by a typist. Another unacceptable situation arises in that court recorders are flown in from Brisbane to attend the District and Supreme Court hearings. Perhaps the Justice Minister will investigate to determine why this work cannot be performed by staff recruited locally.

Although the delay in hearing criminal court cases has been kept down to a reasonable time, but only by putting civil cases further back, people who may be innocent are being kept in custody while they await trial. A further problem is that any delay in the hearing of cases, whether they be civil or criminal, will reduce the accuracy of the evidence presented.

(Time expired.)

SAFETY OF MOTOR-CYCLISTS

Mrs KYBURZ (Salisbury) (11.30 p.m.): I wish to make a plea for more driver education for motor cycle riders, and I make that plea having in mind particularly the very high road toll last week-end. A report in "The Courier-Mail" said that the road toll was an ugly reminder to motorists. It said that eight people were killed on Queensland roads on Saturday and Sunday, that four of those killed were riding motor cycles, and that six of those killed were under 25 years of age.

In my opinion, it is very important that more consideration be given to driver training. I am not referring particularly to motor cycle riders when I say that there ought to be three main changes. First, I think that motor cycle riders should be required by law to wear not only protective clothing but also a jacket that indicates clearly that they are on the road and ensures that they are visible. According to the Australian Bureau of Census and Statistics, latest research indicates that in many accidents involving motor cycles, the drivers of the cars concerned say that they did not see the motor cycle. I believe that motor-cyclists should wear, say, a yellow jacket. That is only one suggestion, of course. If some other honourable member can think of something better, well and good.

My second suggestion is that all riders of motor cycles should be forced to attend a course during their learning period, when their bikes must carry "L" plates. It ought to be a course for motor-cyclists similar to the defensive driving course for motorists. It is important that it be during the learning period, because that is when attitudes towards other road users become firmly fixed.

The third point is that drivers of motor vehicles should show more consideration for motor cycle riders and give them more room on the road. One can almost visualise drivers thinking, "He is only a bike rider. Let's push him off the road." Motor-cyclists are often pushed off towards the edge of the road and, as all honourable members are aware, that is an extremely dangerous position to be in when one is riding a bike. Many drivers of motor vehicles do not realise that motor cycle riders are very vulnerable.

I refer the House to a recent research report issued by the Road Safety Council of Queensland. It is an excellent report, and the first of its kind. Statistics in it reveal that the risk of death or fatal injury is 18 times higher for motor-cyclists than it is for drivers of motor vehicles. They are 18 times more vulnerable, and that is particularly important when one considers the youth of the riders.

Another table shows that motor cycle riders are more likely to be under the age of 25 years when a fatality occurs. There is a more gradual delineation of age in the case of drivers of motor vehicles. In other words, a higher proportion of young people are riding motor cycles and being involved in accidents. In addition, larger motor cycles are highly represented in cases in which fatalities occur. Therefore, the proposal that graduated licences be introduced has merit. The report issued by the Road Safety Council discusses the proposal and comes out against it, but it is in favour of driver education.

Another important factor that emerges from the statistics is that in the fatalities that occurred between 1975 and 1977, 40 per cent of the drivers were unlicensed. What is wrong with the system when 40 per cent of the riders involved in fatalities are riding while unlicensed? Of course, that does not take into account those who may be riding either while their licence is suspended or while they have only a learner's permit. It is time for tighter policing of the licensing system.

The other point that these statistics highlight concerns the fact that of 157 fatalities, 52 per cent of the cyclists had an alcohol blood level higher than average. That is very frightening. It is obvious that motor cycles and alcohol do not mix. I urge more education.

(Time expired.)

SOFTWOOD MILL, BEERBURRUM AREA

Mr FRAWLEY (Caboolture) (11.36 p.m.): On 10 December 1979, State Cabinet gave approval for the investigation of a proposal to build a \$200m mill in South-east Queensland to make softwood pulp mainly for profit—for export.

An Opposition Member: Profit!

Mr FRAWLEY: Profit also. To the ALP, "profit" is a dirty word.

Two companies, namely, Australian Paper Mills and MIM Holdings, and the SGIO, were involved in this proposal. The site of the proposed pulp mill is south of Beerburum, between the North Coast railway line and the Bruce Highway. Incidentally, it is in the electorate of Caboolture that I represent and will continue to represent for as long as I wish. It is somewhere near the border of the Caboolture and Landsborough Shires. It could well be in either Caboolture or Landsborough.

The mill will draw on the extensive softwood plantations of both APM and the Queensland Forestry Department in South-east Queensland and it will have a capacity of 150 million to 200 million tonnes a year.

Mr Underwood: Do you think Gympie should get it?

Mr FRAWLEY: No, I do not.

Production could begin towards the end of 1984. The Landsborough Shire Council wrote to me urging me to do everything in my power to see that the pulp mill is established south of Beerburum. The councillors of Landsborough are genuinely concerned about unemployment in the area. This mill could employ 1300 people during the construction stage, which would take about 18 months. When in full production, it could employ up to 1500 people, both on site in the forests and in the servicing industries. It would go a long way towards alleviating unemployment in the area between Caboolture and Caloundra. All the unemployed people in Caboolture are hoping that the Caboolture Shire Council supports the proposal to build the pulp mill.

Mr Akers: What are you going to do for water?

Mr FRAWLEY: We will get the water.

An Honourable Member: What about pollution?

Mr FRAWLEY: The honourable member need not worry about pollution. We will fix that up.

The Caboolture Shire Council is already employing a number of those who were unemployed on the construction of a sea wall on the Pumicestone Passage side of Bribie Island. By supporting a pulp mill south of Beerburum the council will certainly do a great deal more to alleviate

unemployment in the area. The Caboolture Chamber of Commerce is also behind the project, and it has put that in writing. The conservationists, of course, have already started to knock the project. Their cries that Pumicestone Passage will be polluted are absolute rubbish.

Mr Underwood: You said you didn't care about pollution.

Mr FRAWLEY: I do care. I will explain how it will be eliminated. Effluent will be taken by pipeline under Pumicestone Passage and discharged into the sea on the ocean side of Bribie Island.

In 1963 San Diego Bay in America was polluted. Because of all the metropolitan waste being pumped into it, it was a marine desert. Five councils got together, at a cost of about \$600m, to build a pipeline to carry all the sewage waste and effluent from the cities to cleanse San Diego Bay, and within 12 months it was full of marine life. That gives the lie to anyone who says that Pumicestone Passage will be polluted. The pipeline out to sea will get rid of all the effluent.

Mr Mackenroth: How far out to sea?

Mr FRAWLEY: Far enough out to get rid of the effluent and to ensure that it will not wash back on to the shore.

Any mill that is established will have to meet the requirements of the Water Quality Council and the Air Pollution Council. Investigations have been carried out at a cost of \$1.5 million, including an environmental study. It is all very well for the well-fed conservationists with jobs to knock this project. They do not care about people who are unemployed or those who are on the breadline. My advice to the unemployed is to eat a conservationist, as they would then get plenty of fat. The conservationists do not give a hoot about unemployment. They have knocked the project from the word "go".

Mr Underwood: What about the Bribie Island tourist industry?

Mr FRAWLEY: It will not affect the tourist industry in any way. The pollution will be taken out to sea. There will be no pollution of Bribie Island or Pumicestone Passage. That red herring is being drawn by the conservationists to try to stop this project. I believe the ALP is behind the obstruction. Members of the ALP pander to the conservationists.

Mrs Kyburz: The Communists?

Mr FRAWLEY: No, not the Communists. I do not intend to kick the Communist can. ALP members pander to the conservationists. They will do anything that they want. They are trying to stir them up in my electorate to oppose this project. They will not get away with it because we will not—I repeat "We will not"—let any group of ratbag conservationists stop this project.

Mr Mackenroth interjected.

Mr FRAWLEY: I am sorry to hear the honourable member for Chatsworth say that, because he and the honourable member for Everton are two of the most responsible men in the Labor Party and I predict a brilliant future for each of them.

Both Cabinet and this Government support the establishment of a pulp mill in South-east Queensland and I predict that it will be located south of Beerburrum.

(Time expired.)

Motion (Mr Wharton) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.41 p.m.
