Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 16 OCTOBER 1985

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Mr SPEAKER (Hon. J. H. Warner, Toowoomba South) read prayers and took the chair at 11 a.m.

AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS

Assent

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to inform the House that this day I presented to His Excellency the Governor the amendments to the Standing Orders which were adopted by this House on 19 September 1985, and that His Excellency was pleased, in my presence, to approve the same.

PAPERS

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

Report of the Minister for Education for the year 1984.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Orders in Council under the City of Brisbane Act 1924-1984 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1984.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Queensland Industry Development Corporation

Hon. Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier and Treasurer) (11.3 a.m.), by leave: I noted in a recent article in *The Courier-Mail* a suggestion that primary producers should consider setting up their own bank. In the light of that suggestion, I propose to inform members of the House of current progress towards the establishment of the Queensland Industry Development Corporation. In particular, I propose to outline—

the progress that has been made towards the establishment of the corporation;

the likely commencement date for the corporation; and

the activities that the corporation will undertake.

In regard to progress—legislation is currently being drafted, and will be introduced for approval during the current session of Parliament.

In the meantime, planning has begun on a number of matters relevant to the establishment of the corporation. These matters include—

development of appropriate financial practices and marketing strategies;

transitional arrangements for the transfer of staff and responsibilities from existing organisations to the corporation;

recruitment of staff; and

evaluation of needs in respect of accommodation, equipment and facilities.

Of most immediate importance is the selection of a general manager to head the corporation, and steps have been taken to ensure that a person with outstanding ability and performance is chosen for that role.

Although it is desirable that the corporation begin operations as soon as possible, it is even more important that the corporation be given the best possible foundation for its operations—both in terms of its legislation and the resources at its disposal. This requires careful planning and attention to detail. In these circumstances, and given the

intervention of the Christmas holdiay period, it is envisaged that the corporation will begin operations during the first half of 1986.

The objectives of the corporation will be to facilitate, encourage and promote the development and expansion of primary, secondary and tertiary industries in Queensland, with a view to enhancing economic growth and employment opportunities in the State. It will be established as a financial intermediary, its role being akin to that of a development banking institution. Its clients will include farmers, manufacturers, tourist developers, small-businessmen, exporters and other entrepreneurs. It will not provide cheque-account facilities but will accept deposits.

The corporation will be engaged in the business of borrowing money, advancing loans and making equity investments.

As I have already indicated, the scope of the corporation's financing activities will not be limited, but will encompass all industries and sectors of the Queensland economy.

The corporation will seek to encourage innovative or technology oriented investments in industries in which Queensland has particular skills, products or advantages to exploit. Emphasis will be placed on those projects that are consistent with the State's development objectives and offer the best prospects for increased activity in the State's existing industries or an expansion of the State's economic base—for example, through the development of new products or processes or expansion into new markets.

The corporation will operate on a commercial basis, and will fill a gap in existing capital markets. Finance will be directed to those projects or proposals that are potentially viable but lack the necessary capital or security to meet normal banking criteria. In addition, the corporation will assume the responsibilities and activities of the Agricultural Bank, the Rural Reconstruction Board and other rural finance schemes, as well as the activities of the Industries Assistance Board.

Trump Card (Australia) Pty Ltd

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.7 a.m.), by leave: I take this opportunity to bring to the attention of the House, and through it the general community, the activities of Trump Card (Australia) Pty Ltd operating under the name Trump Card International.

This company is incorporated in South Australia and is in the process of setting up its operations in Queensland. It claims to provide a discount buying service to people who purchase a membership card for $100 per annum. It has also established a marketing system whereby distributors are recruited who may purchase membership applications for resale to the public. The company is promoting the advantages of its buying service and the profits to be made by distributors.

In my recent *White Paper on Legislation Proposals Relating to the Pre-payment of Monies for Goods and Services,* I drew attention to the difficulties experienced by some people in relation to pre-payments to fitness centres and video outlets. It is necessary that potential card-holders of Trump Card (Australia) Pty Ltd be made aware of the implications in making pre-payments.

As I am concerned that the company's selling scheme may be a pyramid selling scheme under the Pyramid Selling Schemes (Elimination) Act 1973-1981, and therefore illegal, I have requested the Pyramid Selling Schemes Elimination Committee to carry out a full investigation of the scheme. In the meantime, persons contemplating entering into an agreement with the company should exercise the utmost caution, and should seek independent legal advice before proceeding.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate—Leader of the Opposition) (11.9 a.m.), by leave: Yesterday morning, in this House, the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs (Mr Lester) made comments that I found both offensive and disgusting.

It should be made known that only one hour before the Minister made his scurrilous, unfounded accusations, he met with Trades and Labor Council officers Mr Dempsey and Mr Hamilton at Comalco House. Not once during those private discussions did this lamentable excuse for a Minister mention to Mr Dempsey and Mr Hamilton that he intended only one hour later to denigrate them in the Parliament.

Mr LESTER: I rise to a point of order. I find the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition offensive. The discussions had nothing to do with what the Leader of the Opposition is talking about. Furthermore, I have a transcript in front of me from the ABC program on Monday last which proves that the various comments that I made were only a repetition of comments made by the union-leaders in fighting amongst themselves. I ask that the remarks be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister finds the words offensive and asks that they be withdrawn.

Mr WARBURTON: In deference to you, Mr Speaker, I withdraw that reference to the Minister.

I repeat, for the benefit of those honourable members who may not have heard it, that not less than an hour previously the Minister spoke to those two gentlemen. Then he came into the House and denigrated them and me. As I indicated, he skulked into this place, something like a mongrel dog——

Mr LESTER: I rise to a point of order. I ask that the comments about me be withdrawn totally. I point out, further, that the Leader of the Opposition is getting right off the point of the discussion.

Mr WARBURTON: In deference to you, Mr Speaker, I do so.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I point out to honourable members that, under Standing Order No. 120, personal reflections are not allowed. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to desist from casting them.

Mr WARBURTON: Unfortunately, the accusations made by the Minister were reported by the media. I have already labelled him as an industrial relations dunce. In the interests of industrial harmony in this State, he should be thrown out of office.

Mr LESTER: I rise to a point of order. I find offensive the remarks that have just been made about me by the Leader of the Opposition. I ask that he withdraw them.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Does the Leader of the Opposition withdraw those remarks?

Mr WARBURTON: Which words were they? Truly, I do not understand.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister finds the words used by the Leader of the Opposition offensive and asks that they be withdrawn.

Mr WARBURTON: Is that when I called him an industrial relations dunce? Does he want those words withdrawn?

Mr Lester: Yes.

Mr WARBURTON: In deference to you, Mr Speaker, I withdraw them.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Contribution to Australian Labor Party Redlands By-election Campaign

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs) (11.14 a.m.), by leave: In view of the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition and although I had no intention of pursuing the matter further in Parliament today, I have sought and been given leave to make a ministerial statement. Comments were made between me, Mr Dempsey and another man who asked that I not name him, so

I will not. The other man from the union movement who attended asked that he not be named as being there. The three of us discussed a number of points. None of them have I mentioned either in the Parliament or elsewhere, so the Leader of the Opposition is trying to double-deal.

I have with me a transcript of a statement made by the ETU Strike Action Committee spokesman (Bernie Neville), who said on ABC *News Day* on Monday, 14 October—

> "Well, I was reading a report in one of the Sunday papers yesterday and we have the report that Hughie Hamilton says the SEQEB dispute is all over and here is a man that is part of the TLC executive and we'll have reports back that a meeting took place—"

another car-park meeting—

> "last Wednesday evening and at that meeting, it was voted to give $10,000 to the Redlands by-election campaign—that is, the ALP's candidate down there—with the promise of a further $10,000 if needed."

I repeat that this was said on radio. This is what he said, not what I said.

The transcript continues—

> "We've also been told that that $20,000 will be coming out of the TLC fighting fund."

Mr WARBURTON: I rise to a point of order. Are we to take it that this is a result of the Minister's direct contact with Mr Bernie Neville, because I understand that they were seen talking together yesterday?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The Minister rose to make a personal explanation. I would rather that he proceeded to make a ministerial statement. I believed previously that the Minister was making a ministerial statement, and I ask him now to do so.

Mr LESTER: I sought leave, and leave was given.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I thought it was a personal explanation. There is far too much noise in the Chamber.

Mr LESTER: For the information of the Leader of the Opposition, I point out that I was not seen talking to Bernie Neville yesterday. If the Australian Labor Party has certain faction splits, I cannot help that.

Further to the statement that I was making, I would like to point out something that has hurt the Opposition. What follows is simply what has been said—

> "We've also been told that that $20,000 will be coming out of the TLC fighting fund. Now, surely that fighting fund was set up and should be used for the workers. The TLC, as a union body, should get its priorities right. Its priorities are to those workers and not for the ALP campaign."

That was said by Mr Neville. I have quoted from a transcript that is available. Members of the Opposition can obtain it, as I did. It is as simple as that.

I now wish to quote what Mr Dempsey said on the same day in the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's news bulletin.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much noise in the Chamber.

Mr LESTER: In answer to a question, Mr Dempsey said—

> "The position is that there are three funds that are operating during the course of the current dispute."

I emphasise that he said "three funds". The transcript further states—

> "One is a national fund controlled by the ACTU for general campaigning purposes."

I do not quite know what they would be. The transcript continues—

> "The second one is controlled by the TLC and the third one is controlled by a committee of members of the ETU purely for the SEQEB workers.
>
> What's got to be realised is that it may well be a political decision is necessary and we see it as being beneficial for the Labor Party to have a win in Redlands and that in the long term could certainly help the current difficulties which people in SEQEB are having."

What I have said through you, Mr Speaker, to the Leader of the Opposition is not anything I have concocted. It is all in the transcript, and the statement was made by the union leaders themselves, not by me.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (11.18 a.m.), by leave: Following a speech I made in the Parliament yesterday, I received a telephone call—an STD telephone call—today. The man on the phone said that he was telephoning from Sydney. I do not know who the person was.

The man told me that when he returned from Sydney, he would get me. I cannot use the other words he used because they are unparliamentary, but I assure the House that threats of any kind made by individuals will not stop me raising matters in this House when I believe that they should be raised.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

Questions submitted on notice were answered as follows—

1. Tamborine-Oxenford Road

Mr WARBURTON asked the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing—

With reference to an item in *The Weekend Australian* of 12-13 October, in which the Albert Shire Clerk, Mr T. Moore, said, when asked about the use of Maralinga Pty Ltd machinery to construct the new Oxenford-Tamborine road, that his understanding of the arrangements was that Maralinga provided the equipment as part payment and also paid some cash as Maralinga's contribution towards construction cost—

(1) Is Mr Moore's understanding correct?

(2) If so, what amount of money is identified as being for the use of the Maralinga machinery?

(3) What was the total contribution towards the road construction by Maralinga?

(4) If Mr Moore's understanding is not correct, what are the full details regarding the hiring or leasing of Maralinga machinery and what are the full terms of hire of the equipment?

(5) Who was responsible for the decision to use Maralinga machinery on the project?

(6) Was the decision made by the Main Roads Department, for which he has ministerial responsibility, or the Albert Shire Council?

Answer—

(1) Maralinga's contribution to the works was made up entirely of plant hire value, plus the supply of materials ordered by the Albert Shire Council.

(2) The value of the plant hire from Maralinga was approximately $61,000, based on hire rates approved by the Albert Shire Council.

(3) The total contribution by Maralinga towards the cost of the road construction was approximately $267,000.

(4 to 6) On this project, the Albert Shire Council was the constructing authority for the Main Roads Department. As such, the Albert Shire Council was responsible for arranging supply of materials and plant required for the job. The hire rates negotiated and approved by the Albert Shire Council were competitive for the area.

2. Harbour Dues, Rosslyn Bay

Mr BURNS asked the acting Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services—

(1) Why are fishermen unloading prawns, fillets of fish and shucked scallops at Rosslyn Bay being subjected to a charge 30 times the amount being charged for other cargo and passengers?

(2) Is the rate 3c per kilogram or $30 per tonne for fishermen unloading the above items, whilst other cargo, including luxury goods, is $1 per tonne?

(3) Do passengers pay 10c to cover both arrival and departure which, if calculated on a 50-kg person each way, would mean 100 kg for 10c as against fish at 3c per kilo?

(4) Are all vessels moored at the tourist terminal free of the mooring fees levied against fishermen?

(5) Is the Harbours Corporation of Queensland currently demanding $28,000 from the Queensland Fish Board for non-payment of a fish-product levy?

(6) Why are fishermen being discriminated against in this way when they are a true small-business, free enterprise group, which the Government pretends to support?

Answer—

(1) The fishing industry is the predominant user of the harbour, and it is equitable that the industry support the maintenance and management of the facilities that it enjoys. The charges, introduced by by-law in January 1981, were set at a level which was calculated to draw, from the fishing industry, an equitable share of the overall harbour costs. The calculation had nothing to do with comparable weights of prawns, other cargo and people.

(2) The harbour dues are—

prawns, fillets of fish and shucked scallops—3c per kilogram;

fish—2c per kilogram;

unshucked scallops—1c per kilogram;

passengers—10c per head; and

general cargo—$1 per tonne.

(3) The passenger harbour due is 10c per passenger taken on board a tourist vessel.

(4) Vessels occupying Crown moorings in Rosslyn Bay Harbour are charged a mooring fee. Private vessels occupying their own privately constructed moorings are not charged a mooring fee but do pay lease rental for the area occupied by the facility. Further, tourist vessels loading passengers at the private tourist terminals do pay the passenger levy of 10c per head.

(5) The Harbours Corporation of Queensland is seeking payment of arrears from the fishing industry. Other harbour-users, who initially objected to the payment of harbour dues, have paid arrears or are being pursued for such payment.

(6) The fishing industry and/or fishermen are not discriminated against. Each class of harbour-user is being required to make a reasonable contribution towards the maintenance and management cost of the harbour. The immense capital investment in the breakwaters, reclamations, roadways, channels and services are provided by the State without any charge to users of the harbour.

3. Interruption of Electricity Supply by Municipal Officers Association

Sir WILLIAM KNOX asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to the period during and after the electricity strike in February when members of a trade union (Municipal Officers Association) turned down Queensland and northern New South Wales power—

(1) How many employees of the electricity-generation authorities attended their place of work and reduced the power supply?

(2) Were these employees identified?

(3) What action was taken to discipline these employees for failing to carry out their normal duties?

(4) How many members of the MOA have been dismissed as a result of this neglect of duty?

(5) What are the current hours of work of MOA members employed by the electricity-generating authorities?

Answer—

(1) The Queensland Electricity Commission has 526 employees in what are classified as operations positions. Not all are members of the Municipal Officers Association, as it is only one of five unions with members employed as operators.

(2 to 4) Those employees on duty at the time of power supply reductions were identified from attendance records. This resulted in legal proceedings against operators being instituted in the Supreme Court of Queensland for an injunction under the Industrial (Commercial Practices) Act. Further legal proceedings were also instituted against operators for breaching the state of emergency proclamation. No dismissals have occurred.

(5) Thirty-six and a quarter hours per week.

4. Profits and Losses, Metropolitan Regional Abattoir Board

Sir WILLIAM KNOX asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) For each of the financial years ended June 1975 to June 1985, what was the profit or loss of the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir Board?

(2) Over the same period, when were increases in charges by the board made and what was the magnitude of those increases?

Answer—

(1) The operating profit or loss at the Metropolitan Regional Abattoir for the periods specified are as follows—

Financial Year	Profit	Loss
	$	$
1974-75	. .	879,704
1975-76	. .	412,805
1976-77	. .	541,345
1977-78	296,314	. .
1978-79	539,983	. .
1979-80	. .	792,916
1980-81	. .	1,755,703
1981-82	. .	1,256,454
1982-83	. .	1,307,867
1983-84	. .	1,894,555
1984-85	. .	1,831,707

Included in these figures from and including the 1976-77 financial year is the interest commitment of approximately $1,500,000 per annum on debenture loans associated with

the rebuilding of the new abattoir complex at Cannon Hill. To offset these operational losses, the Livestock and Meat Authority of Queensland has disposed of surplus land at Cannon Hill and these sales produced the following non-operating profits—

Financial Year	Amount
	$
1982-83	4,000,000
1983-84	1,752,570
1984-85	2,591,070

(2) The slaughtering fees and associated charges as prescribed in the by-laws were increased as from the dates indicated hereunder and by the amounts shown (the amount relates to the increase in the slaughtering fee for adult cattle over 120 kg dressed weight)—

Date of Increase	Amount of Increase
	$
28 October 1974	4.50
7 July 1975	3.15
3 May 1976	3.35
6 September 1976	2.10
20 March 1978	3.75
3 November 1980	3.00
6 July 1981	3.30
4 January 1982	4.70
3 January 1983	6.10
30 July 1984	4.70

5. Patients Comfort Fund, Eventide, Charters Towers

Mr MILLINER asked the Minister for Health—

(1) What is the present balance in the Patients Comfort Fund at Eventide in Charters Towers?

(2) What was the income to the fund for each of the last three years?

(3) What was the expenditure from the fund for each of the last three years?

(4) What were the major items of expenditure during those three years?

(5) Who is authorised to approve expenditure from the fund?

Answer—

(1) The balance of the Patients Comfort Fund fluctuates in that purchases are made regularly. The expenditure ranges from very small to large amounts.

(2 & 3) This information is not readily available.

(4) Items of significant value would include such things as a bus, an electric organ and recreational facilities.

(5) Expenditure from the fund is monitored in many ways, but ultimate accountability rests with the permanent head of the department and/or the Minister. All expenditure is subject to Government audit.

6. Mortgage and Rent Relief Scheme

Mr MILLINER asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

With reference to the mortgage and rent relief scheme—

(1) Is it a fact that the loan institution is required to make the initial application to the Queensland Housing Commission?

(2) Is he aware that no loan institution in Townsville was aware of that condition?

(3) What information about this scheme has been sent to loan institutions other than the one-page set of instructions given out recently after months of requests by these organisations?

(4) What is the number of bond guarantees through the Queensland Housing Commission in Townsville and the whole State?

(5) What is the number of defaulters for Townsville and the whole State?

(6) What is the amount expended on defaulters, either by non-payment of rent or damage?

(7) Who of the rent guarantees get rent subsidies and what is the number who receive rent relief only?

(8) How many of these people approaching the Queensland Housing Commission went through FEAT (Family Emergency Accommodation Scheme Townsville) in Townsville?

Answer—

(1) Yes. The application forms for mortgage relief are to be completed by both the mortgagee and the mortgagor. The mortgagee must recommend the borrower for assistance.

(2 & 3) Since its inception the scheme has received regular State-wide publicity by advertisements in all major Brisbane and regional newspapers. Letters, leaflets and application forms have been forwarded to all recognised home-lending institutions, shelters, refuges and crisis centres. All advertisements and leaflets display the Housing Commission telephone numbers to use to obtain more information and application forms. Further advertising is presently being arranged.

(4 to 6) At present, there are over 2 000 bond guarantees. An average of 80 per month fail, representing a pay-out of more than $23,000 per month. Incidence of failure is increasing. Statistics are not maintained on a regional basis.

(7) Currently, 433 families receive rent subsidy. All but a few obtain bond guarantees.

(8) A record is not maintained of applications for assistance received from any relief centre.

The honourable member should also note that FEAT has, in Townsville, five emergency and crisis houses supplied by the commission, and that another 12 are provided for other welfare organisations. More are to be purchased.

7. Privatisation of South East Queensland Electricity Board Appliance Shops

Mr McPHIE asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

As some time has now elapsed since the privatisation of the South East Queensland Electricity Board electrical appliance retail shops—

(1) How many shops were taken over by private enterprise?

(2) Has the move proved to be successful?

Answer—

(1) Seven sales centres have been taken over by former SEQEB staff. Seven sales centres will be taken over by Retrovision Queensland Pty Ltd and its members. One sales centre—that at Coorparoo—has been closed. What will happen with three centres is still under negotiation. In all centres that have been sold, or which are still under negotiation, all former SEQEB employees have been, or will be, retained by the purchasers. In addition, the SEQEB Albion bulk store and all stock have been sold for cash.

(2) Overall the move has proved to be very successful. Staff members are satisfied with the arrangements made. The level of service to the public in the various localities has been maintained in the take-over arrangements and there have been no adverse public comments. SEQEB management considers that the privatisation process is highly successful.

8. Technical and Further Education Development, Toowoomba Showground

Mr McPHIE asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposed new technical and further education college development on the old showground site in Toowoomba—

(1) What is the present position regarding funding for the project?

(2) What is the estimated starting date for construction?

(3) When will plans for the development be released?

Answer—

(1) The Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission has approved the design of a new TAFE college facility on the old showground site in Toowoomba. The approved ceiling cost for the first building is $11.4m. It is confidently expected that funds will be available to take the project to tender documentation state in 1986.

(2) The anticipated starting date for construction is mid-1987, subject to fund availability from the Commonwealth Government.

(3) Although it is not the practice to release plans, detailed information can be provided to the honourable member once developed sketch plans are completed after March 1986.

9. Health Care, Aboriginal and Islander Communities

Mr SCOTT asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the considered statements that he has made regarding what he likes to call the high standard of health care available to Queenslanders—

(1) Will he accept that this situation certainly does not apply to Aboriginal and Islander people living in areas served by health facilities not under the control of his department?

(2) As this situation was recognised by Cabinet when a decision was made some years ago that his department should take over health facilities administered by the Department of Community Services, why has this decision been rescinded?

(3) Is he aware that this latter decision has caused great concern to people living in Aboriginal and Islander communities who recognise the dedicated service given by people working in hospitals and medical aid posts administered by the Department of Community Services but who do not believe that that department is able to provide facilities of an acceptable standard and the structured training so urgently desired by people working in the existing facilities?

Answer—

(1 to 3) It appears that this question has been inappropriately addressed to me as Minister for Health, because the facilities referred to therein are administered by my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs. It would be improper for me to comment on services provided under another Minister's portfolio.

10. Solar Electricity Scheme, Torres Strait Islands

Mr SCOTT asked the Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs—

With reference to his recent parliamentary statement on electricity supplies for the Torres Strait area—

(1) What is the present position in regard to the installation of the solar-generated electricity scheme long promised by him for Coconut Island and other Torres Strait islands?

(2) Have any contracts been let at this date for the purchase of the necessary equipment and, if so, to which companies and for what items of equipment?

(3) Is it envisaged that there will be a central solar generating station with reticulated supply to each house or is it intended to have a solar unit on each house?

(4) How many kilowatts is it envisaged will be available for each house and at what voltage?

(5) If the level of power available at each house is insufficient to enable domestic cooking to be effected by electricity, will the people on Coconut Island be discriminated against in comparison with the people living elsewhere in the State?

Answer—

(1 to 5) Necessary technical assessment and planning work has been completed and designed so that any proposed power system will provide power availability to individual households commensurate with domestic power consumption patterns in urban centres throughout the State. The figures used were those of ordinary Brisbane households. The department listed its requirements and the terms of reference for the study groups were set according to those requirements. Individual households will thus not be disadvantaged.

At this stage, it is not possible to proceed to tender consequent upon the need to ensure availability of funds and, in this regard, I have had many weeks of negotiation with my Federal counterpart and now await a written response. The Federal Minister advised that he would be prepared to meet 50 per cent of the funding and would mail a letter to my department immediately. I expect to receive that letter this week.

I have also sought a meeting with the Deputy Premier and Minister Assisting the Treasurer (Mr Gunn) and the Minister for Mines and Energy (Mr I. J. Gibbs) regarding funding arrangements. A number of meetings have already taken place with the Island Co-ordinating Council and the Coconut Island Community Council. Three separate reports, by Preece and Ewbank Electrical Engineers and Consultants, by Ameru Economic Consultants, and by another group, indicated that, over a 5-year time-frame, it would be far cheaper to use photo voltaic solar generators than ordinary diesel generating plants. The former have no moving parts, which is of tremendous advantage to an isolated community, such as Coconut Island.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Child Pornography

Mr WARBURTON: In directing a question to the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police, I refer to the 1985 annual report of the Queensland Police Department. In the part relating to the activities of the Police Complaints Tribunal, the report states—

> "During the year, the Tribunal exercised its discretion to act upon its own initiative to investigate allegations of police involvement in a child pornography ring. The Tribunal called witnesses before it and, for the first time, the Tribunal issued subpoenas compelling attendance of witnesses."

The Minister will well remember his commitment to the Parliament late last year when the Opposition brought this serious matter to his attention. I now ask: Has he received a report from the Police Complaints Tribunal in respect of the investigation referred to in the annual report and, if so, will he table that report or make a full statement to the House outlining the results of the investigation?

Mr GLASSON: I have not received a copy of that report, so I request the Leader of the Opposition to put his question on notice. I can probably give him information as to the stage that the investigation has reached.

Mr Warburton: You haven't got the report?

Mr GLASSON: No, not at this stage.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Does the Leader of the Opposition wish to put his question on notice?

Mr WARBURTON: I do so accordingly.

Drug Squad

Mr WARBURTON: In directing a further question to the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police, I refer to the National Party's policy platform for the 1980 State election delivered on 5 November of that year, in which the Premier said—

> "Within the term of the new Government the Queensland Police Drug Squad strength will be expanded greatly, so that we will be able to hit the traders in drugs wherever they are."

At that time, the Drug Squad had a total of 22 officers but, within the term of the last coalition Government from 1980 to 1983, the strength of the squad fell, firstly, from 22 to 19 officers. By the end of the three-year term, the squad had only 21 officers. That is one fewer than the establishment of the squad at the time when the Premier made his promise.

I now ask: Because the Drug Squad now has a mere 28 officers, that is, it has the numbers that it had six years ago, and because, since that time, drug offences have sky-rocketed by 250 per cent, when will adequate staff and resources be given to the Drug Squad so that the drug trade ceases to be one of Queensland's biggest growth industries under the National Party State Government?

Mr GLASSON: The Leader of the Opposition seems to favour long-winded questions. The reality is that there is not one Government in the Commonwealth of Australia that has moved more positively than the Queensland Government has in attempting to intercept the drug trade within its jurisdiction. Indeed, the funding and resources that have been put to this cause have helped in the prevention of the drug trade. I include in that the provision of an aircraft and a helicopter in north Queensland. Admittedly, they belong to the State Emergency Service, but that organisation works in close co-operation with the Police Department and it deserves great credit. The statement made in 1980 by the Premier has been backed up by the Police Department, and the Government will continue to make every effort to inhibit the drug trade in this State.

New Labor Faction; Union Solidarity Party

Mr NEAL: I ask the Premier and Treasurer: Is he aware of the emergence of yet another faction within the Labor movement, this one named the Union Solidarity Party, which will field a candidate, Mr Jackson Brown, in the Redlands by-election? Will the Premier highlight the recent power dispute as an election issue in the campaign? Will he also remind the electors of Redlands of the role of the former ETU secretary and now Leader of the Opposition (Mr Warburton) in supporting the strikers and opposing the actions of this Government to make militant union-leaders in the electricity industry accountable to law and responsible to the community, whom they are supposed to serve?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: This a very, very interesting turn of events. Now the State is witnessing a union-leader and the Leader of the Opposition ratting on their mates. According to a report in today's *Telegraph,* they have ratted on their mates—the very people whom they were out fighting for, those whom they encouraged to turn out the lights. It was the Leader of the Opposition and the union-leaders who asked those men to turn out the lights and stop the community getting power. Now the Leader of the Opposition finds himself and his party turning themselves inside out.

Mr Warburton: Read that answer for us.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: If the Leader of the Opposition wishes me to, I will read it for him.

The Leader of the Opposition and Mr Dempsey have lashed out at Mr Brown, who was supposed to be one of their mates. The only thing is that they did not call him a

rat; they called him something else. Such comments are very different from their utterances earlier this year. Now the people of Queensland can see who are ratting on their mates.

It is very interesting to witness the union solidarity in the Labor movement now. The Leader of the Opposition and Mr Dempsey are calling this fellow a rat and turning on him. Mr Dempsey has said that Mr Brown's nomination is a complete sell-out.

The State will witness a very interesting by-election campaign, because the people now know exactly where the Labor Party stands—it stands for double standards. One day, the Labor Party is supporting and backing these people and encouraging them to turn out the lights, the next day, Mr Dempsey is saying that they are part of a radical, socialist, left-wing organisation. Those people are a part of the Labor movement.

Mr Speaker, I commend to the House this article, which is headed "Rebel Group Splits Labor". The poor old Leader of the Opposition is jumping around like a cat on a hot tin roof.

Reduction of Job Opportunities in Tourist Industry

Mr BORBIDGE: In asking a question of the Premier and Treasurer, I refer to the massive loss of jobs in the tourism and hospitality industry as a result of the Federal Government's tax package. I now ask: How many thousands of jobs are expected to be lost as a direct result of ALP policy, and what is the Queensland Government's response?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: This is a very serious turn of events. Queensland is presently training 5 000 young people to be ready to play their part in the restaurant and tourist industries.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: How many free lunches did Brian Maher give you?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The interjection of the member for Wolston is quite irrelevant. The interjections from the member for Wolston are highly disorderly.

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: He is over where the honourable member spent some happy hours not so long ago.

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Wolston under Standing Order No. 123A for constant interjections.

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: I was just highlighting the seriousness of the situation. The State's hospitality services organisation is training 5 000 people for jobs in the hospitality industry. On figures given to me this morning, those people find that probably only 500 of them can be expected to gain employment.

Yesterday, I was given figures that show that more than 1 000 persons have been dismissed from restaurants and its service industries in this State. Throughout Australia, the conservative estimate is that between 5 000 and 7 000 persons have already lost their jobs. That shows the incompetence of the people in Canberra and the disastrous effects of their policies. Mr Keating said that the Government's decision was made to stop people from dodging taxation. However, it is nothing of the sort. The taxation commissioner already has power to investigate whether claims are legitimate or not. Mr Keating is only trying to get his hands on more money. He is trying to rob the people by putting his hand in their pockets and taking more money. He is supported by Opposition members. How low can they go?

Appointment of Mathematics/Science Teacher, Benowa High School

Mr JENNINGS: I ask the Minister for Education: Is he aware of statements emanating from the Queensland Teachers Union that the appointment at the Benowa High School of a mathematics teacher for a limited period, which will conclude on 14

December, will somehow be the forerunner of a complete change in the department's policy on the appointment of staff and the normal permanency of employment in the teaching profession?

Bearing in mind the importance of ensuring that the students receive the best possible coaching at this time of the year and the drastic shortage of mathematics teachers, will the Minister advise the House whether the recent appointment at Benowa High School of a mathematics teacher who is highly respected by the staff at the school, is the thin end of the wedge for the introduction of contract teachers, as stated by the QTU?

Mr POWELL: I would like to take a little time to put the matter into the proper context. A great storm in a teacup has been stirred up by at least one person from the Queensland Teachers Union, who seems to be out of step with other members of the union and, indeed, the staff at Benowa High School. I thank the honourable member for Southport for the role that he has played in keeping me informed of the views of the local people on what is happening. That is most important to me.

Yesterday I alluded to the fact that the school had a need for another mathematics/science teacher. I do not think that any honourable member would argue that a major shortage of mathematics/science teachers exists throughout the world. Difficulty is experienced in obtaining qualified people to teach those subjects in high schools.

The gentleman in question is a Bachelor of Science and Master of Town Planning, which probably does not have a great deal to do with mathematics/science. He has impeccable qualifications in the subject area. That is the first matter that should be put in place. He has applied to a teacher-training institution to obtain the qualifications necessary for registration. He has yet to obtain those qualifications. To my knowledge, for 18 months the Queensland Teachers Union has embarked on a campaign to instil fear into teachers round the State, with regard to what it calls contract teaching, particularly since the advent of the SEQEB dispute at the beginning of this year.

Anybody who knows anything about the teaching service and its diversity in Queensland would know that contract teaching is not attractive to the Queensland Government as an employer. In fact, it is quite unattractive to the Government. Therefore, common sense should dictate that in all issues, not only on this issue, the Government is not even looking at that particular proposition.

At the behest of the Board of Teacher Education, the gentleman in question is being employed from 7 October to 14 December. At any time during that period, the Board of Teacher Education can withdraw the authorisation of that person to teach. Consequently, that person would then be unable to teach within a school.

I emphasise that to be allowed to teach in a school in Queensland, be it a Government school or a non-Government school funded by the Government, a person must be a registered teacher. If a person has not obtained registration, there are two other means by which he or she can teach in a school. Provisional registration may be obtained from the Board of Teacher Education. That board is not part of my department, and that needs to be mentioned. Alternatively, if a person does not have the qualifications to obtain provisional registration, he or she may be authorised by the board to teach for a specific period. It is the "specific period" that the Queensland Teachers Union is trying to cotton onto and use as a contract issue.

I assure the honourable member for Southport (Mr Jennings), and, indeed, the staff at Benowa High School, that in no way is the authorisation procedure through clause 4A of by-law 1 of the Board of Teacher Education being used by the Government in an attempt to surreptitiously introduce some form of contract teaching. That is just not on.

The gentleman concerned is highly qualified in mathematics/science. It is my understanding that he is doing a good job. I hope that when it realises that the people

of the district are happy with what is happening, the Queensland Teachers Union will back off and allow the students to receive good instruction from that person.

Allegations by Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union

Mr JENNINGS: I ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs: Is he aware of an article in the *Daily Sun* of 8 October in which an unnamed spokesman for the Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union alleged that the Minister is organising a meeting of the Meat and Allied Trades Federation, the National Farmers Federation, the Cattlemen's Union of Australia and the United Graziers Association, with the sole purpose of provoking a strike? As he has already made it quite clear that he and the Queensland Government will not tolerate strike action by the AMIEU to interfere with the very important meat industry—and that statement by the AMIEU obviously indicates that it is in a state of panic—will he advise the House of the latest actions being contemplated to ensure that the great Queensland meat industry is able to continue to supply contracts and orders both within Australia and overseas without interference from standover strike action by the discredited AMIEU?

Mr LESTER: Some comments by various union people suggesting that the Government was trying to cause a strike were printed in the press.

I simply say that, far from causing a strike, the action taken by the Queensland Government prevented a strike in Queensland, not only on one Monday but also on the following Monday. In fact, although Queensland did not have a strike, the other States did. Although strike action was contemplated in the other States on a second occasion, it did not eventuate—probably as a result of the action taken by the Queensland Government.

The need to stand up and be counted can be seen very clearly. Why is the Government standing up and being counted? It is simply because, since 1980, 28 500 meat-workers have lost their jobs. Somebody must act responsibly, and why should it not be the Queensland Government?

It is a fact that the Government has met with representatives of the meat industry. It is also a fact that the Government has met with the National Farmers Federation, the Cattlemen's Union of Australia and the United Graziers Association. Certainly, the Government has a plan of action for the future if the unions decide to misbehave and take away what I believe is an essential service for many people.

The Government will not hestitate to assist in the loading of goods. If goods cannot be loaded through ports in other parts of Australia, the Queensland Government will provide every assistance. This Government will not tolerate secondary boycotts. It has already demonstrated that.

I warn the meat inspectors—those new avengers in the strike field—that the Queensland Government will not tolerate them playing around, either, and action will be taken if necessary.

Whatever happens, the meat will go through, and the Government will stand behind the meat industry in every way.

Gas Pipeline to Gladstone

Mr SMITH: I direct a question to the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology. In view of the very definite statement of the Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs (Mr Katter) reported on the front page of the Monday edition of the *Townsville Bulletin* that 400 new jobs would be created in a new fertiliser plant to be established by North Queensland Phosphate at a north Queensland port, in view of the Government's decision not to proceed with Government funding of the gas pipeline to Gladstone, and also that it takes approximately one tonne of hydrocarbon fuel to manufacture one tonne of urea, I ask: Firstly, what locations are on the short list for the reported project, and from where is it proposed to obtain the required feedstock? Secondly, did the Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal

and Island Affairs prepare his statement prior to or after the Government announced its decision not to fund the Gladstone pipeline? Finally, as the plant would be dependent on the building of the pipeline to Gladstone—if the pipeline does not proceed, is this yet another of the National Party State Government's phantom projects being promoted by the Minister for Northern Development?

Mr AHERN: The Government and its departments make no apology for pursuing projects that it is felt would be of economic benefit to the State. That has happened for a number of years, resulting in the construction of a great number of substantial projects that have been of enormous economic value to Queensland and have generated tremendous employment opportunity for Queenslanders. That active policy will be continued in the future. In respect of some projects, the Government has been disappointed initially that substantial progress has not been made; but in a great number of others, people are working and one may walk amongst the enormous industrial development that has taken place.

The Government has pursued that course of action for very many years, but the Australian Labor Party criticises it at every opportunity. Up and down the coast substantial industrial projects have been brought to fruition as a result of the Government's encouragement.

The project about which the honourable member for Townsville West has asked his question represents such an opportunity. A number of investors are interested in it. It is founded on the development of high-analysis fertilisers, utilising the phosphatic resources of north-west Queensland and a nitrogenous fertiliser plant based on Gladstone. That is the correct direction for fertiliser manufacture in Australia. Because of the higher costs associated with transportation today, the world's horticultural industry is moving towards high-analysis fertilisers. Therefore, the Government is correct in pursuing a project of such magnitude. Discussions have been held about it. I myself have discussed the matter with local authority representatives in the honourable member's electorate.

The Government will definitely be trying to bring the project to fruition so that, as soon as possible, it creates employment. All Government departments are co-operating. I compliment the Minister for Northern Development and Aboriginal and Island Affairs, who has pursued the matter on every possible occasion. Our efforts will continue, in the hope that the project will come to fruition and be brought into production at the earliest possible date.

Departmental Co-ordination for Collinsville

Mr SMITH: I ask the Premier and Treasurer: In view of what has occurred at Collinsville, does he consider the level of planning and co-ordination between Ministers to be adequate?

I refer to the construction undertaken by the Department of Works, for the Department of Education, of a new $2.5m high school at Collinsville, which is now near completion and is to cater for existing and increasing enrolments, at the same time as the Minister for Mines and Energy, with the Premier's knowledge, was planning to close or partially close the Collinsville Power Station. As that closure will drastically reduce the population and eliminate the potential for any increase in high-school enrolments, and in view of the pressing need for new educational buildings elsewhere in the State, how does he justify such a misdirection of funds?

Sir JOH BJELKE-PETERSEN: The honourable member, of course, is new and he does not quite understand or grasp matters. The high school is not just for Collinsville; it will serve a wide area. The honourable member ought to be very appreciative of steps that the Government is taking in his home city, which is so antagonistic to the Government. In spite of the opposition that the Government receives from his home city, through him and others, it continues to do the best possible for Townsville and the northern part of our State. In the near future, I will be up there launching another project, into which the Government will be injecting many millions of dollars.

Catholic Education Office

Mr FITZGERALD: In directing a question to the Minister for Education, I refer to a recent media report in which the president of the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools (Lynne Rolley) claimed that the Catholic Education Office was attempting to control teachers politically and industrially. Is the Minister aware of the statement of principles made by the Catholic Education Office? If so, does the Minister believe that the statement is designed to exercise political or industrial control over teachers?

Mr POWELL: I read the article referred to by the honourable member, which was printed some time last week. In it, the president of Queensland Association for Teachers in Independent Schools complained about a directive given by the Catholic Education Office to those involved in the Catholic system of education.

I find it difficult to understand why QATIS would be complaining, because it is an organisation which represents teachers who work in independent schools and are employed by non-Government authorities.

For a variety of reasons, those teachers choose to work outside the Government sector of education. I think that a clear principle is involved here, that is, that the employer should be the person who dictates the policy under which the employee works. In an area that is as sensitive as education, many people in this State——

Mr Wilson interjected.

Mr POWELL: The honourable member for Townsville South makes a rare interjection and says that the employer does not know much about the matter.

Mr Wilson: I did not say that. I said that employers may not know much about it.

Mr POWELL: I suggest to the honourable member for Townsville South that he take more notice of the rights of employers.

Mr Wilson: You do not believe that employees have any rights.

Mr POWELL: Yes, I do.

Mr Wilson: No, you do not.

Mr POWELL: I firmly believe that employees have plenty of rights. If it is possible, perhaps the honourable member for Townsville South will contain himself, listen to the answer and understand what I am saying.

The important principle in this sensitive field of education is that 25 per cent of children in this State attend non-Government schools. They do so because their parents deliberately send them to those schools, and the parents expect that the schools will have some authority over what is being taught and the way in which it is taught in that non-Government school sector.

I support fully the statement issued by the Catholic Education office that teachers should act in accordance with the principles enunciated by the Catholic Church. In fact, I would support the Anglican Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church, the Uniting Church and any other authority involved in the non-Government sector of education—and the Government school sector for that matter—that imposed upon its teachers certain rules and regulations to which they must adhere. After all, that is why parents choose to send their children to those schools.

For QATIS or any other union of employees to complain about teachers being told by the employers how they must act within a particular school system is, in my view, entirely improper.

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

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Portion 79, Parish of Barrow, County of Ward, Shire of Albert

Mr GOSS (Salisbury) (12 noon): I wish to raise, as a matter of public interest, another example of the way in which this Government looks after its rich and powerful friends to the detriment of the public interest. I want to talk about the way in which some Government departments and resources are at the beck and call of these people for their personal enrichment. More and more, the people of Queensland are coming to realise that they lose every time some rich and powerful member of the National Party secures special treatment for himself. On 2 November, the people of Redlands will have an opportunity to register their disgust at the way in which the resources of this Government are being used to enrich those whom the National Party regards as the VIPs.

In recent weeks, Opposition members have raised a number of important matters relating to conflict of interest and abuse of high position and influence, yet the Government stonewalls to protect its own and damn the public interest.

Today, I want to raise a totally new matter and tell the people of Queensland about a new development project designed to bring benefit to the family of a man connected with this Government. The development could not have occurred if it were not for his power and influence within the Government. No other company and no other Queenslander could have done what has been done in this particular case. This development is simply another part of a grand plan to create massive personal capital gain for the family of this man in one of the fastest-growing areas of Queensland.

The startling aspect of this development is that the man concerned has found that an island in a river is in the way of his development so, by a devious and back-door route, he is simply going to destroy this island. I urge representatives of the media and the public to inspect and film this island and just see for themselves the damage that has been done to it in the course of this plot to remove it from the Queensland landscape. The property description of the island is portion 79, parish of Barrow, county of Ward, in the Albert shire.

In the course of my speech I will table a number of documents from internal Government files and this man's consulting engineers, which have been leaked to members of the Opposition by outraged public servants and disgruntled members of the National Party. They are outraged and disgruntled because they can see the impropriety of what is being done as well as the damage that will be sustained further down the river and to other properties.

The impropriety was clearly established in an expert study by a company named Oceanics (Aust.) Pty Ltd, which said that the main reasons for rejecting this man's request to destroy the island and the main reasons in favour of preserving it were—

> "Firstly in times of flood the island would act to hold water levels against the weir thus reducing the hydraulic drop and potential scour effects from same on the downstream side of the weir;
>
> Secondly, leaving the island in place will reduce considerably the fetch available for wave formation with a consequent reduction in the potential bank erosion from waves."

As I will show, the individual concerned has claimed, through his representatives, that he accepts that advice but, in practice, he goes about his plan by another route.

I table a map of the area and the development in question.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

I table a letter dated 6 April 1982 from the man's engineers seeking both the sand and gravel resources on the island and the removal of the island altogether.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Following discussions with the Albert Shire Council, it was decided to leave the island. I table another letter from the engineers, dated 22 November 1983, to the secretary of the Land Administration Commission confirming that advice.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Yet the destruction of the island has already commenced and soon it will be gone to suit the overall development project.

I table a memo from the Department of Forestry, dated 15 June 1982, seeking an environmental impact study and asking the district forester to ascertain the quantity of commercial timber and the feasibility of removing quarry material, as sought by this individual.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

A subsequent memo, dated 20 July 1982, from the senior forest ranger, which I table, lays down certain recommendations in relation to the timber on the island and the gravel above the high-water mark, and the conditions on which that should be removed if such permission was given.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Reference is made to the need for an accurate survey to determine what should occur. As I understand it, such a survey has not been carried out. Perhaps the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police (Mr Glasson) will be able to clarify the position relative to permission and on what basis it will be given.

I also table a copy of a letter, dated 24 August 1982, from this man's engineers to the Albert Shire Council setting out the reasons for refraining from extraction on the island because the retention of the island was necessary to minimise flood flow velocities in the vicinity of the nearby weir and the low road to Upper Coomera.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

The letter from the engineers goes on to claim that their client has agreed to accept that advice.

Some time after that letter, the back-door route was taken. There was a proposal put forward by the man's engineers for reclamation of part of the island and the bed and the banks of the Coomera River. I table a copy of the letter from the engineers, dated 19 July 1984, to the Department of Lands setting out details of the cost of the proposal.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

I am told that, at about this time, the new plan became a plan to establish a harbour just up from the island and thereby allow dredging to clear harbour obstructions so that the payment of royalties for the material so removed could be avoided.

In addition to that, a quantity of soil, plant and other material was removed from the island itself. Beautiful sandy loam and quarry material was cut down to a depth of about 6 feet and, in some sections, it was deliberately cut below the level of the river so that in heavy rain those parts of the island would go under water. Certain trees were also removed.

Later, when I table a copy of the lease granted to the company owned by this individual, I will demonstrate that that was done without the permission of the Lands Department and the Forestry Department. If it is contended that permission was granted—my source says that no permission was granted—no doubt the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police (Mr Glasson), who is in the House, will be able to produce any documents that might exist to verify that approval was given to the man, the cost being charged to the man and his company, and the extent of the removal that has been authorised by officers of the Minister's departments.

People who have inspected the island also tell me that many substantial trees have been cut just above the ground so that they will eventually die and thereby assist in the process of the destruction of the island.

I table a letter dated 7 September 1984, from the Forestry Department to the secretary of the Land Administration Commission, confirming that no commercial timber or quarry material should be removed from the island without the department's approval.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

I will table a letter dated 11 September 1984, wherein the acting secretary of the Land Administration Commission told the Minister's engineers, "After careful consideration it has been approved to seek executive authority . . . " to grant this man's company a joint-recommendation special lease over part of the island and the adjacent part of the river.

Another startling aspect of this whole deal—startling and shocking to the public servants and experts to whom I have spoken—is that, effectively, the course of the Coomera River will be changed. That is a situation which those people find unbelievable. With reference to the recommendation to grant——

Mr HINZE: I rise to a point of order. Did I understand the honourable member to refer a couple of minutes ago to a Minister?

Mr GOSS: I made reference to the Minister for Lands.

Mr Hinze: I am sorry.

Mr GOSS: I certainly intended no reference to the Minister for Local Government in what I just said.

I table the letter.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

I now table a copy of page 1 of the special lease that this man was able to secure for his family company, and I point out that under the special conditions of that lease on the first page, under the heading "Forest Products etc.", a company is not allowed to interfere with forest products or remove any quarry material, or any other material from the leased land, without the permission of the Minister, namely the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

When did the recommendation for the grant of the special lease go before Executive Council and, if it did, did the Minister concerned declare his interest?

I believe that the subsequent actions of the company in relation to the island breach the conditions of the lease to which I have referred and, for that reason, the lease should be revoked by the Government and withdrawn from the company in question, as would happen with any other lessee who broke the conditions of a Government lease.

As I said at the outset, this particular development is part of a grand plan in this area of Queensland to create massive personal capital gain for one particular interest. The grand plan covers an extensive area to the south of Brisbane, starting with the Oxenford Tavern, the public works associated with that, the relocation of roads, quarries and dairies—and on it goes right down to Hope Island and beyond. The question is: What will the Government do about it? What will the Premier do about it, because he is the person who is in a position to act?

So that there can be no doubt as to what I am talking about in the way of the commercial interests that have benefited from this sorry scandal concerning abuse of high office and influence, let me say that the company I have been referring to is Maralinga Pty Ltd, the company of Mr Hinze, the Minister for Local Government, Main Roads and Racing.

Mr HINZE: I rise to a point of order. My point of order is that the honourable member waited until this part of his accusations to actually name by inference, as he has done repeatedly in this House over the last few weeks. Not one shred of truth is contained in the accusations made by the honourable member. I place on record that he is deliberately setting out to place before the House another concoction.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I will put several honourable members out of the Chamber if the shouting does not cease. The position is this: under the provisions of Standing Order No. 120—

Mr Goss: I hope you are satisfied. You have run my time out again. You do this time and time again.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I remind the honourable member for Salisbury that whilst I am on my feet, he has no right to speak. I now warn him under Standing Order No. 123A.

Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 120, all personal reflections and imputations of improper motives shall be deemed highly disorderly. I rule that the statements of the member for Salisbury come within the category of being highly disorderly. I therefore ask the honourable member to withdraw his implication that the Minister for Main Roads—

Mr Hamill: That is disgraceful.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Because he has reflected on the Chair, I warn the honourable member for Ipswich under Standing Order No. 123A. If he interjects again, I will order him from the Chamber.

Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 120, I order the honourable member for Salisbury to withdraw his imputations of improper motives against the Minister.

Mr GOSS: I seek your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker, because the documents that I have tabled name the company concerned, and I cannot withdraw the fact that the name is now on the public record.

Mr HINZE: Mr Deputy Speaker——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will not accept a point of order. The fact that the honourable member for Salisbury has tabled documents has no bearing at all on my decision under the provisions of Standing Order No. 120 that he is to withdraw his comment or implication that the Minister has acted improperly. The Standing Order is quite clear, and the honourable member is obliged to withdraw.

Mr GOSS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I will make up my own mind. To withdraw those comments would be an abrogation of my duty to the public and to my constituents.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have already warned the honourable member for Salisbury under Standing Order No. 123A. Because he has defied my ruling, I order him to withdraw from the Chamber.

Whereupon the honourable member for Salisbury withdrew from the Chamber.

Child Abuse

Mrs HARVEY (Greenslopes) (12.12 p.m.): To most people, including honourable members, the term "child abuse" conjures up images of a small child covered in welts and bruises. However shocking as these images may be, they are the most common concept of an abused child, but this conceptual picture is not complete. In this complex world of the 1980s, child abuse is much more than that.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If there is any more interjecting across the Chamber, I will eject another honourable member.

Mrs HARVEY: A child can be abused without showing the tell-tale burns, fractures, welts or bruises. A simple classification of the various forms of abuse of children and adolescents includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and abuse by neglect. Unfortunately, some children can be victims of one or more of these forms of abuse at the same time.

Parents and the wider community must be educated to be alert to the different forms of abuse. It must be impressed upon the adults of this world that children are not chattels, but are given to us for a short time and that during the precious time that we have them, it is their right to be cared for and nurtured. This has always been the greatest responsibility of parenthood, and it always will be.

Children are not toys to be played with one moment and rejected and discarded the next. They are not to be manipulated and exploited at adult whims, neglected and left without adequate supervision. Their future must be properly planned for. Importantly, children are not unthinking, unfeeling beings to be passed back and forth in custody cases, torn between separating parents. Children are often sad, uncomprehending witnesses to personal bitterness between parents.

Children are developing people, and how they develop—whether as beautiful, intelligent, wonderful human beings or emotionally and sometimes physically crippled fringe-dwellers of our society—is up to the adults of this world. Let us not be afraid to say that it is our responsibility.

Child abuse is a major social problem. In social terms, the snowballing effect of an abused child becoming an abuser in later life will result in the eventual break-down of the stable family and can lead ultimately to crime or mental illness. It is highly likely that abuse in childhood can lead to mental illness and to crime in some people simply because some victims of abuse would internalise their hostility to abusers and this would lead to mental illness. Others would act out their hostility to abusers and become criminals.

Unfortunately, no statistics are available, and I recommend to the Minister for Welfare Services and the Minister for Health that such statistics be kept by their departments. It is not just the social workers and welfare workers who should be concerned. This should worry Governments, both State and Federal. As the fabric of our society degenerates, it should also worry the hard-headed economists. Think of the cost to the average tax-payer and to the Governments in vandalism caused by discontented, unhappy or unstable people who burn down schools and vent their emotions on public property. So many abused children become delinquent, with attendant costs for institutions to care for them. Ultimately, many may become inmates in the gaols.

Would it not be better to find a way to short-circuit this unhappy social cycle? Money spent on prevention of child abuse is money well spent—if it can reduce the number of family splits, child runaways, delinquency, crime and mental break-down by dealing with the many and complex reasons for physical, sexual, emotional and neglect abuse.

Usually when a case of child abuse comes to light, it is through the medical and remedial work of the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) teams. Honourable members will be aware that each SCAN team is made up of representatives of the medical profession, the Police Department and trained personnel of the Department of Children's Services. My concern is about improving the mechanisms in the preventive area. As a trained teacher myself, I experienced cases of suspected child abuse during my teaching days, so I believe that teachers, because they spend so much time with children, are in a unique position to play an important role in the preventive area.

This Government, through the Minister for Welfare Services (Hon. Geoff Muntz) not only has recognised the great need for action but also, thankfully, has a heavy emphasis on strategy. One does not dabble, try remedies, or even rush into a problem

as profound, complex and sensitive as this. It is essential to research, to plan and to formulate a program for action that can provide integrated formal and informal support systems for these families.

The Child Abuse Research and Education Committee (CARE)—which I chair—under its terms of reference will firstly concentrate on education in carrying out its aim of preventing child abuse. Its priority has already been to plan a formal strategy that will have the maximum application in the shortest possible time. It is important to raise the profile of child abuse so as to promote teacher/educator awareness of the extent of the problem and to develop courses for teachers via pre-service and in-service training in how to recognise suspected child abuse and how to record and report their suspicions. The Minister, at the recommendation of the CARE Committee, appointed an officer of his department to collate statistics for on-forwarding to the Minister for Education (Hon. Lin Powell) for use in teacher courses. A handbook for teachers is being compiled to simplify the procedure for reporting and as a ready reference for teachers. It is expected that this will be ready by the end of this year for use at the start of the new school year.

A further recommendation made to the Minister for Welfare Services is to make reporting of suspected child abuse by teachers mandatory under the proposed Family and Community Development Bill.

Mr Fouras interjected.

Mrs HARVEY: I ask the honourable member for South Brisbane to listen. This is for his benefit, too. Although he has been jumping up and down about this matter, he does not know anything about the problem. For goodness' sake, he should listen and learn.

The CARE Committee also plans to target strategies and programs to deal with prevention of child abuse through education of parents, children and the wider community.

As 1986 has already been designated Queensland's Year for Parents, I will be urging that greater emphasis be placed on parenting-role incompetence, providing support services and material resources to reduce parenting stresses and parent isolation. Unhappy parents have unhappy children. We will be focusing on the personal development of the parent, looking at reasons for tensions and frustrations in the family, how to overcome communication barriers and how to find mutual satisfaction in each other's company. Child abuse is everyone's problem. By joining together we will go a long way towards solving it.

I will now deal with the contribution made by the member for Port Curtis (Mr Prest) to the debate on the Estimates for Lands, Forestry and Police. Because he did not do his homework, I award him zero for his contribution. I inform him that I was not a primary school teacher; I was a high school teacher who specialised in senior English. Most importantly, in several of the schools in which I taught, I conducted a program for Year 8 students who were academically and emotionally at risk. To my dying day, I will always retain the tragic vision of a child curled up in a ball in the corner of a class-room unable to cope with his life any longer.

If I do nothing else in this Assembly, I will deal with those sights that I retain in my memory. That is why I am in this Chamber and not still in the class-room. I make that comment for the information of the honourable member for Port Curtis (Mr Prest). How dare he treat such a serious issue so loosely. How callous and insensitive he is.

Mr Prest: What about a bit of action?

Mrs HARVEY: I have outlined the action. The honourable member must not have been listening. A great deal of action has been taken. Since June, meetings have been held every two weeks. If that is not action, I do not know what it is. It is easy for the honourable member to criticise. For a change, he should do something.

In the whole area of child abuse, it is my personal commitment to ensure that the words contained in a well-known Gospel statement, "Suffer little children to come unto

me" are not turned, by uncaring members of society who find it difficult to cope with the whole concept of incest, to recognise that parents can batter their children and that parents who batter children were probably battered themselves, to deal with the whole horrible spectacle and look at the matter and say, "We must do something," but prefer that the problem would run away, into, "Let little children suffer."

Honourable members opposite, by their criticism, are only adding to the belief in our society that the problem is not all that bad. By jumping up and down and criticising the Government for everything that it is trying to do, Opposition members are certainly not helping. They can do that if they like but, in the long term, it will be on their conscience. It certainly will not be on mine, because I know where my commitment lies. My commitment lies with the children of Queensland. I intend to make sure that those who cannot smile in the class-room day by day are given a reason to smile and that those parents who have a very definite problem are given every assistance to overcome that problem. The criticism by Opposition members has been negative and has worked against everything that society is trying to put together to try to deal with that problem.

Child Abuse

Mr FOURAS (South Brisbane) (12.22 p.m.): Honourable members have heard the honourable member for Greenslopes make an emotional commitment. In my speech, I will document the fact that no fundamental commitment of resources has been made by the Government and that no programs have been initiated.

We were advised that the Estimates for Welfare Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs were to be debated during this Budget session. They were withdrawn and replaced by a debate on education. This is a clear indictment of the lack of confidence in and the most inept handling of the Welfare portfolio by Mr Muntz. It is obvious that the Government is running scared and has removed Mr Muntz from the kitchen simply because it knows that he could not stand the heat.

One of the areas that the Opposition would have highlighted in the debate on those Estimates was the scandalous inability of the Government to provide adequate resources for welfare programs. Today I will highlight one of those shortcomings, that is, the reprehensible failure of this Government when it comes to child-protection programs.

At the recent Australian Early Childhood Association national conference, Mr Thatcher, the deputy director of the Department of Children's Services, clearly stated that he was only too well aware of the demands for additional resources that have been placed on that department to enable it to respond to the spiralling number of reported cases of actual abuse, to provide more effective post-abuse treatment services and, as an urgent need, to give priority to the provision of services directed at the tertiary prevention area.

Undoubtedly, the provision of adequate resources for the prevention of child abuse presents governments and the community with one of the substantial challenges for the future, but this challenge must be met in order to reduce the mushrooming incidence of child abuse. Unfortunately, as far as this penny-pinching National Party Government is concerned, Mr Thatcher is crying in the wilderness. Southern States, such as South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales, are responding to the shocking problem of child abuse, particularly the sky-rocketing incidence of child sexual assault, which is one of the most sensitive issues in society today.

The South Australian Government Task Force on Child Sexual Abuse has presented a comprehensive report, and the Victorian Department of Community Services has completed lengthy studies resulting in the implementation of a new protective services program.

The New South Wales Government has announced a wide range of reforms, the objectives of which are to reduce the stress on child victims when giving evidence, to encourage the reporting of child sexual assault and to enforce a range of penalties that

reflect the seriousness of these crimes against children. The reforms will be accompanied by improved procedures for and services to victims and a community education program. In its recent Budget, the New South Wales Government allocated $1.87m for the initial cost of new incentives to combat sexual assault of children, which is part of a four-year program recommended by its task force report. This strategy includes additional police officers to deal with child sexual assault cases, staffing of a 24-hour State-wide crisis line, district officers for substitute care and additional child protection workers.

A total of $400,000 will be spent on upgrading services for child victims, particularly in metropolitan hospitals, and $660,000 will be provided to fund community-based services.

What new initiatives are being undertaken by the Queensland Government? A paltry $10,000 has been allocated for a pilot program on sexual abuse and the setting up of a committee chaired by a National Party back-bencher, which is nothing more than a political ploy to give the member for Greenslopes (Mrs Harvey) media coverage.

Whether in the area of referrals and investigations, assistance for children and their families such as psychological assessment, therapy and counselling, or preventive measures and community education, the underresourcing by this Government is scandalous.

The goals of the Government's child protection program are to protect children from neglect and abuse, to assist the parents of such children and to restore the family unit and family functioning. However, because of its sick and twisted priorities, this Government prefers to make grants in excess of $60m for race-tracks rather than adequately fund child abuse programs. It cannot meet its stated objectives, or its statutory obligations, to protect children. Every child ought to be seen within 24 hours, but it is not. That is part of the program. As I said, the Government cannot meet its statutory obligations.

SCAN teams are suffering burn-out because of insufficient staff to cope with the ever-increasing referrals. The Mater Hospital SCAN team had 474 children referred to it in 1983-84 and 549 in 1984-85—an increase of 16 per cent—and, in the more sensitive area of sexual abuse, the figures jumped from 91 to 164—a massive increase of 80 per cent.

It is an indictment of the State Government that of the 549 children referred in 1984-85, 84 were re-referrals, and 34 referrals were of another child from the same household that had been previously referred. That shows clearly the inability of this Government to provide sufficient resources to protect children at risk. Only a minute proportion of referrals are followed up. It is reprehensible that nearly one in four of the children at risk are not being protected because of inadequate resources for follow-ups.

The setting up earlier this year by the Department of Children's Services of a sexual abuse treatment program has been nothing more than a token response to that problem. The program has a staff of four, and it is already fully booked out.

The Child Protection Unit, which was once the centre-piece of the department's protective services program, has fallen in a heap. Its role is now to liaise between SCAN teams and departmental area officers. It never was involved outside the metropolitan area.

Recent media reports by an official from the Professional Officers Association—the union representing welfare workers—expressed concern at the high staff turnover, which leaves a serious shortage of experienced workers. In the main, that is due to high burn-out because the professional child care workers find the bandaiding processes expected from them demeaning and an appalling indictment on their professionalism.

I cite the example of the Crisis Care Service, which is staffed by 10 social workers and one senior officer. Because of burn-out—which the Minister has admitted—those people are so overworked that they have to leave the telephones off the hook. Only one of those workers has been in the program for more than two years; yet the department's child protection program states that child protection complaints received after-hours are

to be referred to the Crisis Care Service. Honourable members can ask any refuge worker about the extreme frustration of being unable to make such referrals because the telephone will not answer.

The area officers of the Department of Children's Services are handling referrals up to 40 per cent of which are in the child abuse area, with up to eight serious cases a week at each office. It is an absolute disgrace that child care officers working in the district offices are so overloaded that they cannot do their job properly.

The 1983-84 annual report of the Department of Children's Services shows that about 4 547 voluntary notifications were received in the area of child abuse. Nearly one in four of those—about 1 022—have a finding of 'uncertain.' Surely that is not good enough. It appears that it is highly likely that in a proportion of those so-called 'uncertain' findings something must have been going on, but sufficient evidence has not been produced to justify action.

If the Government is serious about preventing child abuse, officers should be certain one way or the other that referrals are being treated adequately. In the same report, 1 142 cases of identified neglect and abuse are cited. But what can the Department of Children's Services do about them? It is very unfortunate that the officers do not have either the skills, because of high staff turnover owing to burn-out, or the resources, because of too heavy a case-load.

When introducing the legislation to set up the SCAN teams in 1980, the then Minister for Health (Sir William Knox) said that one of the objectives of SCAN was to provide a comprehensive and continuing management plan for each child and family.

SCAN teams meet two afternoons a week and have to deal with between 20 and 25 cases within three hours. How can a management plan be established in the five minutes or so available to each case? The end result is a rubber-stamping to say that a management review has taken place.

Sir William Knox further stated that an intensive public education campaign could be conducted at that time, but nothing has happened.

A co-ordinating committee on child abuse was approved in November 1978. Its role was to advise on all aspects of child abuse, to co-ordinate resources, to periodically review services and to develop programs to educate the public. It is appalling that it has met only three times in the last two years and has not done anything to develop programs for public education. It should have developed protective and preventive programs for schools. The training of professionals and the role of the media ought to have been considered.

The State Government's lack of commitment to child protection is highlighted by the dire financial straits faced by the parent aide unit at the Mater Children's Hospital, which is helping to fight the growing incidence of child abuse but is receiving no help from the State Government. In the last six years, the parent aide unit has trained 60 volunteers, who have worked with 200 child-abusing parents. The parent aide method has proved to be one of the most effective ways of preventing a repetition of child abuse. The Mater's program has 15 volunteers but needs more because there is, naturally, a high burn-out rate. The job of the volunteers is full of stress and they deserve every form of assistance.

The Mater's parent aide unit received funds from the Federal Government Family Support Services Scheme, under which each volunteer receives $10 per week as reimbursement for telephone calls, fares and other out-of-pocket expenses. The Mater program had a total of 26 volunteers, but the State Government refused to provide funds to keep the additional 11 volunteers. I wrote twice to the Minister for Welfare Services, Youth and Ethnic Affairs (Mr Muntz) about this very issue. All he said in reply was that he would ask Canberra for more money.

The National Party State Government is too mean to contribute $10 a week for each of the additional 11 volunteers, which would have cost the State Government about

$5,700 annually, or about one-tenth of the amount Mr Muntz spent on travel and entertainment last financial year. The National Party cries poor and refuses to help the parent aide program.

Many of the volunteers working through the Mater's parent aide program incurred heavy costs. One person spent almost $250 of her own money in about nine months. Another spent almost $100 in three months. Those people are not interested in being paid for the work they do. All they are asking is for some reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses; yet the National Party State Government is simply too mean to help out. It wants volunteer agencies to shoulder more of the welfare burden, but is not prepared to commit its own money.

The Minister should be ashamed of the way his Government is starving welfare programs of funds while splurging millions of dollars on self-seeking propaganda. It is time that this sick and twisted National Party Government provided adequate resources to protect children, who surely, at a vulnerable stage in their life cycle, have a fundamental right to be protected from exploitation and abuse. The Government, which left $58.8m unspent in the Consolidated Revenue Fund, can no longer claim lack of funds.

What is obvious is its lack of commitment and the will to adequately fund human services. No Government lacking that commitment has the right to call itself democratic. I call on the people of Redlands to voice their concern on 2 November. A vote against the National Party Government would be a firm rebuttal of this uncaring, unsympathetic Government.

Time expired.

Reporting Standards of *Daily News*, Warwick

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (12.33 p.m.): I draw the attention of honourable members to what I regard as foolish media reporting in my own town of Warwick. Perhaps the press generally is interested in hysterical and sensational reporting, overlooking the damage that may occur. Perhaps the print medium is under pressure from television and, to some extent, from radio, and feels that it may hold readers through the use of sensationalism. I am not suggesting that is necessarily wrong, but care should be exercised.

I highlight two instances, the principal one of which is the lack of confidence caused to the Warwick and District Co-operative Dairy Association by a front-page article in the Warwick *Daily News* headed, "Warwick Co-op in merger proposal". On 26 September 1985, the Warwick co-operative held its annual meeting. I am not sure whether a reporter was present, but certainly very little news emanating from that meeting was published. However, on the following day, the 27th, the *Daily News* reported that Warwick was contemplating a merger with the Downs Co-operative Dairy Association at Toowoomba. The article contained facts that were claimed to have been ascertained from the manager of the Downs Co-operative Dairy Association. I do not intend to read them, as I do not have sufficient time. Nevertheless, very little was reported from the directors, the chairman of directors or the general manager of the Warwick dairy. On 28 September, the *Daily News* was forced to print a complete denial—I admit that that denial received front-page treatment as well—that any such negotiations were taking place.

At a later date—5 October—another retraction was made by the general manager of the Downs Co-operative Dairy Association (Mr McNamara), who said that the statements that he had made had nothing to do with the present, that he was only thinking about the future.

I suppose it could often be said that reporters are quite young and I am not sure whether that was the case in this instance; but this reporter was either foolish or inexperienced. Honourable members know from observing members of the parliamentary gallery, that media reporters are quite often young and inexperienced. Journalists must remember that what they do can have far-reaching effects. The only assets in which a reporter makes an investment are a biro and a notebook.

In contrast to that, to build up a huge co-operative, such as the Warwick and District Co-operative Dairy Association, requires years of work to make the association stable. That company has evinced stability for more than 60 years. I was its chairman for a lengthy period, and I put a good deal of work into administering it. At no time did I work with general managers or secretaries who did not give of their best. I honestly believe that, nowadays, people occupying those positions are working as hard to maintain the company as a viable organisation. It should be remembered that the Warwick co-operative is a great company in its field.

I suppose it can be argued that no great loss was incurred by the company except for a loss of confidence in its operations. It must be remembered, however, that confidence is a very important factor in business and, once it is lost, it takes a great deal of effort to restore it.

The company had to send out a letter, under the hand of its general manager, stating categorically that it denied that it had ever taken part in any negotiation of the kind referred to. I do not think there is any evidence that it had. It would have been better had the *Daily News* attended the annual general meeting and recorded the conduct of the meeting accurately. That would have had better results for the circulation of that newspaper, and any such article would have been newsworthy.

I hope that, in the future, media reporters will be careful about knocking the operations of organisations in a way that might cause loss of confidence in the conduct of the organisation. I repeat that it takes a long time to restore confidence after something occurs that erodes it. I will not dwell on that matter. Because some time was lost earlier, and to give some other honourable member a chance to speak, I intend to speak for two fewer minutes than I am allowed.

I wish to refer to another statement that was made in the same newspaper on Tuesday, 8 October, under the headline "Government slashes adult courses". The first part of the article reads—

> "The State Government has 'effectively axed' the adult education program in Warwick, according to a Toowoomba TAFE College spokesman."

When I read that, I thought that the name of the spokesman was printed but, further on, the article states that the technical and further education college spokesman asked not to be identified. I have never heard of such a thing as an education spokesman not wishing to be identified. I know of no instance in which a public service spokesman has remained anonymous. Spokesmen have always played the game in the past and have been quite prepared to give their names. If the spokesman in this case was genuine, he would have done so. However, the real story is contained later in the article, where it reads—

> " 'Warwick is now without any extra educational facilities. There's no CYSS, no LAWS and no adult education for Warwick'."

The truth is that the initiative has been taken to set up a Community Youth Support Scheme, and I believe that that will come into operation shortly. I believe that the life and work skills (LAWS) course referred to has been reduced by half because of a cut-back in Federal Government funding. If the Federal Government feels that it was necessary to do that, I make no argument about it. However, I point out that the adult education classes and the TAFE extension courses are on schedule in Warwick, as always.

The statement and the headline are very misleading, and that worries me greatly. Only last Saturday, advertisements calling for people to take part in adult education courses appeared in the same newspaper. I am worried because there may be a lack of confidence, on the part of people who wish to enrol, in the course being conducted. I urge all people who wish to take part in those educational courses in Warwick and the surrounding districts to go ahead and enrol because, if sufficient enrolments are received, the courses will take place.

I want to return to where I started and urge the media to report news accurately. If, for any reason, a matter is not reported accurately or if, as happened recently, a

matter is reported extremely inaccurately, problems are caused immediately. The greatest problem that can be caused is lack of confidence.

I am appealing to all media reporters to use common sense. It seems to me that, somewhere along the line, a number of young people being educated in the tertiary area are being taught that to report accurately is not in their best interests. I believe that they are being taught to report sensationally. I urge the media to take note of my comments and act responsibly.

Redlands By-election; Government's Economic Performance and Policies

Mr BURNS (Lytton) (12.41 p.m.): I want to say a few words about the Redlands by-election and the problems of developing areas.

Thousands of families have poured into the Redlands area in recent years because of its relaxed style of living and its bayside environment. The rapid growth in Redlands has dramatically proved that the ageing or, should I say, old or ancient National Party Cabinet is unable to relate to the problems of young families who move to new areas and need transport services, adequate water supply, sewerage, street-lighting, hospitals and health services, schools, public protection, jobs, and sporting grounds and facilities.

When one visits Redlands one realises what a problem young people face when the State's leadership is composed of old men such as the Premier and Treasurer (Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen) and Mr Hinze, people who have made their millions, who travel by Government aeroplane, who are driven in ministerial cars, and who live with every possible facility at their disposal. How can they relate to the problems of young people? As they are driven round in their ministerial cars, how can they relate to the problems of young families who are forced to own two cars to get to work or do their shopping or take their children to school or to sports?

Is it any wonder that the old, pampered men of the National Party have forgotten just what hardship the third-party premium increases create when young families, out of necessity, are running two cars. The young people in the Redlands area, and all young people starting a family, do not have a great deal to spend on second cars. In the words of one young Redlands housewife, her car was only worth two or three years' registration and insurance. Because of the way that the Government is increasing registration fees and third-party insurance premiums, in a few years the cost of those items will be greater than the cost of the vehicle to which they relate.

How could an electorate, which was once regarded as a safe National Party seat, be neglected to such a degree that the enrolment at the high school at Cleveland exploded to about 1 900, with the possibility that it will exceed 2 000 next year?

Parents whose teenage children face problems with subjects or TE scores because of the massive school enrolments have been forced to send their students to State high schools and private schools outside the area. Is it because the old men of the National Party do not have children at school today and are thus out of touch with the reality of the ordinary families living in booming areas?

The thousands of families who have poured into Redlands and commute daily to Brisbane—by car, too—could be misled by the Premier's promise relative to the provision of an electrified railway line to Wellington Point and his promise that it will be continued to Cleveland in years to come, into thinking that that was the result of long-term planning by the Government for the Redlands area. They would not remember that the ageing Premier was a member of the National Party Government that was so lacking in foresight that, in 1960, it ripped up the railway line to Cleveland.

Residents of Redlands protested strongly at that time that the area was one of the State's most beautiful residential areas and that it would become one of the State's most popular residential suburbs. But the out-of-touch millionaires—the tired old men of the National Party—forgot the problems of the young commuter, ignored the advice of the people of Redlands and ripped up the railway line. Twenty-five years later they can take little credit for putting it back.

The Premier went to Redlands the other night and promised more police out of the 104 additional officers that he announced last month in the State Budget. He and every other member of the National Party have been promising their electorates a share of those additional officers since they were announced. The 104 police officers will not go very far if every electorate has to share them.

The Premier's promise sounds more and more hollow when one stops to look at the facts. The Redlands area is covered by the Wynnum Police District. The Wynnum Police Station has actually lost numbers in the last three years, even though it caters for 55 000 people in the booming Redlands area.

In 1982, Wynnum had a total of 74 uniformed police officers. The following year that number dropped to 68 and, in the annual report tabled yesterday, Wynnum is said to have only 67 uniformed police officers. I am citing the figures in the annual report tabled by the Minister for Lands, Forestry and Police (Mr Glasson). So any additional police allocated to the Redlands area through the Wynnum district will not even make up for the drop in numbers experienced over the last three years. The population of Redlands has gone through the ceiling, yet no additional police have been provided.

Add to that the fact that the Redlands area has experienced a rapid growth in population in the same time and it will be seen just how badly the National Party Government is falling down on its job of providing law and order and protecting life and property.

I could go on speaking about local issues in the Redlands area—about the massive unemployment, the dead end facing young children leaving school because the Government is out of touch with their needs and aspirations. I could speak at length about the problems of the people at Amity, where the township is being swept away by erosion and ignored by the Government, about the environmental destruction, about the lack of facilities on bay islands and about the dead end road to nowhere. As a fisherman, I could speak of the need for a proper hospital with emergency services and the need for a helicopter to effect rescues and urgently evacuate people on bay islands and on the bay itself. The basic question that voters must decide is the party in Government under which they will be better off.

Queenslanders live in the best State in Australia. They enjoy the best climate and have more rich, natural resources than do people in other States. However, the plain truth is that, after almost 30 years of National and Liberal Party Government, ordinary Queenslanders are worse off than the people in other States.

I will now draw some comparisons. Queensland's average weekly earnings are the lowest in Australia. The Queensland all-male average rate is $370 a week. That is almost $30 a week less than the Australian average of $397. In Queensland, the average rate for females is $241 a week, compared with $263 for Australia. Last year, Queensland was the only State in which average weekly earnings declined. Why did that happen? If all that the Liberal and National Party members have said is true—if the State is booming under the National Party—why do our families get less in their pay-packets than do people in other States? Why are they not getting a greater share of the State's wealth?

I will now present some statistics on the cost of motor vehicle insurance on a six-cylinder car. In Brisbane, the cost is $319, in Sydney, $280, and in Melbourne, $248. The cost of car insurance in Melbourne is $71 a year cheaper than it is in Brisbane.

A litre of milk costs 78c in Brisbane, 74c in Sydney and 72c in Melbourne.

Even beef sausages are dearer in Brisbane. They cost $3.05 in Brisbane compared with $2.47 in Sydney.

A person affected by the National Party in Government even pays more in Brisbane for toilet rolls. In Brisbane, a 750 ml bottle of beer costs $1.48, but costs only $1.40 in Melbourne.

The average household cost per quarter for electricity in Brisbane is $126.61, in Sydney it is $86.65 and in Melbourne it is $98. The electricity cost for a single pensioner per quarter in Brisbane is $69.93. In Sydney it is $29.82, and in Melbourne it is $50.74. With such a high cost of electricity for the pensioner in Brisbane, the Government is bludging on him.

The Government has boasted about not increasing taxes, but the cost of house insurance, stamp duty and fire levies on a $40,000 house in Brisbane is $67.80, in Sydney it is $16.76 and in Melbourne it is $21.33. Of course, $40,000 homes can no longer be bought in Brisbane. Why should Queenslanders pay so much more under the National Party Government?

In Brisbane, the average gas bill, based on the consumption of 3 830 megajoules, is $40. In Melbourne, for the same quantity of gas, the cost is $26. Brisbane people, on average, pay $14 more than do the people of Melbourne.

In Queensland, the stamp duty payable on the conveyance of a residential property valued at $50,000 for a first-home-buyer is $250. In Victoria, no stamp duty is payable by the first-home-buyer.

In Brisbane, the average local government rates bill is $172, in Sydney it is $112 and in Melbourne it is $147.

Mr McPHIE: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member for Lytton is deliberately misleading the House by presenting incorrect statistics. The correct statistics can be obtained from the Minister at any time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! There is no personal reflection. There is no point of order.

Mr BURNS: The following table indicates what the average person in Australia had in savings bank deposits as at August 1985—

	$ per person
New South Wales	2,251
Victoria	3,510
Queensland	1,238
South Australia	2,303
Western Australia	1,751
Tasmania	2,872
Australian average	2,566

I ask honourable members to note well that the Queensland figure is $1,238. Queenslanders get less money in their pockets in wages and end up with less money in the bank because the Government bludges on them. Do not let anyone say that it is not the Government's fault. That is rubbish.

The price of almost every commodity I listed is set by the National Party. The electricity price is controlled by the Government. The milk price is controlled by the Government. The Government has the right to control the public bar price of beer. The National Party controls stamp duty and the fire levy. Car registration fees and compulsory third-party insurance premiums are controlled by the National Party.

All Queenslanders should ask themselves a number of questions. After all the promises—after all the years of National-Liberal Party Government propaganda—how am I better off? Why am I worse off? If all that the Premier says is true, why are there not enough policemen to protect my life and property? Why are the State's hospitals so short staffed? Why is there no hospital in Redlands? Why do my children sit in temporary class-rooms that are 15 years old? Why are my power bills so high? Why is there no concession on power bills for pensioners? Why do I have to pay so much to register my car?

I ask honourable members to go out and ask their friends and neighbours this question: In a State as rich as ours, why is the ordinary Queensland family finding it

so hard to make ends meet? Why are Queenslanders worse off financially than their fellow-Australians? Who is getting the major benefit from the State's wealth? Who is making money out of bauxite, coal and wheat?

It is my submission that the people of Redlands should ask themselves this: Why are Queenslanders the lowest paid Australians yet are paying the highest Government charges and end up with less in the bank than other Australians?

Time expired.

Persian Carpet Sales Companies

Mr BAILEY (Toowong) (12.51 p.m.): I found the speech of the honourable member for Lytton (Mr Burns) very interesting, but the only question that he did not ask was why the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Warburton) did not lead the attack.

One of the most blatant rip-offs in Queensland concerns a group of unscrupulous operators who advertise Persian carpets at extraordinary discount prices. A company named Dela Persian and Oriental Carpets and another that trades under the name of Persian Carpet Gallery are misleading the gullible carpet-buyers of Queensland, as they have misled the carpet-buyers down south to the tune of millions of dollars. Four families are involved, and they are the most unscrupulous lot of con men who have operated in Australia for a long time.

Thousands of people have bought their products in the sincere belief that they have bought legitimate Persian or Afghan carpets which will increase in value over time. They are led to that belief because they are told that they have bought Persian carpets at bargain prices. What they have actually bought are cheap Pakistani or Indian counterfeits or poor-quality Persian cast-offs.

I have with me today one of the expensive ads that these rip-off merchants use in their underhand trade. This particular advertisement is not the most expensive example of their fraud, but it shows that people in all income brackets are affected. The advertisement claims that a so-called receivership sale is to be held. The ad refers to the company being under threat of receivership, which is an interesting advertising concept. It is a bit like a "we-might-be-closing-down-sale". The most expensive rug on offer at the sale has a recommended retail price of $6,500 but, for the sale, it has been reduced to $2,595. The actual value of the carpet, all up—that is, with all the profit included—is about $2,000. I will not list all the carpets for sale, but I will table the advertisement if honourable members wish to see it.

Some people in Queensland paid $18,000 for what they believed was a genuine Persian carpet, but its real value was in the vicinity of $5,000. Indeed, the carpet may not even have been a Persian carpet, and the life of the so-called investment is not long. However, to reassure the gullible buyer, these con men guarantee to buy back the carpets at double their value in six years' time.

One marvellous advertisement, which was published in *The Australian* of 2 July 1981, guaranteed the authenticity of the carpets. It also claimed that it was to be the biggest sale ever. A Certificate A would be given with a sale, and the operators promised that they would pay the original price plus 100 per cent after six years. Of course, they are not around in six years' time and the prices that they offer to pay for these counterfeit rugs is about four or five times the real value of the fraudulent investment.

These operators are being prosecuted already in New South Wales and South Australia, and I understand that action is pending in Queensland. However, at the same time, they are still selling their bogus carpets to hundreds of gullible Queenslanders, who are literally buying a pig in a poke.

One can only wonder how these carpets are allowed into Australia so easily. When the carpets come in through Perth, their values are declared at inflated prices. For example, a carpet worth $250, which is made in Pakistan, is brought in as a Persian carpet. The declared retail value is put at $1,000. Because it is made in Pakistan, which

is a Third World country, it does not attract any duty. The carpet is then sent to another State and is advertised as being worth $6,000 but, in a special deal, it is reduced to half price, that is, $3,000. It sounds to be a most extraordinary deal but, in fact, the carpet, which is not what the unsuspecting purchaser thinks it is, is really worth about $250. That is not a bad mark-up, is it? However, what is worse is that the purchaser really thinks that he or she has bought a genuine Persian or Afghan rug that will increase in value.

One of the problems in attempting to stop the Pakistani and Iranian con men is that most of those who have been conned are too embarrassed to admit it. They would rather take a bath and lose hundreds or thousands of dollars than lose face by admitting that they have been conned. I challenge those who have bought carpets from these dealers to have them independently valued. I suggest that a person in Brisbane whose integrity cannot be challenged is Herman Korn of Unikorn Oriental Rug Company.

The Trade Practices Commission is very interested in all these gentlemen. I have confidential information not only that they are dealing in counterfeit carpets and making outrageously inaccurate claims about their value and quality, but also that grave suspicions are held that the carpets are used as a front for the importation of drugs into Australia. These con men are quite capable of any low dealing, but that has yet to be confirmed. However, it is thought that some of the carpets are impregnated with drugs and then exported to Australia amongst the hundreds or thousands of carpets—sometimes tens of thousands are imported in a bulk shipment—that come to this country. On arrival in Australia, the drugs are removed from the carpets. I hope that, in the near future, Federal investigators will discover the validity of their suspicions.

Of the other activities of these men, there is no doubt. The Trade Practices Commission has interviewed Ayaz Haffad and Ahmad Djaffari about those advertisements, particularly because there is no doubt that they are misleading and deceptive. One of the rip-offs is the Iranian silk rug. These are made cheaply in Iran and are sold here for three times their real value. The buyer is given what is called a Certificate A, to which I referred earlier. That certificate guarantees that in six years the carpet will increase in value at least twofold and that the seller undertakes to repurchase it at twice the price at the end of that period. As in that time the value of the rug will not be anywhere near even the original purchase price, let alone double in value, that is an extraordinary claim.

One cannot prevent people from being stupid or gullible, but it is extraordinary that fraudulent operators such as those con men—those foreign thieves—can operate for so long almost with impunity from prosecution. Obviously, the difficulty is to get people to testify. Embarrassment is one thing. Although some pretty wealthy and influential people have been caught, they owe it to the community to admit that they have been conned and to help prosecute those parasites who are making it very difficult for legitimate traders to operate. Because of the operations of those charlatans, one can only wonder whether the Persian carpet industry now has any credibility at all.

One of my constituents, who was one of the original suckers, paid $22,000 for four of these rugs. All have been valued at about one-third of the price she paid, yet she has been promised that by the end of this year she will be paid $44,000 by the Persian Carpet Gallery. Her chances of getting that are about the same as the chances of survival of a snowflake in hell. She is now stuck with these highly overvalued carpets. She quite likes one of them, which cost her $15,500. She has received an independent valuation that it is really worth $5,000, which is $10,500 less than she paid for it. She is still negotiating, but her chances of obtaining a resolution are negligible. I suppose that that rug will have to remain as an expensive wall-hanging for her and a sad lesson in how con men, if they have a reasonable tale to tell, can get away with murder.

Most of the carpets are imported en masse from Britain. More and more countries are supplying these counterfeit Persian rugs. Albania now has a very successful trade in supplying high-quality replicas, as do China and Egypt. There is nothing wrong with

making replicas. The problems arise when unscrupulous dealers buy them and sell them as the real thing to an ill-informed public.

Four families are involved in this trade, with Haffaz, Djaffari and Chaudrey being the principal operators. I hope that the Trade Practices Commission will get them. Chaudrey has managed to beat one fraud charge in South Australia, but he will stand trial in a trade practices action next February. However, in the meantime, the huge and expensive full-page advertisements continue to appear and the trusting public queues up to be taken. One can only ask the newspaper-publishers, who have been warned of the matter by the Trade Practices Commission, not to run the advertisements. The public needs to be aware of these smooth-talking carpet-baggers who are making a fraudulent fortune. Over the past few years, that must have run into millions, and they are still operating.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 36A, the time allotted for the debate on matters of public interest has now expired.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.15 p.m.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES' SUPERANNUATION RESTORATION BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 15 October (see p. 1976) on Mr I. J. Gibbs's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr UNDERWOOD (Ipswich West) (2.15 p.m.): There are some general points that I wish to put to honourable members, to the Minister and to the Government. First, the people in the Ipswich area who have been sacked are good, fine, outstanding citizens. They have come from good families and they have raised good families in our community. Because they dared to stand up for their rights, they were sacked and victimised totally. Some families have split up, others have been destroyed. The children from those families have suffered immense social and mental trauma because of the stress that has been placed on them. A Minister, who sits in his big car or his soft ministerial chair, with all his departmental officers and public relations people around him, with an expense account and other privileges, can become totally isolated from the facts of life. Decisions made by Cabinet are supported by the Government's back-benchers.

Because of the Government's continuing decisions in the electricity industry dispute, good families and good citizens of this State are being dragged continually into the gutter. The livelihood and the lives of many people are being destroyed. The Minister for Mines and Energy, the Premier and Treasurer (Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen) and the Government have had a big win on that issue. They achieved what they set out to do. They set out to humble the trade union movement and to put it back in what they considered to be its place. They have achieved that goal.

It is now time for the Government to be magnanimous in victory and give back to those people their lives and their families. They should be given an opportunity to regain their self-esteem and their esteem in their families' eyes so that they can begin putting their families back together. I plead with the Minister and his Government to give those people a go. Members of the Government put themselves forward as Christian men and women who are members of a Christian Government. Let us have some of the old basic Bible-bashing Christianity. It does not matter to which sect or religion one belongs, everyone has a common belief, which is to love one's enemy, to turn the other cheek, and to help those in need. The Minister should put some of those beliefs into operation.

As the Minister has not done very much listening yet, I ask him to listen for a couple of moments. I ask him to respond to my plea on behalf of the people I have

mentioned, particularly my constituents and those persons in the Ipswich area. The Government has had its big win. The Government has put the union in the place in which it believes it should be. The Government has its legislation in place. It has further dragged the police force into disrepute. Now that the Government has done all those things, let some Christianity prevail and let the Government give back the jobs to those workers. It is a simple Christian request of a Christian Government. I do not use those words facetiously; I use them genuinely.

Because of the hostility that has been generated in the electricity industry dispute, I do not expect that the Minister would have had very much personal contact with the sacked workers or their families. The Premier and Treasurer and the Minister refuse to meet the wives of the families who wish to state their views and tell them about the drastic situations into which their families have been dragged. The Premier and Treasurer and the Minister for Mines and Energy will say, "We gave them an opportunity to go back to work and they refused to take it." That is a spurious response.

Everyone knows the industrial position. It is the history of Australia that everyone gets in and has a go. However, when the battle is over, both sides shake hands and get on with the job. The Government does not want to shake hands and allow everyone to get on with his job. The Government wants to kick people further down the gutter. It wants to grind them down even further.

Mr FitzGerald: Do you want the Government to go round knocking on the doors and inviting each one to come back?

Mr UNDERWOOD: Yes, I do. I want exactly that. I want the Government to go round knocking on the doors and inviting them to come back.

The Government should invite the sacked SEQEB workers to return to work in such a way that they do not lose their self-respect and the respect of their families, their friends and the community in general. The good old Australian tradition is that one sticks by his mates. People do not dob in their mates. That is something that everybody learnt at school. The honourable member for Lockyer does not dob in some of the corrupt Ministers in this Government. Not once has he done that. He is one of its most vocal supporters because he adheres to that very Australian tradition.

Mr FitzGerald: You are saying that Ministers are corrupt, and that is casting aspersions on Ministers in this House.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will not tolerate exchanges.

Mr UNDERWOOD: What I was saying to the noisy member for Lockyer is that he adheres to that cultural tradition as part of the Australian and Queensland way of life. It is that same culture and background, which is an integral part of society, that is stopping these sacked workers scabbing on their mates and their principles. Those men refused to get down in the drain-hole and crawl back to work.

Some of the sacked men have been forced to return to work because the family situation was intolerable. Men returned to work to avoid a split-up of their families. For a Christian Government to put married people, who have sworn allegiance to each other for life in wedlock, into such a position is beyond belief. All I can say is that it is one of the most unchristian acts that could be perpetrated on people, particularly people who love one another.

Perhaps he will not do it this week or next week, but I plead with the Minister and the Premier—when the Redlands by-election is over—to allow these people to return to work under proper conditions—and it can be done—so that neither side loses face and both sides can still command respect. I point out once again that the Government has had a tremendous victory, and it should be magnanimous in victory, not vicious and vindictive as it continues to be.

I have spoken to sacked SEQEB workers in my electorate who were on the verge of retiring and receiving benefits from the superannuation scheme. All honourable

members know how dear and important superannuation is to workers. Recently, this House passed amending legislation to overcome what were believed to be anomalies in the parliamentary scheme. That happened as a result of the death of the late member for Archerfield (Mr Hooper). The family of Kevin Hooper have missed out on a superannuation pay-out, so this House passed legislation to change the rules. All honourable members know how important superannuation is to families.

Mr FitzGerald: It was in this House well before that. You are incorrect with regard to Kevin Hooper.

Mr UNDERWOOD: The point I make is that Kev Hooper's death helped it along.

Mr FitzGerald: It was in the House before then.

Mr UNDERWOOD: It does not matter when it was before the House. My point is that honourable members realise the importance of superannuation to families.

The Minister and the Government must surely realise what a devastating blow it was that has been dealt to those men and their families, particularly the men who were on the verge of retiring. Honourable members can imagine what it would be like if parliamentary superannuation was wiped out tomorrow. That would be a devastating blow to honourable members.

Mrs Chapman: The unions caused a lot of the problem, too. Everybody listened to the unions, and they led the workers up the garden path.

Mr UNDERWOOD: The honourable member for Pine Rivers has just entered the Chamber. I invite her to read in *Hansard* what I have said. That is the sort of bitchiness and vindictiveness about which I have just spoken. It is time that it was put aside.

As I have said, the Government has had a big win. It achieved what it set out to achieve. I repeat that it is now time for the Government to be magnanimous and allow these ordinary, decent citizens and their families to get on with living and put some semblance of humanity back into their lives.

Mrs CHAPMAN: I rise to a point of order. I sincerely hope that the honourable member for Ipswich West was not referring to me as being bitchy.

Mr UNDERWOOD: Let me say, Mr Speaker, "If the cap fits, wear it."

Mrs CHAPMAN: I rise to a point of order. I believe that the member for Ipswich West was referring to me. I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Ipswich West will withdraw that comment.

Mr UNDERWOOD: I withdraw it.

The Government has won a victory by being able to instil fear into unionists and other workers who were regarded by the community as being very strong. Because of its threats, the fear and the $50,000 fines, the Government has had its way. However, it will be a hollow victory, firstly, because a Government that regards itself as being Christian is committing some of the most unchristian acts ever perpetrated by any Government upon its people and, secondly, because of the fear instilled in the community. I suggest to the Government that, if it wishes to overcome the backlash that will come from the community, it must be magnanimous.

Most Queenslanders thought that the SEQEB dispute was simply about turning the lights off and on. However, the Government has not confined its industrial action to SEQEB, but is spreading it throughout areas of the Queensland Public Service, including, recently, the Justice Department. As more and more employers take their cue from the Government's lead, more and more people in the community who thought that they were totally dissociated from the effects of the SEQEB dispute and the Government's

legislation are discovering that they are being financially and socially disadvantaged by the dispute.

The effects are not being limited merely to those in the work-place and their families. Business, particularly smaller business, is realising that, once the community is affected, less money is available to be spent across the counter. Small business needs cash flow, which it gets from customers. The more cash that the customers have to spend, the more profitable is the business. One of the Government's aims in the dispute is to reduce the incomes of workers. Business is beginning to realise that the Government's action is affecting it as well.

I repeat that it has been brought about by the Government's use of fear tactics. One of its principal weapons, of course, is the $50,000 fine. I have seen grown men cry as the result of the pressure imposed on them through worry about their future. Fine, upstanding citizens have been reduced to tears by the Government's pressure on them, their families and their workmates. That is not a reason for pride, I suggest to National Party members. It should not cause them to throw out their chests. If I had been responsible, I would be hiding wherever I could.

One could refer to the many problems that have been experienced by those affected. I have attempted to put my point to the Minister and the Government. I am sure that, in the immediate future, no notice will be taken, but my final plea is that, if they are really Christian gentlemen—a Christian back-bench led by a Christian Premier—they should act in a Christian fashion.

Mr FitzGerald: You are thumping it a bit hard, aren't you?

Mr UNDERWOOD: I am, because it is so damned important. Does the member for Lockyer realise how many hundreds of families are affected and how many have split up as a result? People who have sworn to love each other have broken apart as a result of the dispute and the pressure imposed on them by the Government. The Australian way of doing things is that, after a dispute, the parties shake hands and get on with it. That is not the attitude of Government members, however. I plead with them to adopt the Australian tradition by shaking hands and getting on with the business. They have had a big win. Let them do something about living up to the principles that they are always talking about.

Mr D'ARCY (Woodridge) (2.30 p.m.): The member for Ipswich West (Mr Underwood) has dealt with some of the trials and tribulations suffered by SEQEB workers and their families. Our shadow spokesman, the honourable member for Nudgee (Mr Vaughan), has provided me with background information on a few of those involved. I wish to read them to the House. They are very interesting.

Mr Vaughan: That is only a small sample.

Mr D'ARCY: This is a small sample, as the honourable member for Nudgee has said, of cases in which people have lost superannuation benefits through action taken by the Government over the strike by members of the Electrical Trades Union.

Mr FitzGerald: Fair go. You said, "action taken by the Government".

Mr D'ARCY: That is right, and the honourable member for Lockyer will have to wait till I can deal with him.

The first case involves "KS", who, as at last June, would have been employed in the industry for 37 years. He left the Southern Electric Authority of Queensland in 1973 and collected superannuation. He then joined the Brisbane City Council in 1974 and became a contributor to the superannuation scheme that operated in the Brisbane City Council. He will be 60 years of age next July and, on a rough calculation, he has lost between $28,000 and $30,000.

Based on a rough estimate, "AM" lost between $30,000 and $40,000. For 18 years, he was employed as a tradesman's assistant on substation construction. He planned to

retire when he reached 59 years of age. Although he has tried to obtain other jobs, he is too old and has also been injured by carrying out certain work when he was employed by the South East Queensland Electricity Board.

Another man, "BO", had contributed to the superannuation scheme for 10 years. From his salary, he has paid something like $8,000. He is presently 50 years of age, and he had been working in the electricity industry for 20 years. His superannuation pay-out amounted to $8,000.

"McL" worked for SEQEB at Rocklea, having joined the Southern Electric Authority of Queensland in 1966. In 1968, he started to contribute to the superannuation scheme, and continued to do so for 17 years. His pay-out amounted to $12,000 plus 5 per cent. He is 45 years of age, and he has lost a total of $80,000 if his contribution is calculated on a multiplication factor of 7.5.

"OM" was one of the lucky ones, and he was able to stay with the Brisbane City Council superannuation scheme, which, at the age of 33, he joined in 1952. As he had reached the age of 55 years, he voluntarily retired. At that stage, he had lost from $25,000 to $30,000, which he would not have lost had he retired at 60 years of age.

"JA" is probably the worst case I have come across. He started work with the Brisbane City Council, and worked in the industry for 23 years. He contributed to the superannuation scheme for 22 years but received a pay-out of only $12,322.54. If honourable members received a pay-out of $12,000 after 22 years of contributing, they would do some screaming. At the time of his dismissal, his annual salary was $20,509.32. Based on the multiplication factor of 8, which is the highest multiplication factor provided by the scheme, the pay-out on retirement at 60 years of age would have been $164,074. Through action taken by the Government in this instance, he has lost $151,752. He will be 40 years of age next month.

Those people represent some of the cases of hardship that have been caused by the Government. Despite the parroting of Government members, I do not think that any honourable member in this House could be unsympathetic towards people who have lost so much money because of action taken by the Government.

Government Members interjected.

Mr D'ARCY: If similar loss was caused by any other action taken by any other organisation, I am sure that all honourable members would be very sympathetic. I am equally sure that each and every case would receive widespread publicity in the media.

The subject that I wish to raise within the context of the Bill relates to investments made by the superannuation board. The Bill refers to the acquisition of funds through the scheme and the way in which the scheme works. This Government has a shocking investment record when it comes to selectively propping up companies that operate in Queensland. Consequently, because many of these companies have gone to the wall, the Queensland tax-payers have lost millions and millions of dollars. The Auditor-General's report on the Treasurer's Annual Statement—if it is able to be found, stuck away in a corner somewhere—states as follows—

> "The amount of $1 250 002 shown in the statement below represents the cost of shares in Suttons Foundry Pty. Ltd. The Company has since been placed in receivership. Losses if any have not yet been determined."

That is one instance in which $1,200,000 has been lost by virtue of the Queensland Government's investment in that company. A former Treasurer, Dr Llew Edwards, used to refer to the Government's investment in shares in Evans Deakin Industries as paper losses. Surely those losses will become a reality.

What concerns me is that the Queensland Government is directing superannuation schemes that cover quango employees, such as the one referred to in the Electricity Supply Industry Employees' Superannuation Restoration Bill, to invest in certain Queensland-controlled companies. I have been critical of one such company in the House.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to the fact that the honourable member for Woodridge has mentioned superannuation schemes operated by the Government. He said that the Queensland Government directs boards to do certain things. However, I point out that the scheme referred to in the Bill is operated by a board that has nothing to do with the Queensland Government. The honourable member has addressed his remarks to a Government superannuation scheme, which has nothing to do with the provisions of the Bill.

Mr D'ARCY: May I clarify that, Mr Speaker? I am referring to the investment in Bartlett by the Queensland Electricity Supply Industry Superannuation Board, which operates a superannuation scheme that is directly referred to in this Bill.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I must pursue this matter. The honourable member said that the Government directed the Electricity Supply Industry Superannuation Board, which is quite wrong. That board is run in accordance with the Act, and the investments that the honourable member is talking about relate to the Government and have nothing to do with the electricity superannuation scheme in any way, shape or form.

Mr Davis: Sit down. You don't know what you're talking about.

Mr D'ARCY: I will accept the Minister's assurance——

Mr I. J. GIBBS: I would like the remarks of the honourable member for Brisbane Central withdrawn. They are offensive to me and he made them from other than his usual place.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! In the first instance, the Minister rose on a point of order relating to the superannuation scheme, and I believe that that has been accepted. The Minister rose on another point of order and asked that the honourable member for Brisbane Central withdraw certain comments.

Mr Davis: For what?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Would the Minister repeat the comments? I am not sure what they were.

Mr I. J. GIBBS: Perhaps we ought not pursue that, Mr Speaker. It is not worth wasting the time of the House, because nobody takes any notice of him, anyway.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D'ARCY: I will accept the Minister's assurance. I was querying whether or not the Queensland Government had instructed the superannuation board to invest in Queensland companies as part of its portfolio. When one looks at the overall portfolio of Australian stocks held by the superannuation board, one finds that it is not a badly balanced portfolio. If I were giving advice, I would say that it is a fairly good portfolio except for the Queensland content.

It was brought to my attention by a member of the superannuation scheme that the Queensland Government had directed the board, so I accept the Minister's assurance that no direction was given to the board. I might add that, according to a Touche Ross and Co. report, the address of the Queensland Electricity Supply Industry Superannuation Board—I would like an explanation from the Minister about this—is 18th Floor, 447 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria. So much for the Queensland content. That information appears under the listing of holders of units in the Bartlett Property Trust. The document from which I obtained the information is actually a computer print-out. It shows that the board has an investment of about 200 000 units in the Bartlett Property Trust, which has been under a cloud since its inception. A very senior member of the Brisbane Stock Exchange—for his own protection I will not name him—has said privately that the trust has been a fishy operation from the start. It certainly had problems, just like those of the Telford group which I exposed in this House long before they became

general knowledge and long before investors lost millions of dollars. The trust has received the attention of the Queensland Corporate Affairs office, and will have that stigma attached to it.

A newspaper article published yesterday stated—

> "The Queensland-based Bartlett Property Trust whose units have dropped in value from $1 to 88c since the last Norths' report—has received a blast from the authors.
>
> 'The quality of the assets of the Bartlett Property Trust is questionable at best,' the report says, giving Bartlett a 'not recomended' listing. 'Ignoring the land held for redevelopment and resale, the trust is heavily dependent on the sale of liquor,' the authors say.
>
> The $23 million Bartlett Trust is described as very risky, 'with its main operations resulting from rentals tied to liquor sales, speculative land development and redevelopment of the Florida Hotel at Terrigal.'
>
> The tenant of most of the Bartlett properties is related to the manager, which according to Bradfield and Shackell creates the same conflict of interest of which Telford was accused."

That was where Telford stumbled.

An article in today's issue of *The Sydney Morning Herald* states that investment in the Bartlett Property Trust is listed as number 37 in risk value. It also states that it is not recommended. From the inception, Bartletts had trouble with the National Companies and Securities Commission. According to *The Courier-Mail* reporter at the time, John Hale, much of the necessary information was not supplied by the Queensland Corporate Affairs Commission, and there was conflict between the commission and the NCSC about the information supplied by Bartletts. When the company secretary of Bartletts was asked earlier this year why the high operation costs were not geared to proper rentals, he told *Australian Business*—

> "This is very much a marketing exercise. We're looking at maximising the return for our investors. I don't care where it comes from."

That is a very dangerous approach in dealing with a trust of such magnitude. He also said that the high lease figures reflect the high turnover of the outlet. In January, in commenting on the properties, the Norths survey said—

> "We have inspected all the Bartlett Property-Trust properties, excepting Barlett's Club Tavern. Unfortunately we are not particularly keen on any of them. . . . all properties backed into the trust from the Bartlett group have been transferred at a projected net yield of 10.59 per cent (the stockbroker Wilson and Co in its letter says 10.57 per cent) per annum. We have difficulty understanding why all five properties, all different, all located between Townsville in the north and a suburb of Sydney in the south, can all yield exactly 10.59 per cent."

Mr R. J. Gibbs: If they had listened to you, they would never have got into trouble.

Mr D'ARCY: That is so.

Some time ago, when I asked the Minister in charge of corporate affairs whether the Bartlett Property Trust was up to date in paying its licensing fees, and what backlog was owing to the Government, I learnt that the amount was very substantial.

The money of these workers is being invested by a superannuation board in a very risky project. The shares dropped a further 1c yesterday. At the moment, they are being propped up only by the guarantee that Bartletts gave to the stock exchange about paying a high rate of interest.

In the same way as Telford, the Bartlett Trust has severe liquidity problems. I do not say, as I did with Telford, that Bartlett cannot trade out of its problems, but certainly the Bartlett Trust is not the type of investment for superannuation funds. In fact, the Queensland investments reek of patronage.

The buying of these shares by a quango or superannuation board appointed by the Queensland Government must be of concern to all Queenslanders, particularly in the light of the Queensland Government's record of propping up Queensland companies for reasons that members of this House, the average investor, and investment advisers will find it difficult to understand.

Hon. I. J. GIBBS (Albert—Minister for Mines and Energy) (2.44 p.m.), in reply: The three members of the Opposition who spoke covered some of the matters in the Bill. As I understand it, no-one is really opposing the Bill. However, Opposition members took the opportunity to make certain comments. The Opposition spokesman, the honourable member for Nudgee, was quite constructive in producing certain facts. It is unfortunate that the member for Ipswich West—I do not say that his speech was not sincere—seemed to dwell on Christianity. In taking a Christian attitude, perhaps I can answer the honourable member for Woodridge in the same way.

The honourable member for Ipswich West (Mr Underwood) blamed the Government for the whole affair. He spoke also about Christianity. I wonder whether he thinks that the attitude of a handful of people who held two and a-half million people in this State to ransom and blacked them out was Christian. Because streetlights and stoplights were not working, road accidents occurred, some of which resulted in deaths. I know that, in my own electorate, many people feel insecure without streetlights, and as all honourable members are aware, especially those who have served on local councils, people complain about not having street-lighting. The striking electricity workers jeopardised the security of every Queenslander. Hospitals and health services were affected and, because there was no light and power, the entire Queensland economy was put in jeopardy. A handful of people denied millions of Queenslanders the right to the power for which they had paid; yet the member for Ipswich West spoke about Christianity.

The honourable member for Ipswich West did not mention the 5 000 people who had nothing to do with the electricity industry but who were forced to join the dole queue because they lost their jobs as a result of the power strike. Probably many of them have not yet got their jobs back. Indeed, during the strike, many businesses went bankrupt. Supermarkets threw out up to $20,000-worth of perishable goods. Countless individuals also had to throw out food and were faced with much hardship because of the strike.

The honourable member for Ipswich West should question Dinny Madden, who is the grub of the Electrical Trades Union. He should be put out of the union movement by the movement itself. He is the man who misled the electricity workers and dragged them into the mire that they cannot get out of. He is still telling them lies.

At a conference held in the Industrial Commission on a night when Commissioners Ledlie and Birch and 80,000 other people had the roofs of their houses blown off, their windows blown in and had lost power, Dinny Madden stood before the commission and refused to obey its direction to let his men return to work to carry out vital repairs. What he said at that conference was quoted in all the papers, and it appears in the record of proceedings. He said that it was not on. Finally, he was ordered to let his men return to work, and the men reacted admirably when he obeyed the commission's order. But Dinny Madden was too silly to carry on in a proper manner after that; he continued to mislead his men. He is the man who should be condemned by the honourable member for Ipswich West. Those men sacked themselves; they were given the opportunity to come back to work, and many did.

The honourable member for Woodridge (Mr D'Arcy) spoke about the men who missed out on their superannuation, and he cited two or three cases. I must admit that that is sad, because many people did not have enough backbone to stand on their own. The member for Ipswich West suggested that the Government had destroyed the lives of those men and their families. The fact is that they thought more of fellows such as Dinny Madden than they did of their own families. I wonder how much love there is between those men and their wives.

The unions stand condemned for ever over a case involving two Redland Bay men close to retirement. One was a member of the ALP and the other a member of the National Party. At the time of the strike they were only a few weeks from retirement. The union members pushed the ALP man back through the gate and told him to go and hide in the corner. What did they do to the National Party man? Because they have threatened to bash this man up, I will not name him. The member of the National Party, who was a great supporter of the late John Goleby, was told by the union members that they would take to his family and his grandchildren, and they would do him in as well. I have had that man in my office and that happening is a fact of life. The case knocks right out of the ring all of those cases mentioned by the member for Woodridge (Mr D'Arcy).

The member for Woodridge spoke a lot of waffle and codswallop. If he knew what he was talking about, he would be a little more knowledgeable. Perhaps I will give him some knowledge now. The superannuation board does an excellent job. It has an excellent staff. Its investment has been superb. What the member for Woodridge spoke about was the share portfolio, which is not handled by the board. It is handled by two of the best investment companies in the world—the National Mutual Life Association and the AMP Society. By agreement with the board, those companies handle the share investment portfolio. In that field, there are no more successful companies in this State or in Australia. So the board had nothing to do with the choice of the share portfolio. Perhaps that piece of information might help the honourable member for Woodridge to understand how professional the board is and how it goes about its business.

My advice to the member for Ipswich West (Mr Underwood) is that he study Christianity and the full circumstances on both sides of the industry. That would show him what a handful of men did to the people of Queensland and what Dinny Madden did to 80 000 people in Brisbane and to the rest of the people in Queensland. While the State Emergency Service was helping people on a voluntary basis by putting tarpaulins on roofs, Mr Madden would not let his union-members—either on double-time or treble-time—do the job that they were employed to do. Following on from the statements of the member of Ipswich West—if Mr Madden's life depended on his regard for the Christian ethic, he would die.

Motion (Mr I. J. Gibbs) agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 14, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr I. J. Gibbs, by leave, read a third time.

ELECTRICITY (INDUSTRIAL CAUSES AND CONTINUITY OF SUPPLY) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading—Resumption of Debate

Debate resumed from 8 October (see p. 1642) on Mr I. J. Gibbs's motion—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr VAUGHAN (Nudgee) (2.56 p.m.): Following the Government's declaration of a state of emergency on Thursday, 7 February this year, on Monday, 11 February, an Order in Council was issued giving the South East Queensland Electricity Board the right to enter into a contract of service with any person whose employment would normally be covered by the provisions of the Electrical Engineering Award—State and thereafter to employ such person in accordance with the terms of that contract.

The Order in Council provided that such contracts would be deemed to contain the provisions of the Electrical Engineering Award—State, except that hours of duty would be 38 per week over 10 days per fortnight and would be for the duration of the state of emergency, which was for a period of one month. The Order in Council also prohibited any strikes.

The purpose of the Order in Council was, of course, to enable SEQEB to engage people under the contract terms to replace SEQEB employees who were sacked from 12 February. As all honourable members know, under the terms prescribed by the Order in Council, a number of New Zealanders took the jobs of the sacked SEQEB workers.

In addition, a number of the sacked SEQEB workers accepted the terms of the contract and returned to work. Some of those workers returned to work voluntarily, some were encouraged to return to work, and others were forced, because of financial and family reasons, to return to work.

I turn now to the situation that existed at that time. I have received information that a number of people were contacted. Some employees went back to inquire about their returning to work. The conditions that were offered to those people show the attitude that existed at that time amongst the people in SEQEB and other places who had the responsibility of handling the situation in relation to return to work.

Three propositions were put to people who made inquiries about returning to work. First, they were told that they would have to make a statutory declaration that would be reviewed by a tribunal—it must be remembered that the Industrial Causes Tribunal was not in existence at that time—an appeals committee. An appeals committee would examine the persons who wanted to return to work.

The people were told that the statutory declaration should contain information in reply to questions such as, "Were you forced to go out on strike?" and "Who forced you?", evidence of harassment and by whom, answers to questions such as, "Were you on leave, compensation leave or on holidays, etc. at the time of the strike?", the names of the men who caused any harassment, the names of pickets, and the names of any workmates who may have urged them to remain on strike. If workers were able to provide such information, subject to the approval of the general manager they would have been re-employed.

That shows the extent to which the Government, SEQEB and other people associated with the electricity industry dispute went. The screws were applied to those employees. The Government and SEQEB wanted to get at them.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr VAUGHAN: As the honourable member for Brisbane Central said, it smacks of Gestapo tactics.

Previously, I heard the honourable member for Pine Rivers (Mrs Chapman) state that the SEQEB workers had an opportunity to return to work. I point out to her that, because of the conditions the sacked workers were forced to accept, they were being asked to split on their mates and to report on them. That sort of thing occurred during the war when people were asked to turn in their friends and to rat on their mates. We live in Queensland, and those people are Australians. Many of the sacked SEQEB workers who have been persecuted and crucified by this Government are returned servicemen.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mr VAUGHAN: Is that true? Did the honourable member for Pine Rivers support the other side during the last world war? I know that the Premier was sympathetic towards the Nazis.

I have dealt with the first proposition put to the men who made inquiries about returning to work. The second proposition was that the men could apply for a job on

the usual SEQEB application form and that the conditions of employment would be as follows—

(1) the signing of a no-strike clause;

(2) a 38-hour week, 10-day fortnight;

(3) no bans or limitations;

(4) no demarcation;

(5) no union membership preferred;

(6) rostered shift-work, two shifts per day, 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., to be worked any five days in seven—

which is contrary to the award provisions, but that did not worry SEQEB—

(7) must be able to start or finish in any depot in the board area—

which is contrary to the award, but that did not worry SEQEB—

(8) must be prepared to live away from home;

(9) industry payment deleted—

which is contrary to the award, but that did not worry SEQEB, either—

(10) employees will be treated as new employees.

That meant that all previous entitlements that had been accumulated were lost and they would commence with no experience payments, no sick-leave entitlements, no annual-leave entitlements and no superannuation entitlements.

The board was prepared to re-employ 50 men under the above conditions, not the 1 000-odd who were dismissed. However, no jobs would be filled until power station operators signed a no-strike agreement. I emphasise that. No jobs would be filled until power station operators signed a no-strike agreement. If that condition had continued to apply, nobody would have been re-employed by SEQEB today, because, as I pointed out last night in my speech to the superannuation legislation that was before the House, none of the power station operators had complied with that particular provision, which was laid down as one of the conditions. I will deal with that further later on.

The third proposition was that men could fill in an application for employment by the board and wait until the board decided that it required them. All local conditions previously agreed to would cease to exist, that is, all of the terms that had been reached over the years to settle disputes were wiped, down the drain. All of the resolutions of problems arising as a result of disputation in the electricity industry were wiped. The whole matter will have to be sorted out again. In the future, these machinations will have to be gone through again.

Finally, there would be no six-hour or eight-hour breaks following call-outs. I have personal knowledge of the six-hour and eight-hour breaks because I negotiated them when I was a representative of the Electrical Trades Union. It took me a few years to solve the problems that were caused to employees in the electricity industry. That solution has now been wiped. It took me two or three years to finally thrash out an agreement with the electricity industry. That agreement has gone by the board.

My point is that even if a person went back to SEQEB and said, "I am interested in returning to work," SEQEB was selective. It was selective because the Government told it to be selective.

Mrs Chapman: It was employing them; it can be.

Mr VAUGHAN: Some time ago, the honourable member for Pine Rivers made the statement that the sacked SEQEB workers had an opportunity to return to work and they did not do so. SEQEB was selective. It wanted to pick the eyes out of those seeking re-employment. Many of the sacked workers who were returned servicemen and had 30-odd years' service with SEQEB were not going to be re-employed. Not all of them had the same opportunity to return to work.

Honourable members would recall that, on 21 February, the Government put forward a six-point proposal, which was published on page 9 of the following day's *Courier-Mail.* The first point was—

> "Power station operators would be required to restore full power and become staff employees with a no-strike agreement."

The power station operators restored full power on the night of the 21st, believing that the terms laid down were negotiable and could lead to a resolution of the dispute. Subsequently, the Premier and Treasurer appeared on television and said that the terms were not negotiable.

Once the Government had laid down six non-negotiable terms, one would have expected them to be complied with. However, the last part of the first point—"and become staff employees with a no-strike agreement"—has never been agreed to. Logically, if the first point was not complied with, why were the following points proceeded with?

The next point began—

> "30 days after the staff agreement . . ."

If there has not been a no-strike agreement by power station operators, how could people return to work?

The remaining five points were—

> "30 days after the staff agreement has been achieved action would be taken to offer re-employment to dismissed SEQEB employees who wish to re-apply for positions.
>
> Any re-employment would be under the new non-strike contract conditions now in place for new employees with a 38 hour week and ten day fortnight.
>
> Such re-employment would only be offered provided the dismissed employees had not previously engaged in any harassment of existing employees and new employees.
>
> If six months after the employment of any dismissed employee there has been no harassment of other employees action would be taken to restore the employee's superannuation and other entitlements.
>
> Harassment at any time after the six month period would be grounds for dismissal."

I repeat that, although power station operators restored full power on the night of 21 February, they have not become staff employees and have not signed no-strike agreements.

Because SEQEB was having trouble recruiting sufficient people to keep SEQEB functioning, selected—I emphasise "selected"—sacked employees were approached by SEQEB staff to return to work on the understanding that they would not have to sign contracts and would be employed under the terms and conditions that they enjoyed prior to being dismissed. So much for the six-point proposal, supposedly non-negotiable, put forward by the Premier!

As the state of emergency expired on 7 March and because the Government wanted to prevent the SEQEB dispute returning to the State Industrial Commission, where it probably would have been resolved—I suggest that it would have been—on 5 March the Government forced the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Bill through Parliament. The contents of that Bill enabled the provisions of the state of emergency to be continued beyond 7 March and prevented the dispute's being resolved by the State Industrial Commission.

Since the SEQEB workers were sacked on 12 February, SEQEB has engaged contractors and industrial mercenaries —I will be kind to them—and re-employed some of the sacked workers to keep SEQEB functioning. The end result is that, within SEQEB, employees are working a 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight under awards other than the Electrical Engineering Award—State, which covered the dismissed workers. Employees

who are covered by the Electrical Engineering Award—State are working a 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight.

New employees are working a 38-hour week, 10-day fortnight under the terms of the contract prescribed by the Order in Council on 11 February and carried on by the provisions of the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act. Re-employed sacked employees are working a 38-hour week, 10-day fortnight under the provisions of the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act. Under the provisions of the Electrical Engineering Award—State, re-employed sacked employees are working a 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight. I point out that that award is no longer known as the Electrical Engineering Award—State. It is now known as the Electricity Supply Industry Engineering Award—State.

Needless to say, SEQEB is not the happy, contented, efficient, smooth-functioning electricity board that the Government and the general manager of SEQEB would have us believe it is. On the contrary, there is serious discontent and disharmony, and morale is as low as it could be.

It is because of the situation that exists within the South East Queensland Electricity Board that the legislation is before us today. Members of the Government and the general manager of SEQEB know very well that SEQEB is in serious trouble. They are trying desperately to rectify the situation that they have created.

SEQEB employees, who have been engaged under the terms of the contracts provided for in the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act and are required to work a 38-hour week, 10-day fortnight, are now realising the extent to which they have been used as pawns by the Government and are naturally far from happy at the double standards that exist. They realise that, whereas they receive the same rates of pay as the SEQEB employees who are working the 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight, not only are they working an extra day a fortnight, but also when they work overtime, their hourly rate of pay is less than that paid to those employees on the 36¼-hour week. Of course, those who are affected and those who are now discontented have accepted that those conditions will apply from 12 February. It must be emphasised that those employees accepted those conditions.

Because of the double standards within SEQEB that are causing growing discontent, the general manager of SEQEB sent the following notice dated 19 September 1985, to all employees—

> "The Minister for Mines and Energy, the Honourable Ivan J. Gibbs, today issued a release advising of the availability of a voluntary Contract of Service available for SEQEB employees."

Emphasis must be placed on the word "voluntary".

The rest of the notice reads—

> "A copy of the Ministerial statement is attached.
>
> I am arranging for a draft copy of the proposed Personal Contract of Service to be made available for issue to all depots.
>
> You are encouraged to closely read the Ministerial statement and the draft Contract and to, in the first instance, address any questions to either your Supervisor, or the appropriate Employee Relations Officer. It is expected that enabling Legislation will be passed within the next week, which will enable these Contracts to be formally offered.
>
> In addition to the Ministerial statement, your attention is drawn to the fact that—
>
> (a) These proposed Contracts are entirely optional, and
>
> (b) The proposed Contracts (except as detailed in the draft Contract) in no way diminish or detract from your rights under the appropriate Award which presently governs your employment.

(c) It is expected that it will be possible for Contracts to be signed on or about 1 November for those employees who wish to proceed.

I am further advised that the Legislation promised by the Honourable the Premier earlier in the year concerning the restoration of superannuation benefits to dismissed employees re-employed will be progressed through Parliament in the next few weeks. As soon as the details of this Legislation are known, I will advise you accordingly.

I recommend that you carefully study the Ministerial Statement and the Contract of Service and consider whether you feel such a Contract would be to your benefit.

(Signed) Wayne Gilbert"

As I said, the general manager of SEQEB referred in that notice to a voluntary contract and emphasised that the contract was entirely optional. However, quite a hard sell went with this so-called voluntary contract. As a matter of fact, I understand that, in certain sections, pressure has been and is continuing to be applied:

I turn now to examine the ministerial statement that is referred to in the notice and that accompanied the notice sent by the general manager of SEQEB. What follows is what the Minister for Mines and Energy (Mr I. J. Gibbs) said—

"All new and re-employed employees of SEQEB since 11 February 1985 employed pursuant to the Electricity Supply Industry Electrical Engineering Award, are bound by the terms and conditions contained in the Electricity Continuity of Supply Act, the principal provisions being—

38 hour week

10 day fortnight

no preference for unions; and

a no strike clause.

As a means of providing equity as between those who are employed under the original terms of employment and those who are employed on terms contained in the Continuity of Supply Act, it is proposed that The South East Queensland Electricity Board make available, on a voluntary basis, a Personal Contract of Service. This Personal Contract of Service could be made available by the QEC and the Electricity Boards throughout Queensland to their employees.

The features of the proposed Personal Contract of Service are—

1. The Contract is voluntary at the option of each individual employee.
2. The parties to the Contract will be the employer and each contracting employee individually.
3. The period of the Contract will be for three years from 1 November 1985, with the provision for and the expectation of renewal thereafter.
4. Each contracting employee personally agrees to—
   (a) Endeavour to provide a continuous supply of electricity
   (b) To work a Ten Day Fortnight
   (c) To work a 38 Hour Week
   (d) Not to strike
   (e) Acknowledge there is no preference in employment
   (f) To accept a dispute settling procedure
   (g) To obey lawful instructions properly given.

The employer agrees—

To pay each year as consideration for the Contract a sum equivalent to 7½% of the normal wage/salary.

It is stressed that this Personal Contract of Service is entirely voluntary at the option of each individual employee."

The employer offered 7½ per cent—as I said, big deal!—provided the employee agreed to all those conditions. I might point out that my information is that the 7½ per cent was arrived at in the following way: a number of employees are working a 38-hour week and others are working a 36¼-hour week—a difference of 1¾ hours. If one takes the 1¾ hours and treats it as overtime and applies the overtime rate of 150 per cent, that comes to 2.625 hours. That is 7.24 per cent of 36¼ hours; hence the magical figure of 7½ per cent that SEQEB is offering to employees to agree to all the provisions that I have outlined and sign their lives away under these contracts.

The Minister used the phrase "as a means of providing equity". Equity for whom? The Minister is saying that those employees who currently enjoy a 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight, which was negotiated for them by their unions, should give that up and should voluntarily agree to a 38-hour week, 10-day fortnight.

Mr Menzel: That's right, too.

Mr VAUGHAN: That is equity the other way round. If the Minister wants to provide equity, he should reduce the fellows on the 38-hour week, 10-day fortnight to a 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight. I am sure that all the engineers and staff in the electricity industry would be very pleased about that.

Mr Davis: Is that the reward for scabbing?

Mr VAUGHAN: Yes. The honourable member should wait and hear the terms of the contract. I repeat that the Minister said—

"This personal contract of service could be made available by the QEC and the Electricity Boards throughout Queensland to their employees."

So there is the sting; and if the other employees of the electricity industry are not now aware of what the Government is about, as far as I am concerned they will be in the not too distant future. At present, there is an undercurrent of discontent flowing right throughout the Queensland electricity industry.

Attached to the notice from the general manager of SEQEB and the Minister's statement was a specimen of the proposed contract of service.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I sought permission from Mr Speaker to have the contract of service incorporated in *Hansard*. I now seek leave to do so.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! Is leave granted?

Mr I. J. Gibbs: Yes. Thank you.

Leave granted.

THIS CONTRACT is made BETWEEN
(hereinafter called "the employee") of the one part and THE SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND ELECTRICITY BOARD (hereinafter called "the employer") of the other part.

DURATION OF CONTRACT.

This contract remains in force for a period of 3 years commencing 1 November, 1985, unless sooner terminated, altered, or amended according to the terms hereof.

Commencing 1 October, 1988, discussions shall be held with the intent of both parties that a further Contract of Service be signed before 1 November, 1988, to provide for service by the employee to the employer after that date.

1. BASIC TENETS.

WHEREAS the parties have agreed that the employer wishes to engage the services of the employee for the purpose of carrying out the functions and duties of the employer under the Electricity act 1976 (as amended).

AND WHEREAS the employee has agreed to enter into a Contract of Service with the employer in accordance with the provisions of Section 7 of the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act 1985 for the purposes of such engagement

AND WHEREAS the parties have agreed that such engagement is, and always remains, subject to the following basic understanding as to the intent of the parties in signing this Contract namely:—

Permanency in employment

(a) to provide permanent employment for the employee with the employer, save only that the employer retains the right to terminate this contract of service upon the employer being satisfied that the employee has been directly or indirectly involved in serious misconduct in relation to such employment and/or conduct inconsistent with the express intent and terms of this contract; and

Continuity of Supply of electricity

(b) in consideration of (a), the employee acknowledges, and will continue to so acknowledge throughout the duration of this Contract, that the continuity and maintenance of the supply of electricity to all consumers within the employer's area is of fundamental importance to the employers objectives, and to the discharge of the employer's functions and duties pursuant to the Electricity Act 1976 (as amended), and must be preserved and protected at all times. The supply of electricity for these purposes is acknowledged to include all such ancillary services as are presently operating or as may be established from time to time in support of the primary objectives of the employer.

2. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE.

(a) Subject to, and in accordance with, the provisions of the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act 1985, and the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Act 1985, and in addition to the rights, duties and obligations conferred and imposed by the said Acts, the employee shall render such services as may be required by the employer from time to time, and more particularly shall:—

Hours of Work

(i) work a minimum thirty-eight (38) hours per week over a ten (10) day fortnight over a spread of hours deemed suitable by the employer;

Not to participate in a Strike

(ii) not either directly or indirectly participate in, incite, counsel or abet a strike as defined in Section 5 of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1961-1985, or any Act passed in substitution or amendment thereof;

No Union Preference

(iii) acknowledge that preference in employment in relation to union membership shall form no part of the requirements of the employer in considering the engagement, or continuation in employment of employees;

Shift Work

(iv) work shift work as, when, and where reasonably required by the employer;

Work where required

(v) carry out any form of work which may be required by the employer in any district, subject to the employee being suitably and properly trained;

(vi) live away from home at such locations and for such periods as may be reasonably required by the employer for the purpose of enabling the employee to properly and efficiently discharge all duties of the employee under this Contract;

Dispute settling procedure

(vii) refer or concur in the reference of any unresolved industrial dispute to the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Tribunal for determination, and unreservedly accept the decision of that Tribunal;

Lawful instructions

(viii) abide by any lawful instruction of the employer and carry out all duties allocated as efficiently, efficaciously and expeditiously as possible.

(b) For the purposes of this Contract, the employee agrees and acknowledges that the rights, duties and obligations conferred or imposed upon employees in electricity callings by the provisions of the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act 1985 and the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Act 1985, are expressly included as terms and conditions of this Contract, to the same effect as if those provisions of those Acts were expressly set forth herein. In the event that the said Acts or either of them are amended, or any Act is enacted in substitution therefor during the continuation of this Contract, this Contract shall be deemed to be amended accordingly.

3. CONSIDERATION.

Consideration

IN CONSIDERATION of the foregoing and of this Contract, and subject to the compliance with the terms of this Contract by the employee, the employer shall pay in the first week of December every year during the continuation of this Contract (in addition to remuneration otherwise provided for pursuant to the terms of the award or industrial agreement deemed by Section 7 (3) of the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act 1985 to apply to this Contract), a sum equivalent to seven and one-half per centum (7½%) of the base rate of pay applicable to the relevant award classification, category or level including Industry Payment and Experience Allowance as varied from time to time. For the purpose of calculation of pro rata adjustments, the date of signing this Contract shall be deemed to be the assessment date.

SIGNED SEALED AND DELIVERED by the said
this day of
, 1985 in the presence of:

A Justice of the Peace

THE SEAL of THE SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND ELECTRICITY BOARD was hereunto affixed pursuant to a resolution of the board made on the day of 1985 by WAYNE LLOYD GILBERT, General Manager in the presence of CECIL VINCENT WEBSTER, Secretary, both in the presence of:

General Manager.

Secretary.

A Justice of the Peace

Mr VAUGHAN: I heard the Minister say, "Yes. Thank you." Instead of trying to search for the various documents, anyone wanting to trace the history of this matter will be able to refer to *Hansard.*

I will name as Mark 1 the first contract presented. The employees were very concerned about it. I will not deal with the Mark 1 document. I will save my comments for the Mark 2 document. Naturally, the contents of the proposed contracts sent more than a ripple through those employees of the South East Queensland Electricity Board who worked a 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight.

The Minister's statement about those conditions being extended to employees of the Queensland Electricity Commission and employees in the electricity industry throughout the State caused the employees a great deal of concern. After all, why would they want to give up the conditions they enjoyed and subject themselves to the obnoxious terms of the contract in return for a lousy 7½ per cent loading on their pay, to be paid annually?

The Minister said, in his second-reading speech, that a contract could well be acceptable to many SEQEB employees as a means of overcoming the disadvantages of differing conditions of employment for those SEQEB employees who are subject to award conditions and those whose terms of employment are governed by contracts under the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act.

Surely the Minister is not suggesting that SEQEB employees or, for that matter, employees of the Queensland Electricity Commission and other electricity boards who currently enjoy conditions that they, in conjunction with their unions, have won over the years, will voluntarily give up those conditions because the employees who took the sacked SEQEB workers jobs are working under contracts, the terms of which are inferior to award conditions.

The Minister knows little or nothing about industrial relations. That has been quite apparent throughout the whole SEQEB dispute, but I thought that even he would have a better grasp of things than that.

Workers would be very foolish to sell hard-won conditions for money, particularly a mere pittance of 7½ per cent loading. The answer to the problem, of course is to give the contract employees a 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight. If that were done, equity would be restored to SEQEB.

To try to sell the contract, the general manager of SEQEB prepared a 40-minute video tape, that was shown to employees throughout SEQEB depots. It was a real hit at the Banyo depot. They had five sessions down there. In conjunction with the video, the following circular was issued to answer employee questions—

"CONTRACT OF SERVICE

Employee Questions

The video which you have just seen will have answered a large number of the questions raised by employees on the proposed voluntary Contract of Service.

As was stated by the interviewer at the conclusion of the video, the more specific questions raised by employees would also be answered and distributed to employees. Listed below, therefore, are a number of brief statements covering provisions of the Contract of Service which should resolve most, if not all, of the outstanding questions that employees have raised.

Employees are also advised that the specimen Contract of Service which has been circulated to all areas is in the process of receiving some additional amendments. This action has been taken as a result of the many questions that were submitted by employees to ensure that the conditions and provisions of the Contract of Service are more readily understood. Revised copies of the Contract of Service will be circulated as soon as possible.

General Answers

The annual 7½% payment will be calculated on the basis of 7½% of the employee's gross taxable income and paid annually in the first week of December.

The assessment period for each year of service under the contract covers a period of 12 months from the beginning of November each year to the end of October the following year, e.g. employees who elect to sign the Contract of Service on 1 November, 1985 will receive their first payment in December, 1986 covering the period 1 November, 1985 to 31 October, 1986.

The 7½% payment may be made on a pro rata basis to cover cases where employees elect to sign the Contract of Service part way through the assessment period or retire or resign from employment with SEQEB in accordance with the provisions of the contract prior to November of each year of the contract.

The '38 hours per week' as specified in the Hours of Work section of the contract is ordinary time.

The Contract of Service does not provide for employees to be able to work flexitime.

There is no specific date set for employees to sign the contract. As previously stated, the 7½% payment is payable on a pro rata basis and this enables employees who elect to enter the Contract of Service to sign at any time.

The Contract of Service is not available to apprentices during the period of the currency of their apprenticeship. On completion of their apprenticeship and being retained in permanent full time employment with SEQEB, they would then be eligible to be offered a Contract of Service.

Employees who elect to sign the Contract of Service and who work a 36¼ hour week will receive an adjustment to their hourly rate when changing to a 38 hour week in accordance with the Contract of Service provisions.

Employees who elect to sign the Contract of Service will not be restricted or prevented from transferring to positions within other Queensland electricity authorities.

An employee's promotional prospects or eligibility to transfer to other positions within SEQEB will not be adversely affected because he does not elect to sign the Contract of Service.

With the exception of those provisions specifically referred to in the Contract of Service, existing award and industry entitlements will be maintained, e.g. shift work entitlements, living away from home conditions and payments, overtime payments etc., will not be changed.

The 7½% annual payment is fixed for the period of the Contract of Service and would only be able to be varied if and when a new Contract of Service is signed. This would be an area for discussion between the parties prior to signing a new Contract of Service.

The information you have now received, both from the video and answers provided on this sheet, should resolve most, if not all the questions that you have regarding the proposed voluntary Contract of Service.

However, if you are still unsure of any aspect or require further clarification on any matter, do not hesitate to refer such questions to your immediate supervisor and arrangements will be made to ensure a reply is given to you as soon as possible."

It was signed by Wayne Gilbert.

Subsequent to the showing of the video, on 10 October an amended contract was issued and sent out to employees with a covering memo, which read—

"TO: All Employees

CONTRACT OF SERVICE

You would by now have all seen the original Contract of Service which was sent out in specimen form so that the general idea of the contract could be known to you. I now reiterate what I said on the videotape and that is, I sincerely thank all of you who have asked many probing questions about the contract and its contents. As a result of those many questions, I have taken advice and the Contract has been amended to reflect some misgivings expressed. Basically, the final Contract, which is currently in circulation, ensures the following:

There is no definite starting point for the Contract, i.e., an employee may sign it at any time. However, the expiry date is October 1988.

It is now clear that employment does continue after the Contract has expired in the event that the employee does not wish to sign a further Contract.

There are only two grounds upon which SEQEB may rely to cancel the Contract, and they are, in essence, what is provided for in relevant awards. You will note that the Contract now clearly states that there are no other grounds apart from serious misconduct and conduct which is inconsistent with the express intent of the Contract.

The 7½% now will be calculated on gross taxable earnings.

All normal Award entitlements, with the exception of hours and the nine day fortnight, still apply and in fact run alongside the Contract of Service.

As with the original specimen Contract, I ask you to study it carefully, to give it your fullest consideration, and be well aware of the fact that this is an entirely voluntary personal Contract of Service.

Very shortly there will be available application forms to sign for those people who wish to be involved in the Contract.

As before, if you have any questions about details of the Contract or its general intent, I invite you to contact your Supervisor so that appropriate answers can be given to your questions.

(W. L. Gilbert)

GENERAL MANAGER"

In that memo to all employees, Mr Gilbert stated that all normal award entitlements, with the exception of hours and the nine-day fortnight, will still apply and will run alongside the contract of service. That is incorrect.

The new award that has been handed down by the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Tribunal mirrors the old Electrical Engineering Award—State. That award contains the provisions that the hours for shift work are to be negotiated. As I will point out very shortly, that does not apply in the contract.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I shall now refer to the second contract. Again, I seek permission to incorporate a copy of the contract in *Hansard.*

Leave granted.

THIS CONTRACT is made BETWEEN (hereinafter called "the employee") of the one part and THE SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND ELECTRICITY BOARD (hereinafter called "the employer") of the other part.

1. BASIC TENETS

WHEREAS the parties have agreed that the employer wishes to engage the services of the employee for the purpose of carrying out the functions and duties of the employer under the Electricity Act 1976 (as amended);

AND WHEREAS the employee has agreed to enter into a Contract of Service with the employer pursuant to, and in accordance with the provisions of the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Act 1985 (as amended) for the purposes of such engagement;

AND WHEREAS the parties have agreed that such engagement is and always remains, subject to the following basic understanding as to the intent of the parties in signing this Contract, namely:—

Permanency in employment

(a) to provide permanent employment for the employee with the employer subject to the terms hereof;

Continuity of Supply of electricity

(b) in consideration of (a), the employee acknowledges, and will continue to so acknowledge throughout the duration of this Contract, that the continuity and maintenance of the supply of electricity to all consumers within the employer's area is of fundamental importance to the employer's objectives, and to the discharge of the employer's functions and duties pursuant to the Electricity Act 1976 (as amended), and must be preserved and protected at all times. The supply of electricity for these purposes is acknowledged to include all such ancillary services as are presently operating or as may be established from time to time in support of the primary objectives of the employer.

NOW THIS DEED WITNESSES:—

2. DURATION OF CONTRACT

(a) This Contract remains in force for a period of years commencing the day of , 198 , unless sooner terminated, altered, or amended according to the terms hereof.

(b) Commencing the first day of October, 1988, discussions shall be held between the parties with the intent of both parties that a further Contract of Service be signed on or before first November, 1988, to provide for service by the employee to the employer after that date.

(c) If, on the expiry date of this Contract as hereinbefore mentioned, this Contract has not been terminated by the employer by reason of the breach thereof by the employee, and the parties have not entered into a further Contract of Service in extension of, or in substitution for, this Contract, the employer shall forthwith employ the employee as and from that expiry date subject to, and in accordance with, the applicable award or industrial agreement referred to in Clause 3 (b) herein in respect of the position and/or calling of the employee at the said expiry date, provided that for the purpose of calculating length of service and other entitlements under such award or agreement the employer shall deem all employment under this Contract to have been employment under the said award or agreement in the same manner as if this Contract had not existed.

3. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

(a) Subject to, and in accordance with, the provisions of the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act 1985, and the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Act 1985, and in addition to the rights, duties and obligations conferred and imposed by the said Acts, the employee shall render such services as may be required by the employer from time to time, and more particularly shall:—

Hours of work

(i) work a minimum thirty-eight (38) ordinary hours per week over a ten (10) day fortnight over a spread of hours deemed suitable by the employer;

Not to participate in a strike

(ii) not either directly or indirectly participate in, incite, counsel or abet a strike as defined in Section 5 of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1961-1985, or any Act passed in substitution or amendment thereof;

No union preference

(iii) acknowledge that preference in employment in relation to union membership shall form no part of the requirements of the employer in considering the engagement, or continuation in employment, of employees;

Shift work

(iv) work shift work as, when, and where reasonably required by the employer;

Work where required

(v) carry out any form of work which may be required by the employer in any district, subject to the employee being suitably and properly qualified and trained;

(vi) live away from home at such locations and for such periods as may be reasonably required by the employer for the purpose of enabling the employee to properly and efficiently discharge all duties of the employee under this Contract;

Dispute settling procedure

(vii) refer or concur in the reference of any unresolved industrial dispute to the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Tribunal for determination, and unreservedly accept the decision of that Tribunal;

Lawful instructions

(viii) abide by any lawful instruction of the employer and carry out all duties allocated as efficiently and expeditiously as possible.

(b) Subject to the foregoing provisions, the engagement of the employee hereunder shall be on the same terms and conditions as are contained in the award or industrial agreement under which the employee would have been employed if this Contract had not existed, and any alteration, variation or amendment to such award or agreement by any competent tribunal shall be deemed to effect a corresponding alteration, variation or amendment to this Contract, provided only that in the event of any inconsistency between the terms of that award or agreement, and the terms of this Contract, then the terms of this Contract shall prevail to the extent of any such inconsistency. Such award or industrial agreement is hereinafter called "the applicable Award".

(c) For the purposes of this Contract, the employee agrees and acknowledges that the rights, duties and obligations conferred or imposed upon employees in electricity callings by the provisions of the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act 1985 and the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Act 1985, are expressly included as terms and conditions of this Contract, to the same effect as if those provisions of those Acts as were expressly set forth herein. In the event that the said Acts or either of them are amended, or any Act is enacted in substitution therefor during the continuation of this Contract, this Contract shall be deemed to be amended accordingly.

4. CONSIDERATION

IN CONSIDERATION of the foregoing and of this Contract, and subject to compliance by the employee with the terms of this Contract, the employer shall pay to the employee, in the first pay period of December each year for the duration of this Contract, a lump sum which is equivalent to seven and one-half per centum (7½%) of the annual gross taxable earnings paid to the employee over the twelve months preceding the First day of November in each year, (which date is hereinafter called "the assessment date") or over such proportion of twelve months as shall have been served under this Contract as at the assessment date, which payment shall be in addition to the wage or salary to which the employee shall be otherwise entitled under the Contract. In the event of the termination of this Contract by reason of the voluntary resignation or death of the employee less than twelve (12) months after the assessment date, a pro-rata payment shall be calculated accordingly, and paid to the employee or their personal representative upon such resignation or death as the case may be.

5. TERMINATION

In addition to the rights and obligations conferred and imposed by the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act 1985 and the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Act 1985, this Contract and the engagement of the employee may be terminated by the employer upon the giving of such notice (if any) as is prescribed in the applicable Award, upon the grounds that the employee has been guilty of:—

(a) serious misconduct in relation to their employment hereunder; and/or

(b) conduct inconsisten with the express intent and terms of this Contract;

and no other grounds.

Upon such termination of this Contract by the employer:—

(i) the employee shall forfeit all entitlement to payment of any part of the seven and one-half per centum (7½%) lump sum referred to in clause 4 hereof, as may have accrued at the date of such termination; and

(ii) subject to (i), all pecuniary entitlements of the employee shall be deemed to be such as would be payable if the employee had been employed at all material times under the applicable Award in lieu of this Contract.

The employee may terminate this Contract prior to the expiry thereof by way of resignation from the service of the employer in accordance with the provisions of the applicable Award, whereupon both parties shall thence forth be released and discharged from all obligations, liabilities and entitlements whatsoever under this Contract accruing or arising after such termination date.

SIGNED SEALED AND DELIVERED by the said this day of , 1985 in the presence of:

A Justice of the Peace

THE SEAL of THE SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND ELECTRICITY BOARD was hereunto affixed pursuant to a resolution of the board made on the day of 1985 by WAYNE LLOYD GILBERT, General Manager in the presence of CECIL VINCENT WEBSTER, Secretary, both in the presence of:

General Manager

Secretary

A Justice of the Peace

Mr VAUGHAN: I will now deal with the contract of service, which is the Government's new idea directed at deregulating the labour market in this State. If this is an example of what the Government has in mind for the workers of this State, God help them. I am sure this move will rebound on the Government and on any employer who chooses to go into this area. Under the heading of "Basic Tenets" the contract states—

> "WHEREAS the parties have agreed that such engagement is, and always remains, subject to the following basic understanding as to the intent of the parties. . ."

Surely a contract cannot refer to the basic understanding as to the intent of the parties. Surely a contract should be more specific than that. The contract is "to provide permanent employment for the employee with the employer subject to the terms hereof". The contract also states that the employee acknowledges the "fundamental importance to the employer's objectives". This contract contains a great deal of icing on a not-too-palatable cake.

The employees who sign this contract are also required to acknowledge—

> "The supply of electricity for these purposes is acknowledged to include all such ancillary services as are presently operating or as may be established from time to time. . ."

The employee is virtually required to give the employer—in this case, SEQEB—a blank cheque.

A part of the contract, which was not in the previous agreement, covers the duration of the contract. If these contracts are to apply to the electricity industry as a whole, this provision will apply to the entire State. SEQEB has acknowledged that, when the contract runs out at the end of the three year period, in October 1988—that is, for those who may be stupid enough to sign it—the following contract provision applies—

> "the employer shall forthwith employ the employee as and from that expiry date subject to, and in accordance with, the applicable award or industrial agreement referred to in Clause 3 (b). . ."

That is a change from the first document that was presented to employees. The contract is to expire in October 1988, which is the bicentennial year—that might be another cause for celebration. When that contract expires, if it is not renewed or terminated by the employer for reasons I have previously referred to, the employee reverts back to working under the award, which means that those employees who currently work a 38-hour week and a 10-day fortnight would revert to a 36¼-hour week, as is provided for in the award.

The really obnoxious part of this contract that the Government and the electricity industry want to force upon their employees is contained under the "Conditions of Service".

I refer briefly to the Minister's second-reading speech, in which he said, in referring to the contracts—

> "Such contracts will vary the award conditions but, being voluntary, will have to be of real advantage to employees to gain acceptance."

I will now look at some of the real advantages that the Minister proposes to give employees if they enter into these obnoxious contracts.

The contract states—

> "The employees shall render such service—"

it is as wide as a gate—

> "as may be required by the employer from time to time, and more particularly shall . . . "

The employee is required to render "such service". It is not defined. It is virtually a blank cheque. The first requirement is that the employee will work a minimum 38-hour week over a 10-day fortnight over a spread of hours deemed suitable by the employer. That is wide open. Again, it is contrary to the provisions of the award. Mr Gilbert said, "All normal award entitlements, with the exception of hours and the nine-day fortnight, still apply." He is spelling out that the employee will not only work a 38-hour week, 10-day fortnight, but also work it over a spread of hours deemed suitable by the employer. That is contrary to the new award that has been handed down by the new Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Tribunal. Is that a contract? So much for the contract.

An employee could be required to work six days one week and four days the next week. He could be required to work any hours over a spread of hours deemed suitable by the employer. It could be 10 days in one spread and a couple of days in the following week.

The contract states—

> "The employee . . . shall . . . not either directly or indirectly—"

I do not know who will define this—

> "participate in, incite, counsel or abet a strike as defined in Section 5 of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1961-1985, or any Act passed in substitution or amendment thereof;
>
> (iii) acknowledge that preference in employment in relation to union membership shall form no part of the requirements of the employer in considering the engagement, or continuation in employment, of employees."

All honourable members know that the whole thrust of the Government and of the general manager of SEQEB, who has been brought in as a hatchetman to do the dirty work for the Government, has been to destroy the union organisation within the SEQEB. Because of the uncertainty that exists in relation to the non-existence of a union structure, I understand that the general manager has some reservations. Whoever follows Mr Gilbert will have some real problems in trying to handle disputes.

As to shift work, the contract states that an employee shall work shift work "as, when and where reasonably required by the employer." Is the SEQEB currently a reasonable employer? It certainly is not. That provision is contrary to the new award handed down by the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Tribunal. The contract states that an employee covered by this contract shall—

> "carry out any form of work which may be required by the employer in any district, subject to the employee being suitably and properly qualified and trained."

The employer decides that. What chance would a person have with the obnoxious conditions of the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act, which states that an employee shall virtually love his employer and do whatever he is bidden. What chance has an employee of challenging that provision as to whether he is properly qualified and trained?

The contract states that the employee shall—

> "live away from home at such locations and for such periods as may be reasonably required by the employer for the purpose of enabling the employee to properly . . . "

There is no provision for the payment of a living-away-from-home allowance. For that provision, it would probably be necessary to revert back to the award. Upon reading the contract, if the person were not careful or did not seek legal advice, he could very well believe that he had to perform all those functions without any remuneration. The employee has no say in where he should go or when he is going away. There is no provision for notice to be given. The Minister said that the contract contained real advantages for the employees. With due respect to the Minister, that is a great deal of garbage. The contract states that employees are required to "live away from home at such locations and for such periods as may be reasonably required by the employer . . . "

The contract states that the employee shall abide by any lawful instruction of the employer. The board is given very wide powers. It can tell the employees what to do, where to work and to love it at the same time.

Another provision in the document reads as follows—

> "Subject to the foregoing provisions, the engagement of the employee hereunder shall be on the same terms and conditions as are contained in the award or industrial agreement . . ."

Of course, that is after the conditions have been modified or aborted by this document. The document goes on to state—and this is another provision in the Bill to which I will be referring at some length at the Committee stage—

> ". . . provided only that in the event of any inconsistency between the terms of that award or agreement, and the terms of this Contract, then the terms of this Contract shall prevail to the extent of any such inconsistency."

So it does not matter a damn what provisions are contained in the award that was brought down by this new tribunal that the Government set up in order to get the electricity industry out of the jurisdiction of the State Industrial Commission.

A new award has been set up. Regardless of the provisions contained in that award, if any of the conditions contained in that contract are inconsistent with that award, the contract terms apply. So much for Judge Pratt, the chairman of the tribunal. He can bring down an award, but this contract of service that the Government and SEQEB want the employees to sign—those employees who are stupid enough—will override his award. If any inconsistency is found between the award and the contract of service, the terms of the contract apply.

The document goes on to say—and this is another new provision—

> "For the purposes of this Contract, the employee agrees and acknowledges that the rights, duties and obligations conferred or imposed upon employees in electricity callings by the provisions of the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act 1985 and the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Act 1985, are expressly included as terms and conditions of this Contract, . . ."

Yet SEQEB—or the Government through SEQEB—is supposed to be asking employees to enter into and sign this contract, which is a very legal document—it has even got a place for a seal—saying to them, "That is your contract for three years. It cannot be varied." Not much it cannot be varied! If the Government wants to, it can introduce legislation to vary the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act 1985 or the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Act 1985 in whatever way it desires. The Government would do that. I would not trust Government members as far as I could throw them. I would not trust the Minister, because he only does the bidding of the Premier. And all honourable members know the attitude of the Premier.

The document then moves on to the very small concession that the employer will give in return for these "advantageous" terms, as the Minister describes them, such as working anywhere, any spread of hours, shift work, no notice and all the other things that I have mentioned. In return for all of that, in return for giving up a 36¼-hour week and a nine-day fortnight in the name of equity—so that the new employees will have conditions equal to those of employees who are working a 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight—the employer will give the workers 7½ per cent of the annual gross taxable earnings, paid annually on 1 December. That is the only area in which the workers have been given any consideration.

In other words, the Government is saying to employees of SEQEB and the entire electricity industry, "Sell all your conditions, sell all your rights, and you will be given 7½ per cent." For a person on $400 a week, that works out at about $30 a week on average, and that is before tax. Anybody who would forgo any of the provisions contained in his award for a lousy $30 a week less tax is mad, is not right in the head. It is not equitable. This legislation is being introduced supposedly to restore equity amongst the employees of the electricity industry, yet if a worker happens to work a good deal of overtime during the year or happens to receive other perks, the 7½ per cent is paid on that. The bloke who works a good deal of overtime will receive more.

I give honourable members an example of what I mean by referring to two electrical fitters employed by SEQEB, one in the test department and the other involved in call-outs. Because the fitter in the test department works very little overtime, at the end of the year the gap between his salary and that of the fitter who works a great deal of overtime is quite large. Signing the contract will mean more to the fitter required to work a great deal of overtime. Where is the equity in that?

SEQEB is back where it started. It claimed to be creating equity by bringing the fellows working the 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight up to those working the 38-hour week, 10-day fortnight, but at the same time it has a provision in its contract that creates inequity. This is the second draft, supposedly drawn up after all the ramifications have been considered.

What is provided by the clause dealing with termination of employment, which was inserted after the first draft was rejected? It spells out the termination conditions for SEQEB employees, and for the other poor devils in the electricity industry, if the contract becomes compulsory, as it very well could if the electricity industry uses the powers available to it. The industry has wide powers. Because employees cannot strike or complain, the industry can force employees to do anything. As the Minister knows, the industry is tied up by the legislation passed by the Parliament earlier this year.

The termination provision spells out the only two conditions under which the employer can terminate the employment of the employee—

> "serious misconduct . . . or

conduct inconsistent with the express intent and terms of this Contract . . .

Upon such termination of this Contract by the employer:—

the employee shall forfeit all entitlement to payment of any part of the seven and one-half per centum . . . "

Therefore, if an employee had accrued nine months of the 7½ per cent payment for entering into the contract and was sacked or breached the contract in any way, he would forfeit all of those accrued entitlements.

The terms of the contract are obnoxious. It has myriad flaws. Any employee who signed that document would have to have rocks in his head.

The Bill provides an electricity authority with the right to enter into a contract with any of its employees or any person seeking employment. Such contracts can cover the terms and conditions of employment, vary the provisions of awards or industrial agreements, as I have pointed out, and differ as between callings, thus creating even more anomalies; but the provisions of the contracts must be approved by the Governor in Council and must be freely entered into. The Minister said that there have to be some real advantages. My God!

The Minister said contracts will have to be of real advantage to employees to gain acceptance. I cannot see very many employees signing the contracts offered by SEQEB. I can also see serious problems being created if more than one type of contract is in force at the one time in an electricity authority. After all, did not the current problem in SEQEB arise because employees are working different hours?

The Bill provides for the terms of a contract to prevail over the provisions of an award if there is any inconsistency. Such a provision is, of course, contrary to the provisions of section 123 of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, which provides that awards prevail over contracts in cases of conflict. It reads—

"**Awards to prevail over contracts in cases of conflict.** Every award shall prevail over any contract of service in force on the coming into operation of the award, so far as there is an inconsistency between the award and the contract; and the contract shall thereafter be construed and have effect as if it had been modified, so far as necessary, in order to conform to the award:

Provided that no such contract shall be deemed to be inconsistent with an award for the reason only that such contract provides for more favourable conditions of employment than those provided by the award."

The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act was not drawn up lightly. Its provisions are designed to protect the interests of the working people of this State, to maintain the working conditions of the workers in this State and to maintain a standard of living that people can enjoy. In line with the Government's present intention, if an employer were able to make a contract of service with an employee that would provide less than the wages and conditions stipulated by the award, what would be the result? The standard of living presently enjoyed by people in Queensland would go by the board. It cannot be stressed enough that the award provisions are minimum provisions and that they are designed to maintain standards. Award provisions ensure that employers cannot play one employee off against another.

One can imagine two applicants being interviewed for one position in times of widespread unemployment. If employment contracts move along the lines taken by this Government and if the provisions of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act are abrogated—especially the provision that applies to an award taking precedence over any contract, which prevents people entering into contracts outside the award provisions—the situation that would be created could only be described as disastrous. For instance, if an employer provides employment under the provisions of the Electrical Engineering Award—State, the minimum rate of pay could be, say $400 for an electrical tradesman. If the provision that governs contracts of service is abrogated and if the labour market is deregulated—and I point out that the Government is on record as having that intention—it is possible that one applicant could say that, although the award stipulates a wage of $400, he

would do the job for $350 a week. The other applicant might say that he, too, would do the job for $350 a week. The next step is that the first applicant would say that he would do it for $325 a week, and that is the beginning of a trend that just takes off.

Government Members interjected.

Mr VAUGHAN: The novices on the Government side of the House would not understand that.

Mr FitzGerald: Tell us about Mudginberri.

Mr VAUGHAN: Government members have no idea of the history associated with the industrial conciliation and arbitration system and do not know the way in which it operates. Notwithstanding that, the Government is about to tear down the society as we know it today and tear down the standard of living in Queensland so that, instead, the law of the jungle will prevail.

Mr Stephan: The Government will build it up.

Mr VAUGHAN: Like hell! For the benefit of the honourable member for Gympie, I state that I was a trade union official for 13 years.

Mr FitzGerald: Obviously.

Mr VAUGHAN: I am very proud of that fact.

During the course of my duties, I was required to check the wages books of employers. I realise that the current policy of the Government is not to have industrial inspectors checking wages books. The Government is not interested in sending people into the field to discover the problems and instances in which workers are being ripped off. The honourable member for Wynnum (Mr Shaw) gave a very good example when he mentioned an employee of Video Sam. The employee did not have a lunch-break and, when she worked overtime, she was not paid for it despite the fact that her employment contract was covered by the provisions of the relevant award. That is the kind of environment that is being promoted by Government members, and I can assure them that it will rebound against the Government.

Of all the wages books I was required to check, not one was without fault. Very few employers abide by the provisions of the relevant awards.

Mr Davis: Half the time, employers would not have even an attendance book.

Mr VAUGHAN: And for the rest of the time, half of them do not have wages books. The wages books that are kept certainly do not conform to the provisions of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Many times, employers had to be prosecuted over non-payment of award rates. The point I make is that, if these obnoxious contracts of employment operate instead of awards, all kinds of shoddy deals would be made throughout society.

I instance a situation that I encountered frequently when I was a union official. When a check was made of the wages books, it was often the result of a complaint that had been made by an employee. When I queried the employer, the response would be that a deal had been made with the employee in question in that, when the employee worked overtime, the employer would allow him a few hours off work during the week. That is an example of a sweetheart deal. However, when the employee complained about being dudded, he would request the union to have the matter rectified. Of course, in such circumstances, the employee is entitled to full restitution. The advice I gave to employers was never to make sweetheart deals and to stay in line with the provisions of the award and abide by its provisions.

Mr Stephan: What about those people who are being paid more than the award rates?

Mr VAUGHAN: The point I make is that the award is the minimum standard. That interjection only goes to show how ignorant Government members are. If Government members were to study the provisions of section 123, which I read, they would realise that the award sets the minimum standard. Provided that an agreement——

Mr Stephan interjected.

Mr VAUGHAN: The award is the minimum. An employer can enter into an agreement to pay more than the award, but he cannot enter into an agreement to pay less than the award. An employer cannot enter into an agreement such as is contained in this contract of service to which I have referred, because it contains provisions that are below the minimum provisions in the award. These proposed contracts are grossly obnoxious.

I referred previously to the video tape that the general manager of SEQEB made with John Arlidge and had shown at all the jobs. I now want to take the opportunity of referring to a transcript of that video tape. It is a little difficult under the circumstances to obtain a precise report, but this is fairly close to being an accurate report of what was said. Mr Gilbert is the present general manager of SEQEB. As I said before, I understand that he has his eye on the job of the Electricity Commissioner. He might have his eye on that job, but I hardly imagine that he would get it, because he is cut out for a particular type of work.

The first question was—

> "Was the contract your idea or the Governments?"

Mr Gilbert answered—

> "John, the question of the contract, or rather the question of how we addressed the problem of having employees working side by side doing similar jobs, but subject to different conditions has been on the mind of many of us for a long period time."

Since 12 February this year!

Mr Warburton: That was the one that was going to be voluntary.

Mr VAUGHAN: No, that was not the voluntary contract; the voluntary contract is the one to which I am now referring.

The problem was created earlier this year when the Government and SEQEB told the new employees who offered to work, and those employees who returned to work, that they would work 38 hours a week and a 10-day fortnight.

Referring to this contract about which I have been speaking, Mr Gilbert went on to say—

> "... a contract of this sort would go a long way towards overcoming the problems of the apparent inequity..."

Again there is a reference to inequity. Again I ask: Inequity to whom? Certainly not to the people who had been employed by SEQEB all along and had enjoyed a 36¼-hour week and a nine-day fortnight, and certainly not inequity to those employees throughout the State who worked for the Queensland Electricity Commission and the other boards. It is inequity to those employees who went in and took the jobs—they scabbed—of the employees who were sacked by the Government on 12 February. That is what it is all about. The management of SEQEB created the problem itself.

John Arlidge then asked—

> "But surely you could have saved yourself a lot of heartache. Why didn't you make the contract to be based on 36¼ hour week. Why did you choose 38 hours—the more provocative option?"

Mr Gilbert answered—

> "Well I disagree John that it is provocative. I think the community at large would regard an extension of the 36¼ hours, nine-day fortnight in current terms and conditions as provocative."

There is no extension; there is merely a reversion to what previously existed. The community at large knew that SEQEB closed down on every second Monday. The community at large have accepted that for a number of years. So that certainly would not be provocative. What is provocative is going to those employees currently enjoying the 36¼ hour week and nine-day fortnight and saying to them, "Because of equity, we want you to sign this contract which has real advantages for you and which, as far as we are concerned, is in your interests." What a lot of garbage!

Gilbert was asked in reference to the contract—

> "Some people are going to say that it is not fair?"

He replied—

> "I can't see that there is anything wrong with this at all . . . it is absolutely optional."

I understand that subtle pressure is being applied by people trying to do a hard sell in all the depots. The implication is that, if an employee does not sign the contract, which is quite voluntary and contains real advantages, there could be problems.

Mr Davis: Con men are selling the contract.

Mr VAUGHAN: Yes, they are.

Another question was asked to which the answer was to the effect that unions do not like the contract.

Mr Gilbert was then asked—

> "At the very least you are at loggerheads with the union movement. Where in your view does this place unionism?"

Mr Gilbert replied—

> "I don't see it as an attack on unionism at all."

It is not an attack on unionism! It is an attack on awards of the industrial tribunal. The contents of this document are an attack on a recent award that has hardly dried on the paper.

Mr Gilbert went on to say—

> "What I see is giving employees of ours at all levels the freedom and a right to make a choice."

How about this for freedom. The employee, under the contract conditions, will work shift work as, when, and where reasonably required by the employer. He will carry out any form of work which may be required by the employer in any district, subject to the employee's being suitably and properly qualified. He will live away from home at such locations and for such periods as may be reasonably required by the employer.

That man talks about freedom. It is a wonder that his jaws did not lock when he talked about freedom and right of choice.

The next question was—

> "Will the contract block any moves by the Federal award coverage?"

Mr Gilbert replied—

> "I can't see that it is going to make any difference at all."

If that is so, this legislation is a waste of money. We are wasting our time here. My information is that the Federal award will be in operation before Christmas, provided the attempts by the Queensland Government to block it are not successful. If it is not to make any difference to a Federal award, why are we wasting our time here?

Mr Gilbert said—

> "I believe it is the intention of the Government to attempt to block moves by the ETU, to get a Federal award."

Of course it is the Government's intention to block a Federal award. It does not want a Federal award. It wants to retain the legislation it has, which virtually subjects these employees to slavery. They cannot do anything. They cannot object. They have to do as they are bidden, go where the boards want them to go, and so on.

If the employees do not sign this contract—and the majority will not sign it; indeed, I will be surprised if any of them do—the Government can still legislate to introduce the terms of this contract into the legislation currently on the statute-book of this Parliament.

Later, a question was asked in these terms—

> "Well alright, later in that section it talks about 'conduct inconsistent with the expressed content of the terms of the contract.' Now that to me could mean just about anything."

Of course it could be just about anything. This was the answer given by Mr Gilbert—

> "Yes and I disagree that it could mean just about anything. It is a fairly wide description. If any action is to be taken pursuant to the contract by other parties it has to be proven that there is a breach of the contract and that would have to be proven in a commercial court, not an industrial court."

That statement by the general manager is really interesting. I repeat that he said—

> "If any action is to be taken pursuant to the contract by other parties it has to be proven that there is a breach of the contract and that would have to be proven in a commercial court."

To gain relief from the contract a proof of breach would have to be established thereafter, and the penalties that will apply are those of common and contract law, not industrial law. It should be noted that Mr Gilbert said, "not of industrial law". It could be very costly for anybody, having entered into a contract unwittingly, to question the terms relative to an alleged breach of the contract.

Suppose that, as a result of an employee's action, he is considered by SEQEB to have breached the terms of his contract and SEQEB decides to proceed against him. It could be very costly for the individual. Who will back him up? It certainly will not be his union, because he has entered into the contract as an individual. The matter would be heard under common law.

Further in the interview, the issue of costs was raised. Mr Gilbert was asked—

> "Who pays if an individual employee goes to either the tribunal or the court?"

For those employees who have signed contracts, it is a very pertinent question. Mr Gilbert's answer was—

> "The individual employee who went to either the tribunal of the courts would initially presumably have to pay for his own costs . . . "

Those costs would be significant, as is all litigation in common law.

This highlights an inconsistency between the understanding of the general manager of SEQEB and the provisions of the Bill. Mr Gilbert said—

> " . . . so to gain relief from the contract there will need to be established a proof of breach thereafter the penalties that apply are those of common law and contract law not of industrial law."

I will discuss this further at the Committee stage, but I must point out that the Bill provides that any dispute over contracts will be heard by the tribunal that has been set up. The Bill states that any disputes shall be referred to the tribunal for resolution and that the tribunal's decision shall be binding upon and shall be given effect by each party to the contract. It goes on to point out that the tribunal's jurisdiction includes jurisdiction

to hear and determine all matters arising in connection with a dispute referred to it for resolution and to make such order thereupon as it considers proper.

What is the real position? The general manager of SEQEB is of the opinion that any breach of a contract will be heard under common law, not under industrial law. Yet, the Bill refers to the jurisdiction of the tribunal to resolve disputes on contracts. There is something wrong.

The interview between Mr Arlidge and Mr Gilbert went on further. The next point that I am about to make is very important, and I ask honourable members to note the question. John Arlidge asked Wayne Gilbert—

> "It seems that the situation has become so tied up that if your not careful you are going to be faced with the situation where your employees have got no legitimate outlet for frustration or dissatisfaction."

That is what the Government has done to the employees in the electricity industry. It has tied their hands, and they now have no legitimate outlet for frustration or dissatisfaction. They cannot do a thing; the Government has got them. Mr Gilbert's answer was—

> "It doesn't take away any right that they have under their award and under the amending legislation. Under the Continuity of Supply Act and the Industrial Electricity Causes Act the right to strike in this essential industry is removed. This contract doesn't change that in any way. Employees who do feel aggrieved or disaffected by what law may be doing, have their rights to proceed if it is to do with the award, via the tribunal and if it is to do with matters of the contract, through the courts . . . "

It is foolish even to suggest that disputes over contracts will be handled by the tribunal. In the mind of the general manager, any disputes will be dealt with through the courts only.

With regard to the statement by John Arlidge that SEQEB workers will have no outlet for frustration or dissatisfaction, I refer to part of the article that was attributed to Hughie Hamilton and appeared on page 2 of *The Sunday Mail* last Sunday. There was a message in the last three paragraphs.

Mr I. J. Gibbs: There was a message in the first two, as well.

Mr VAUGHAN: The Minister may laugh if he likes. He is a sadist, and I feel sorry for him. When it comes to understanding these things, I really do not think that the Minister is the full quid. It is unfortunate that he does not understand. As I said earlier, on industrial relations matters, the Minister is ignorant. Let me look at what Hughie Hamilton said.

Mr I. J. Gibbs: What about the lot?

Mr VAUGHAN: I know what Hughie Hamilton said. He said that the SEQEB blokes are history. I do not disagree to a great extent with what Hughie Hamilton said. What the men have to do is regroup and attack the problem from a different direction. For a long, long time I have believed that. A person does not keep butting his head up against a brick wall when he is not getting anywhere. There is another way of getting through that wall and of getting round an obstacle. If an irresistible force meets an immovable object, there is no use in continuing to butt one's head up against the brick wall. Something else must be tried. There are other ways and other means that will be successful.

Hughie Hamilton is a dedicated and sincere trade union official. I have much admiration for him. He is very knowledgeable and very experienced. There is a great deal of truth in these words—

> "The lesson for the trade union movement is to learn from this current experience, and from the past, and to see the new scene in industrial relations that lies ahead, Mr Hamilton argues.

'People will wake up to what's happening; they will realise that their basic rights are being whittled away under the smokescreen of freedom for individuals. Contract labour will make them slaves, not set them free.

'Eventually you will simply breed anarchy and violence because in the end people will fight for their rights.' "

No truer words have ever been spoken.

I ask the gentlemen from the Queensland Electricity Commission to take note of what I am saying. These moves will simply breed anarchy and violence because, in the end, people will fight for their rights. If the Queensland Electricity Commission is stupid enough to continue on its current path, the responsibility must rest with it. I realise that to a great degree it has its hands tied behind it.

I return to the video interview and to the question that dealt with shift work. The question was—

"Let's turn to shift work and there were quite a lot of questions on this. The contract says that shift work must be done that is reasonably required by the employer now who determines what is reasonable."

That is not an unfair question. Who does determine what is reasonable? This is the answer provided by Mr Gilbert—

"Well the test of reasonable in the first instance is the prerogative of the employer however the question of whether shift work will or need to be introduced has always been the subject of negotiations and always will be."

Garbage! That cannot happen. Who does Mr Gilbert think he is kidding? He said—

" . . . the question of whether shift work will or need be introduced has always been the subject of negotiations and always will be. If there is disagreement, then the award applies the ground rules under which shift-work may or may not be introduced."

Of course the award provides that.

I have a copy of the Electricity Supply Industry Electrical Engineering Award, which, on page 190 of the *Queensland Government Industrial Gazette* of 5 October 1985, in clause 8 (2), states—

"(2) *Shift Workers.*—(i) Subject to the following provisions the ordinary hours of work for shift workers shall not exceed 36¼ hours per week.

(ii) The ordinary hours of work referred to in (i) hereof may be exceeded in any week or weeks subject to the total ordinary hours worked during any roster period not exceeding that number of hours ascertained by multiplying the number of weeks in the roster period by 36¼ and may be worked according to a roster agreed upon between the Union Secretary and the Employer to suit the needs and circumstances of each establishment."

That is what the award provides. After a hearing that took place on 29, 30 and 31 July, that is the award that was handed down by the new Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Tribunal. It is a brand-new award. The ink has hardly dried.

Although that is what the award provides, Mr Gilbert says that if there is disagreement, the award applies the ground rules. But that is not what the contract says. It states—

"The employee shall work shift work as, when, and where reasonably required by the employer."

No negotiations will take place. I would say that Gilbert was lying to the employees whom he was supposed to be convincing. He set out to lie blatantly to them. He states that, if there is any disagreement, the provisions of the award will apply. Like hell the award will apply! He knows damned well that the provisions of the contract apply. The contract states that the employees shall work shift work, etc. What Mr Gilbert said was not true.

The terms of the contract override the award provisions. That is contained in the legislation before us and is also spelt out in the contract. If there is any disagreement about the working of shift work, the employee is in breach of the contract and he has to go to a civil court, not to the tribunal, where he will be dealt with. During the interview, Mr Gilbert was asked—

> "You have already won the battle, or the government's won it, over the 38 hour week virtually. All new or re-employed people have signed a document which says that they won't strike and they will work a 38 hour week. It is much simpler than the contract that you are putting out here. Why do you need this contract?"

That was not a bad question.

Gilbert made the following reply—

> "Well for two reasons. Firstly, this contract provides us for the means of restoring equity—"

he is back on the equity kick again—

> "for those people who are working longer hours and under different provisions to their work mates."

One could take that with a grain of salt. He said that the contract provides a means of restoring equity. It does not restore equity to those employees who are already enjoying a 36¼-hour week. It takes away the 36¼-hour week from those employees. If Mr Gilbert, the Government or anybody else wants to restore equity, the fellows who are currently working a 38-hour week, 10-day fortnight should be given a 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight.

Gilbert further stated—

> "... it stengthens in my view, the personal and private relationship that exists between employers and employees."

I think that the man is having himself on. I would like to know what goes on in his little brain. Later, he refers to commercial and civil laws.

He was asked the following question—

> "What is to stop the government changing the contract... "

Earlier, I referred to this matter briefly.

Mr Gilbert replied—

> "I don't believe the government can change the contract."

Of course the Government can change the contract. The contract relates to the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act and the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Act. By amending those two Acts, the Government can write into the contract anything it wants. Although Mr Gilbert knows that, he lied to the people whom he was trying to convince. He lied to all the employees of SEQEB. He did that on video.

The interview continues—

> "What happens if employees don't sign this?"

Mr Gilbert said that it was completely voluntary. As I said, I know that subtle pressure is being applied. I would not be surprised about the extent to which the current manager of SEQEB would be prepared to go to force employees to do something, but I would say that he has an uphill battle. There is no way in the world that any sane-thinking worker who, at any time in his life, has had to fight for any conditions that he currently enjoys would sign the contract.

Although I am quoting Mr Gilbert out of context, I must place on record that he said, "I have a track record second to none..." He certainly does. He will go down in history. His track record goes from New South Wales to Queensland, back to New South Wales, and it is currently in SEQEB. Undoubtedly he will go on to other places to do the dirty work for the person who pays the highest price for this hatchetman. His track record will follow him all over the place.

Mr R. J. Gibbs: He is a detestable human being.

Mr VAUGHAN: He is a detestable human being because of the things that he has done to the employees of SEQEB and to the electricity industry. He has been the Government's hatchetman. The Government could not have found any normal human being to perform those tasks. He has been instrumental in initiating an attempt to break down the whole industrial structure in this State. As I have said, if the electricity industry is allowed to get away with this contract and the obnoxious terms contained in it, having regard to the expressed intentions of this Government, God help the workers in other industries over the length and breadth of this State!

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (4.20 p.m.): I do not intend to take up the time allotted to me in this debate. I noted that the honourable member for Nudgee spoke for what I think *Hansard* will record as 85 minutes.

Today, honourable members have seen the sad shadow of a former union organiser who advised the electricity workers of Queensland not to accept the conditions offered to them by this Government. Those workers disobeyed him and did not take his advice. Now the honourable member for Nudgee is trying to advise the people who did not take that advice on what to do about a contract that is being offered to them.

Who will take the advice of the honourable member for Nudgee? The people whom he has been advising have never taken any notice of him. He is still trying to advise the people who did not take his advice last time.

I certainly sympathise with people in Queensland who are unemployed, be it their own fault or not. However, it is time that people stopped blaming the Government if they are unemployed of their own volition.

I point out that the SEQEB contract is a voluntary contract. It is being offered——

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr FITZGERALD: The honourable member for Ipswich said that it is not a voluntary contract. I think he interjected that a gun is being held at the heads of workers. Perhaps that comment was made by the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who interjected at the same time.

Fortunately, the standards of this Government are not the standards of the thugs in some of the unions. I do not condemn all the unions.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mr FITZGERALD: The honourable member for Ipswich has been mixing in the wrong company for too long. He has been influenced by some of the philosophies of the Builders Labourers Federation and Norm Gallagher. The honourable member for Ipswich is not that type of person, but I believe that he has been influenced by such people.

The legislation is to legitimise and make possible a voluntary contract. Pressure will not be put on workers who do not wish to accept such a contract.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr FITZGERALD: Yes, the electricity industry does have problems brought about by variations in awards that are operating at present. I certainly do not deny that.

In my opinion, the Queensland Government and the management of the electricity authority should be applauded for working towards a unified electricity industry. That must be done. As has been said by speakers in another debate, a great deal of bitterness remains. The industry must continue to strive for uniformity so that that bitterness can gradually be eliminated. The people who do not wish to rejoin the industry will probably

be bitter for many years. However, the workers in the industry are tackling the problem head on. It is certainly praiseworthy that the Government and the management of the electricity authority are trying to eliminate the anomalies. This voluntary scheme has been set up so that those who wish to join it may vary their conditions. Workers can sign voluntary contracts if they want to.

I know that Opposition members are not very happy about the contract. I accept the words attributed to Hugh Hamilton by the Opposition spokesman that the industrial climate in Australia has changed. It must be faced. I do not wish to refer to other matters such as the Mudginberri dispute in the Northern Territory, in which the unions were totally opposed to workers engaging in contracts with their employers. That same principle is being applied with this legislation. Workers are asked if they want to partake of a voluntary scheme.

I remind honourable members opposite, who thought they represented the trade union movement—some of them once did, but they no longer do—of the old axiom that the person signing the cheques still has some privileges. Under a contract, employees know the conditions when they collect their pay. They are free to take the advice of the honourable member for Nudgee (Mr Vaughan). If they do, they will not enter into a contract. I advise them, however, to make up their own minds by reading the contract thoroughly and considering its conditions before deciding whether or not to accept it. I advise those who are presently working a 36¼-hour week not to blindly follow the advice of the honourable member for Nudgee.

Honourable members opposite have decided to speak for as long as possible in the debate on the Bill because they are concerned about the present political climate. Prior to 2 November, the people in the Redlands electorate will be asked to consider a number of issues. The pressure groups will canvass every candidate and ask his view. One issue that is sure to be raised—it is already on the wind—is whether or not a candidate approves the way in which the Government handled the electricity industry dispute. That is an inevitable issue. I am fairly sure that Paul Clauson, the National Party candidate, will say——

Mr Davis: Who?

Mr FITZGERALD: Who is the ALP candidate? Is it Jackson Brown or Beattie?

Government Members interjected.

Mr FITZGERALD: That is right, Sciacca. I apologise; I must have been confused.

I am fairly sure that Paul Clauson would say that he supports the Queensland Government's handling of the electricity industry dispute in February. Where would the other candidates stand?

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! The member for Port Curtis may not interject from other than his usual seat.

Mr Prest: I will do it very quietly.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member may not do it at all; otherwise he will be asked to leave the Chamber.

Mr FITZGERALD: The electors of Redlands have a choice of candidates. They may vote for Mr Jackson Brown, who, I understand, is a former employee of SEQEB. He is absolutely disgusted about the way in which the ALP has conducted its campaign. That is his prerogative. He had every right to nominate for the seat. It will be very interesting to see how many votes his philosophy attracts. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr Warburton) is not very happy with him.

Mr Wilson: How much will it cost the National Party for Jackson Brown's campaign?

Mr FITZGERALD: I understand that Jackson Brown is the second choice; that he is the choice of the ALP headquarters. When the headquarters backed Beattie but the locals would not have him, Jackson Brown became the second choice.

The voters at Redlands could take into consideration where the funds are coming from for the by-election. I know that Jackson Brown, who is the Union Solidarity Party candidate, is relying on disgruntled SEQEB workers and their supporters to elect him. I presume that his funds will be coming from the people who support that cause. One does not believe everything one reads in a newspaper, but I refer to today's *Daily Sun,* in which this is reported—

> "The Queensland A.L.P. will spend a record $100,000 in a desperate bid to win the Redlands by-election as a springboard to next year's State election.
>
> . . .
>
> yesterday the Trades and Labor Council had put $10,000 from the SEQEB strike fund towards Labor's by-election campaign in a donation that was 'on the edge of fraud'. "

I say that that is a fraud. If that article is correct, and if it is true that people have donated to the fund that was established to provide support for sacked SEQEB workers, it is an absolute fraud if the funds are being applied towards the campaign of the Australian Labor Party candidate for the seat of Redlands.

Mr Littleproud: Which one?

Mr FITZGERALD: I believe the funds are being used to support Sciacca.

Mr Gunn: What a good-looking man that Mr Sciacca is.

Mr FITZGERALD: Excuse me, but the honourable member for Brisbane Central (Mr Davis) is much better looking, and much more intelligent.

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. I seek your ruling, Mr Deputy Speaker, on the grounds that the member is dealing with the by-election for the seat of Redlands. The honourable member is not dealing with the Bill. I seek your ruling because the Opposition has eight speakers waiting, and we would like to deal with the Redlands by-election.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Row): Order! I suggest that the Chamber come to order, and that the subject-matter of the legislation should be the main topic discussed.

A good deal of cross-firing has taken place in the Chamber, and more than one honourable member is guilty of straying from the contents of the Bill. Fortunately, the honourable member for Lockyer has a loud voice; otherwise, I would have called the Chamber to order long ago. I do so now at the request of the honourable member for Brisbane Central. No more levity will be permitted in the Chamber. The debate will now proceed in the usual way.

Mr FITZGERALD: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker.

I realise the seriousness of the situation. Honourable members are discussing the provisions of the Electricity (Industrial Causes and Continuity of Supply) Acts Amendment Bill. I point out that the previous speaker spoke for 84 or 85 minutes and also incorporated a good deal of material in *Hansard.* His speech will be notable for the fact that it will be one of the longest speeches recorded in *Hansard.*

Notwithstanding that, the honourable member for Nudgee still could not analyse the facts and explain the reason for the introduction of the legislation. For the first time, the people of Queensland will be given a chance to judge the action taken by the Queensland Government.

Mr I. J. Gibbs: Seventy-three per cent of the people back us.

Mr FITZGERALD: As the Minister has said, 73 per cent of the people support the Government in the stand that it has taken. It is no wonder that the former trade union official spoke for as long as possible. As he was unable to explain the reason for the legislation by wit and brevity, he tried to speak for as long as possible in an attempt to get his point across. At least in that way the speech will serve to confuse honourable members. I believe that that is what the honourable member for Nudgee tried to do, and he also attempted to totally confuse the worker.

The new situation is quite different. A contract of employment has been offered, and it has been legitimised by the presentation of this legislation. I understand that the contract applies for a set term and that employees are not being forced to sign. A set time has been agreed for its completion, and I agree with the honourable member for Nudgee that people should read the contract very, very carefully before they sign it.

The main principle that the Opposition finds objectionable is that the contract is voluntary. The Opposition likes an element of compulsion. The Opposition favours the compulsion factor that is part of the organisational techniques used by trade unions. Opposition members like the collective wisdom evident in a group of their mates working in together and being led by a union organiser.

The previous speaker has already tried to advise the Electrical Trades Union about its course of action in the current dispute. He was a disaster. Although I admit that the honourable member is a nice chap, I am afraid that his advice—which was not heeded, in any case—was rejected. Some of the people who went back to work were Australian Labor Party supporters, and some of them telephoned me at home to ask what they should do. They asked me, "Do you think that the Government will cave in?" I honestly had to say that I did not believe that the Queensland Government would cave in while the people of this State supported it. That was exactly the result.

Mr Menzel: Notwithstanding that, at least one Opposition member believes in tough unionism, because I understand that he said that the garbage workers should be sacked.

Mr FITZGERALD: I accept the interjection, but I certainly do not wish to cast a reflection upon any other honourable member on a subject-matter of which I am not aware. I prefer to be straight.

The by-election on 2 November will be the first chance that people anywhere in Queensland will have had the opportunity to voice their opinion. I believe that they will do so quite precisely and once again it will be seen that the consequences of this Government's actions will be backed by the people of Queensland.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM KNOX (Nundah) (4.35 p.m.): I join in this debate and support the Bill.

Mr Fouras: What's new?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: The Liberal Party also supported the original legislation.

A number of matters need to be aired and examined, particularly those raised by the honourable member for Nudgee (Mr Vaughan), who seems to be creating problems rather than solving them. Unfortunately, the people who created the problems in the first place have not been dealt with and are still not being dealt with by this legislation. I refer, of course, to the union-leaders who, in an attempt to consolidate their power base within the union, used the members of the union as cannon-fodder.

Mr Wilson: You want the Minister to get out the cat-o'-nine-tails. What about the legislative agreement that the Liberal Party came to with the trade union movement only to be vetoed by Joh? On every occasion it was a Liberal Party Minister, and you came to an agreement about long service leave and other aspects of the industrial area.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Is the honourable member for Townsville South on the whips' list of speakers? He used two minutes of my time. If he cannot get on his own

party's list because his Whip will not let him, I do not intend to give him time. I know that he is an embarrassment to his party. Most of the time he cannot be found.

It should be remembered that, at the time of the demarcation dispute—that is virtually what it was—ETU members were employed by SEQEB under day-labour arrangements according to the award and other ETU members were employed by contractors—also under the award—to do exactly the same work, except that the ETU members employed by SEQEB decided that they would not do certain work as a protest against their employer's using contractors who were employing their brother ETU members. The bosses of the union did not have the capacity or the competence to be able to handle that problem, and were quite happy for the ETU members employed by SEQEB to proceed to a demarcation dispute by not doing connections and so on, which their brother members were happily doing as employees of contractors. The union officials did not have the courage or did not want to advise their members employed by SEQEB that in fact they were being sabotaged by their leaders.

What did the ETU officials do when the order was issued for the ETU members to return to work under normal conditions? They advised the SEQEB employees not to go back to work. Many of the unfortunate individuals who did not go back to work have suffered permanent damage to their careers and livelihoods, and their families have suffered.

The ETU officials who were responsible for defying the Industrial Commission and advising their members not to go back to work have been let off scot-free, not only by this legislation but also by the Trades and Labor Council and all their union members. Those union members should be demonstrating outside the union offices and not outside Parliament House or the offices of SEQEB. They should be demonstrating outside the union offices because it is the union's officials who led them down the dry gully. It was the union officials who deserted those men when things got too tough to handle. They are people who now do not want to have anything to do with those men and are advising them to get a job elsewhere.

Mr Menzel: The Liberal Party deserted the National Party years ago when it had a dispute.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I want to deal with that matter because the Minister, in another debate, said that if there had been a coalition the National Party would not have been able to do what it did.

The legislation brought to this House was supported by the Liberal Party, with some exceptions and provisos which related to the reversal of the onus of proof and the matter of civil conscription by the Electricity Commissioner, who we believed should not have power to order private citizens to do work on his behalf, although we agreed that he should have power to do that with reference to his contractors and his employees.

At the time of the previous electrical dispute, a number of recommendations were made by me, and approved by Cabinet, to do certain things. Two of the things that were to be done were firstly, that the people who generated electricity were to be put on contract and, secondly, that strike-ban clauses were to be inserted into the awards. Those things were not done.

National Party Ministers have been in charge of industrial relations for some years. Those decisions made by Cabinet were not carried out at the time, with the result that we faced the debacle that eventuated. We supported the Government's action at the time and supported the legislation that went through the House. That is on record.

The people who were responsible could have been dealt with if strike-ban clauses had been applied for in the Industrial Commission. They would have been granted because the unions had defied the Industrial Commission. History shows that, whenever unions have defied the industrial tribunals and bans clauses have been applied for by the employer—in the railways, public works, Mount Isa Mines, or elsewhere—the Industrial Commission or Court has granted them.

As Minister for Railways, to prevent strikes I had bans clauses inserted in awards for three or four months. If such clauses had been put into the award, the union-leaders could have been dealt with on the spot. They could have been dealt with as people inciting disrespect for the award, inciting a strike contrary to the provisions of the award and carrying on in a way that was contrary to the court's decisions.

Instead of the little guys being hurt, the union bosses who created the whole situation could have been dealt with. No application has yet been made to the industrial tribunals in Queensland to have strike-ban clauses inserted in the awards.

Mr Vaughan: Because they don't want them.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: That may be so, but no application has been made to insert strike-ban clauses under which these people who are the manipulators in the system, could have been dealt with. I refer not to the tree-loppers, the post-hole-diggers, the truck-drivers or the linesmen, but to the union-bosses who started all this nonsense and do not know how to finish it. They should be dealt with.

Mr Innes: They finish up in Parliament.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: There are several of them here.

This morning, I asked the Minister a question about the black-outs that occurred over a period of 14 days in Queensland and northern New South Wales and the people who turned off the power and created chaos in the community, which meant that small businesses were going bankrupt. Those people were not members of the ETU; they were the people who generated the power at the power stations. They turned up to work and turned the power down.

I refer to the Municipal Officers Association and its associates. According to the Minister, 526 employees are classified as holding operational positions. They are the people who turned the power down and caused distress in the community. They caused little industries to go broke and caused chaos right throughout the community; but not one of them has been dismissed or suffered any penalty. All of them are currently working a nine-day fortnight and a 36¼-hour week. The Premier said that they would be made to suffer; but no change has occurred in their working conditions. But it was those people who caused the enormous chaos throughout this State and in northern New South Wales.

Mr Menzel: Oh!

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Government members try to dodge this issue. It was the members of the Municipal Officers Association who caused the problem, but they are all still at work. I understand that, during the strike, when they were at work turning down the power, they were paid full wages. Do honourable members know that? They were paid all their wages and all of their entitlements. None of them lost any long service leave——

Mr Innes: Or their superannuation.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: None of them lost any superannuation.

Mr Bailey: That was because your former Minister, Mr Campbell, reached an agreement with them.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: The honourable member is obviously misinformed. The Minister in charge of all these operations was Mr Camm, not Mr Campbell. Obviously the member is grossly misinformed.

Mr White: You can't blame the Liberals for everything.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: No. The Minister in charge of all of those operations at the time was Mr Camm. I am not blaming him, because, eventually, the conditions of those workers received Cabinet approval. The arrangements made by Mr Camm with the

union for a 36¼-hour week and a nine-day fortnight and their other conditions eventually had——

Mr I. J. Gibbs: Uncle Fred.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Well, he eventually had the unanimous approval of Cabinet. I point out that the majority of Ministers were National Party Ministers, so let us not have any nonsense about that.

Mr Davis interjected.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I was a Minister at the time and supported that decision, as did every Minister round the table.

Mr Davis: Including Uncle Fred, whoever he is.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Yes, whoever he is. If the present Minister (Mr Gibbs) was a Minister at the time, he would have supported it, too. The Premier supported it. Indeed, there were no exceptions. On the recommendation of the Minister in charge of the industry at the time (Honourable Ron Camm) every Minister supported the measure. I just wanted to set the record straight concerning that agreement.

The point is that, when there was a black-out, the power-generators turned up for work, were paid as if they had worked full-time, and did not suffer in any way—despite the threat of the Premier that they would be made to suffer for the indignities that they inflicted on the people of Queensland.

Mr Littleproud: The ball game is not over yet.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: It will be interesting to see what happens.

Mr Innes: What about the decision of the new tribunal?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: The new tribunal has been established, and the Liberal Party supported its creation. The awards are now coming through, and I will read from them to refresh the memories of honourable members. I ask honourable members to remember that this is the new ball game that is being played under the new legislation. What are the hours of work? The award states that the ordinary hours of work shall not exceed 36¼ hours in any one week or 7¼ hours in any one day. I will read the hours of work from another award set up under the new order.

Under the award, the minimum hours of work a week shall be 36¼. The Electricity Supply Industry Electrical Engineering Award provides—

> "The ordinary working hours of day working employees shall not exceed 36¼ hours per week of 7¼ hours per day to be worked between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday to Friday inclusive with a break of not more than one hour for a meal. The ordinary working hours of patrolmen shall not exceed 36¼ hours per week and not more than 7¼ hours shall be worked on any one day at ordinary rates."

That award was handed down by the new tribunal before which the Minister, through the commissioner and his agents, is entitled to appear. Those conditions are representative of the conditions that apply under the present arrangements.

The legislation refers to the only exception, which, of course, is in the Electricity Supply Industry Electrical Engineering Award. It has written into it that its application is subject to the following proviso—

> " . . . provided that this Award shall be read and applied subject to the provisions of the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act 1985."

Those to whom I am referring, that is, those who generate electricity, will not be affected adversely by this award, because they will not come under either it or the Act. They are the ones who caused the chaos and the small-businessmen to go broke.

Mr Davis interjected.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: At the time, the claim was that the people who caused the chaos would be penalised. After all, Mount Isa Mines lost tens of millions of dollars. People went broke; people even died. All of those things happened because electricity was not supplied. Because of surges of electricity caused by the operators, houses were burnt. It was not the members of the ETU who caused that problem.

The Premier and Treasurer, with a great deal of support from the community—he certainly had mine—said that the generator-operators would suffer for what they had done to the community. This legislation does not touch them. They have not been penalised in any way for what they did to the community; in fact, they are just as well off as they ever were.

At the end of May this year, electricity authorities employed 627 members of the ETU who had not gone on strike. According to this legislation and the legislation that was debated earlier this afternoon, those who did not go on strike are allowed to work under the old award conditions. As I understand it—the Minister can correct me if I am wrong—they are entitled to their 36¼-hour week and their nine-day fortnight. Of course, there has been no interruption to their long service leave entitlements and their superannuation arrangements remain unchanged, and quite rightly so. After all, they are the ones who remained at work right through the dispute. Of a total of 1 552 employees, 627 did not go on strike. They should be entitled to take advantage of the provisions of the award. They have not been penalised in any way, and I hope that they will not be, because they defied their union and resisted the pressures that were put on them in some way or another to stop work.

I presume that the 180 employees who returned to work and signed on as new employees on new terms will be subject to the provisions of the award and the Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act, which will also be the case with new recruits. Although I do not know exactly how many new recruits there would be by now, I expect that the number is 170 or 180. That means that approximately 360 employees are subject to the provisions of the new award and the Act. I make that assumption; if it is not correct, I hope that the Minister will correct me. I want the Minister to reassure me that, presumably, all those who did not go on strike and complied with the rules will be allowed to continue to work under the award.

Mr Vaughan interjected.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Am I wrong?

Mr Vaughan: Haven't you read the contract?

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I have read the contract. Am I to assume that those who did not go on strike are also to be punished?

Mr Vaughan: They want them to sign the contract.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Perhaps the Minister might explain that to me. Does he want all the people——

Mr Vaughan: Yes.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: He has not had the opportunity of replying yet. If all those people who did not go——

Mr Vaughan interjected.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I am going from the awards, the Act and the amendments to the Act.

Mr McLean: The award is not worth two bob.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: Let us find out. No doubt the Minister will reply.

Approximately 630 persons in the Electrical Trades Union did not go on strike. I ask the Minister: Are they going to be punished along with those who did go on strike?

Will they be forced to accept a 38-hour week, whereas others will work a 36¼-hour week, particularly those who turned the power off and who are still working a 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight? I can well understand it applying to the new recruits and to those people who went on strike.

Mr Davis: You are dense.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I am not dense.

I can well understand it being given to those persons who went on strike. There are also ETU members employed by contractors doing exactly the same work. They are employed under the award that states that they shall be employed on a 36¼-hour week, nine-day fortnight. They do exactly the same work as the day-labour workers in the SEQEB.

Perhaps the Minister will explain the conditions and hours of work of the various categories of people. The first category is those who did not go on strike. The second category is those who did go on strike and who have been re-employed. The third category is those who are new recruits. The fourth category is those who are employed by contractors and who did not go on strike. The fifth category is those who are employed by contractors and who went on strike. At the time, they were employed by the SEQEB; they have been re-employed by contractors. I would be grateful if the Minister could explain exactly the hours and conditions of work in those five categories and tell me whether each of those has to sign a contract.

Mr Davis: Next time, read the legislation.

Sir WILLIAM KNOX: I have read the legislation, and I am asking the questions.

About 250 persons who are ETU members are employed by contractors. I understand that they are employed under the award conditions and do not have to sign contracts. Most of those employees did not go on strike. However, some of them who went on strike have been re-employed by the contractors.

Having heard those questions, the Minister may be in a position to tell me exactly, as a result of those additions and subtractions, how many persons will now be working under the Electricity Supply Industry Electrical Engineering Award. How many of the people working for all electricity authorities will actually be working under the award and be exempt from the provisions of this Bill? There must be quite a few. It will be interesting to learn how many there are. Why in the name of fortune produce an award unless it will apply to some people who will work under its conditions? Honourable members should understand what that is all about. Those matters are causing some confusion in the community.

As to dealing with lawlessness—those who want to be disrespectful to the industrial tribunals should be dealt with severely, and they have been. I have no sympathy for them. One or two persons have been in touch with me. I asked, "Why did you go on strike in the first place?" The circumstances have been explained to me. The employees obviously did not know that their union was double-crossing them in relation to their fellow members who are being employed by contractors. Secondly, they did not go back to work, as instructed by the Industrial Commission, because they were assured by their union-leaders that they would have everybody's support; that they would have nothing to fear; that they would get their jobs back; that they could defy the Industrial Commission without any trouble; and that everybody would be gathering in the streets to support them. Of course, those promises could not be kept and those unfortunate individuals were left out in the cold. I asked several of them, "What is more important—obeying union-leaders or looking after the interests of the community?"

In an essential service such as electricity reticulation, there is no room at all for the withdrawal of services. Of course, there is room for industrial disputes, but certainly no room for depriving the community of the essential service of electricity supply.

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Condamine) (5.1 p.m.): I support the Minister in his introduction of this legislation. I am mindful of the fact that I represent the 13 000 people of the electorate of Condamine, who whole-heartedly support the actions taken by the Government since the SEQEB dispute flared up earlier this year.

The legislation is part of an overall strategy formed as a result of public opinion, sparked, as I said, by the electricity dispute earlier this year. I will not go into all the earlier issues. However, I will deal with the fact that power-house workers went on strike in sympathy with the SEQEB workers.

At that time, legislation was introduced outlawing secondary boycotts. That legislation, of course, forced the power-house workers back to work and turned on the power. However, it does not necessarily guarantee a continuous supply of electricity, because the situation might still arise in which the power-house workers go on strike as a direct result of an industrial dispute in their own area. Therefore, the Government needs an alternative work-force within the power stations. This legislation addresses that problem by the appointment of contract labour.

I understand that the contracts contain a no-strike clause. People are prepared to voluntarily sign such a contract and carry out work in the power houses. I know that people in my electorate are particularly pleased that this further step towards the final plan is being taken.

The electricity strikes had a disastrous effect. Shop-keepers lost perishable goods. It was disastrous for the sick and the aged. The honourable member for Nundah (Sir William Knox) mentioned people dying in road accidents and an inability to provide medical care. Mothers were severely disadvantaged in regard to cooking, cleaning and general house duties. The owners of factories suffered heavy losses. MIM Holdings has been mentioned in that regard. Thousands of small-business people lost out badly. Workers were stood down. Workers in my electorate said to me, "Brian, get stuck into the so-and-sos." I cannot mention the word they used, because it is unparliamentary. However, those workers told me in local terms exactly what they thought. I am confident that I speak on behalf of not only the employers but also the employees in the electorate of Condamine. Not once did I receive a telephone call criticising the action taken by the Government when the issue was running very hot. Not once have I received a critical telephone call since then.

The Electricity (Continuity of Supply) Act Amendment Bill has two objectives, as outlined in the Minister's second-reading speech. The second objective, of course, is to allow for variation to the award. I do not need to comment on that, except to say that the Government is mindful that if awards are varied, the benefits should flow on to the workers.

The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission no longer has jurisdiction to conduct hearings with respect to awards covering the electricity industry. That jurisdiction is now exercised by the Electricity Authorities Industrial Causes Tribunal.

The first objective is the introduction of contract labour, about which I have already spoken. Prior to becoming a member of Parliament, I was a member of a union for more than 20 years. For a number of years, I was proud to be a member of the Queensland Teachers Union. However, I gradually became disenchanted with very poor union-leadership.

I, too, share the concern of many people in the community for those who have lost their jobs. However, I am mindful that on a number of occasions those people were warned that they would be sacked if they did not turn up for work. The pity of it all is that the leaders of the particular union said, "It will be all right, boys. You will not be sacked. That threat is just a bluff." At some stage, unfortunately the Government had to draw the line. Those poor, misguided, ill-advised fellows who followed their union-leaders lost their jobs.

Mr Vaughan: You had your eyes on the Rockhampton by-election.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: The member for Lockyer (Mr FitzGerald) spoke about the Redlands by-election, for which a new party—the Union Solidarity Party—is nominating Mr Jackson Brown as its candidate. He is a former SEQEB worker. The Electrical Trades Union is contributing $10,000 to the ALP campaign fund for the by-election. On the other hand, a person who has been a member of that union for many years is standing against the ALP. What disharmony! Many workers realised that they were badly led by the ETU, which has an affiliation with the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the Australian Labor Party.

To confirm my claim of solid community support for the Government's actions, I refer to three newspaper editorials. February is now several months away. The feeling in the community is not as emotional as it was. The editorials are now subjectively considering what has happened.

The Courier-Mail editorial of 20 August read—

> "Although it seems a long time ago, the origins of the dispute which led to the sacking of the South East Queensland Electricity Board linesmen are worthwhile recalling. The dispute began when the Electrical Trades Union objected to SEQEB plans to use ETU members employed by private contractors, instead of by SEQEB itself.
>
> This was not a dispute about non-union labor, but involved the fundamental right of management to make decisions about the composition of its workforce. As a public authority, SEQEB has the duty to provide an efficient power supply at the cheapest possible cost.
>
> Throughout the dispute, the unfortunate ETU linesmen were caught between a determined government and unsuspecting union officials. Of course the government had to win, and it had to be seen to win. The government's victory was complete and, with the exception of the sacked linesmen and their families, a few 'concerned Christians' and the hierarchy of the union officials, it has been accepted as such.
>
> Indeed, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen has been widely praised as a politician who showed it was possible to reverse the direction of union power."

The day before, 19 August, *The Courier-Mail's* editorial read—

> "Clearly, unions must accept some limits to their powers and to their objectives."

I repeat that this is the editor, not a political person.

It continues—

> "The more difficult economic conditions which have prevailed in the recent past must have made thoughtful union leaders realise that new challenges cannot be met by old methods.
>
> . . .
>
> Threatening a new round of industrial disputes to coincide with the opening of State Parliament tomorrow might help rally the spirits of the sacked SEQEB workers, but it does nothing to show that the union officials appreciate either the depth of public feeling or the extent of the problems facing their organisations. The swing towards a de-unionised Australia might be small now, but with each unpopular strike, the movement will gain speed."

Finally, I refer to another *Courier-Mail* editorial, on 2 August, which read—

> "During the power dispute, Sir Joh was able to make great advantages from the fact that the ETU members had disobeyed an order to return to work made by the State Industrial Commission.
>
> The union's action then gave the government the chance for which it was waiting. The tough legislation was introduced, passed and is now the law of the state. And members of trade unions have a responsibility, like any other citizen, to obey the laws of the state. If those laws are considered to be harsh, unfair or

otherwise wrong, they can be changed by another government. But while they exist, they must be obeyed."

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: In the Redlands by-election, the people will make a judgment. I know where the confidence of the people is.

The editorial continues—

"Unions which persist in disobeying the laws cannot be surprised if conservative governments adopt tougher measures to counter that disobedience.

. . .

The more the Queensland TLC threatens a 'tough time' for the government, the more reinforced becomes the government's position. And the more the public will take the government's side."

Mr Davis: Did you read that out of a National Party rag?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: They are all *Courier-Mail* editorials.

The issue involved in the legislation has something in common with the Mudginberri dispute. It has something in common also with the dispute in the shearing industry over the use of wide combs. The workers at Mudginberri had the opportunity to earn more money by breaking away from the tally system. The employers had the opportunity to earn more money, too, but irresponsible union-leadership tried to step in.

In the shearing industry, wide combs were introduced and the shearers were able to make more money because more sheep were shorn each day. The shearers were happier because they made more money, and the owners of the sheep stations were happier because shed costs were reduced. Now, of course, shearers have told the Australian Workers Union to go to hell because they are making more money, and they have told the trade union to reorganise itself. No doubt honourable members would realise the commonality in the reaction of the workers to the over-aggressive leadership that is commonplace in the union movement and the abuse by trade union organisations of their powers. In fact, trade unions have gone beyond the legitimate limits of their charters, which were designed to look after the wages and conditions of workers.

Of course, the strike in the electricity industry was merely part of an overall plan. In one of the editorials I read, it was mentioned that Australia is moving towards a non-union work-force; that Australia is entering a new era. A non-union labour-force is not a completely new idea in other parts of the world. It just happens that Australia has one of the highest levels of trade-union organisation of any work-force in the world.

A trend towards deregulation of wages and abolition of wage fixation has begun. I completely agree with that trend. Under a centralised wage-fixation system, a 5 per cent increase in wages may be applied across the board. In some cases, industries may be well able to support a 5 per cent flow-on; in other cases, it would be completely disastrous. The present system lacks flexibility.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: The mind of the honourable member for Brisbane Central also lacks flexibility at times. It always thinks the same thoughts.

It is unrealistic for unions to make demands for increased wages and better conditions that have no relationship to levels of productivity. When attempts were made to improve working conditions and rates of pay for people who are employed, inevitably some other people lost their jobs. Despite that, the unions pressed on for better conditions for those who were employed. The stage has been reached at which employers prefer to invest capital for the purchase and installation of more machinery instead of paying for the employment of workers. That trend must be reversed.

Last night, in the House, I spoke about the perilous economic conditions that prevail. Governments must act to change the nature of employment contracts so that Australia becomes competitive in international trade. The Queensland Government has devised an overall plan for the electricity industry that will ensure that public demand is met and that a continuous supply of electricity is provided. I fully support the legislation.

Mr HAMILL (Ipswich) (5.12 p.m.): It is interesting to examine the philosophical underpinning of this legislation. All honourable members must be indebted to the honourable member for Nudgee (Mr Vaughan) for the very detailed analysis that he offered this afternoon in his consideration of the legislation. He dealt with the practicalities—or, should I say, the impracticalities—of its provisions and the manifestation of its contents as found in the contracts that the electricity authority is floating at present.

It is important for the people of Queensland to understand the philosophy and implications inherent in the legislation. The notion of individual contracts of service, which is obviously the key objective of the legislation, is a concept that is rooted firmly in nineteenth century economics and nineteenth century liberal ideology, which was based upon a belief in the freedom of individuals to make contracts.

The reaction of Government members to the Bill is extraordinary. I said previously to the honourable member for Lockyer that he had missed his vocation and that he ought to be in vaudeville. It is a joke when the Queensland Government talks about the freedom of individuals to make contracts, because that notion runs in contrast to so much of the philosophy espoused by the Government.

Opposition members realise that the Government is still a coalition Government in all but name. The coalition consists of agrarian socialists and the white-shoe, white-belted nouveau riche and get-rick-quick people who flock to the National Party in the urban areas. But the Government talks about free-contracting——

Mr Davis: Brian Maher?

Mr HAMILL: Yes, the white-shoe brigade, such as the honourable member for Mount Gravatt (Mr Henderson)—the Brian Maher type.

The notion of free contracting that was contained in the honourable antecedents to the legislation is founded upon a theory of parties of equal bargaining strength coming together to negotiate a contract on an equal basis. It was realised decades and decades ago in Australia that the reality bore no resemblance to that ideal.

Because of that, a rise in unionism occurred in Australia. Unfortunately, the honourable member for Condamine (Mr Littleproud) has forsaken the early union principles to which he referred in his speech this afternoon. The reality is that the trade union movement did rise up and redress the inequity in that contract imbalance.

Mr Davis: I bet that, as a schoolteacher, he never gave one zack back.

Mr HAMILL: I am very interested in that, because the Queensland Teachers Union now faces a crisis over the employment of a person who is not a qualified teacher. I thought that a so-called good unionist, such as the member for Condamine, might at least have raised his voice in protest at that further undermining of the industrial relations system in the industry that he knows best of all.

I return to the question of negotiation and determination of contracts. As I said, the development of trade unions occurred in direct response to the unequal bargaining power that existed between free contracting parties in the industrial relations situation last century. For the same reason, a system of industrial conciliation and arbitration was developed in this country to get away from the law of the jungle which prevailed in that free contracting free labour market of the nineteenth century.

Following the rise of industrial conciliation and arbitration, regulation in terms of industrial conditions and terms of employment entered the area of the labour market

and was enshrined in industrial awards. However, as in so many other areas of economic policy, the Queensland Government wants to drag Queenslanders back to the Stone Age in industrial relations and in economic policy. On the subject of the Stone Age, John Stone has had a lot of air play from this Government recently. Members ought to be reminded of what the "Stone" age represented in terms of economic management in this country. It represented disastrous industrial relations, record unemployment, tax avoidance on a massive scale and negative economic growth.

Mr Innes: Mr Hamill——

Mr HAMILL: John Stone is the person who is put at the mast-head of those who want to deregulate the labour market, those who want to have free contracting terms of employment enshrined in contracts of service. It is the same mast-head as that which has, as its goal, the destruction of centralised wage fixation.

Mr Innes: Mr Hamill——

Mr HAMILL: The member for Condamine has placed himself in that particular group. I am disappointed about that because I thought that he may at least have had the good sense, given his industrial background in teaching, to realise that that is an absolute nonsense that will be detrimental both to the economy of this country and to the good conduct of industrial relations. It will mean that Australia will be returned to the law of the jungle.

Mr Innes: Mr Hamill——

Mr HAMILL: I have heard the member for Sherwood trying to interject. Unfortunately, by his public utterances about this issue he has shown himself to be in the same cart. I will dwell a little more on the sort of nonsense that his party is perpetrating relative to industrial relations policy and economic management in general.

For those who advocate contracts of service, it really must be bitter medicine for them to look at the magnificient record of the accord. It has been the corner-stone of wage and income policy under the Federal Government. The accord has been very important because it has been the panacea that has seen employment prospects in this country improve and economic growth stride forward at a record level. People such as Mr Innes said that it would not work, and privately they prayed that it could not work. Unfortunately for them, it has worked, and worked magnificently. But, in so doing, it has discredited the economic and industrial relations policies of the economic and industrial troglodytes who sit opposite.

Let me make a few very pertinent points that might penetrate the minds of Government members who bring forth legislation such as this. Firstly, there has never been a free flow of market forces in the labour field. The deregulators talk about a free interaction of supply and demand and say that wages will be determined by the interaction of the demand for and supply of labour. It has never worked perfectly in those terms at all. The labour market and wage rates have been notoriously sticky, and the labour market itself has frequently been observed to be greatly segmented. It just does not work as the free market theorists would have people believe. Let me take their argument to a logical conclusion, although it might be believed that it is a rather more illogical conclusion.

The Government has said that it is opposed to centralised wage fixation. In considering the legislation before us, it appears that the Government is also opposed to collective bargaining. At a national level, the members of the Liberal Party are saying that they want to free up the wages determination system in Australia and move to a hybrid system involving collective bargaining. On examination of this legislation we do not find support for the deregulation of the labour market that has been mouthed in some speeches this afternoon but, rather, signs that the Government is not prepared to argue the toss before the properly constituted industrial tribunals of the State in terms of the returns that workers get for their labour or in terms of conditions of employment under which people work. The Government wants to set all the rules itself, put them

into a contract of service and ask the employees of the Government to accept those terms and conditions—to accept the Government's terms and conditions—not to come to negotiated terms and conditions which we would expect to be granted in any properly constituted industrial tribunal.

The electricity authorities will hand down the terms of employment and the contracts of service. Although the Government says that it will be a voluntary arrangement——

Mr Davis: We know how voluntary it will be.

Mr HAMILL: Indeed we do. It is as voluntary as it would be if a person had a gun held at his head.

If an employee does not sign the contract, I suppose his services can be dispensed with by the Government.

Mr FitzGerald: BLF tactics.

Mr HAMILL: Bjelke tactics—the "B" stands for Bjelke.

The member for Condamine spoke about the deregulation of the labour market. If the National Party is really interested in that, let it put its money where its mouth is.

The commitment to deregulation extends only to areas that suit the Government. It seems that we can have market forces operating to determine the price of labour, that is, the wage rate, but to what extent will the National Party Government allow market forces to determine the price of milk, the price of wheat, the price of wool or, indeed, the price of sugar.

The member for Cooroora is raising his head on this issue. I believe that he would support the destruction of centralised wage fixation, but I would be very surprised if he would go to the cane-growers in his electorate and say, "Let market prices determine the price of sugar." He would not dare to raise his head in Nambour and advocate that proposition. That is the sort of hypocrisy Opposition members have come to expect from members such as the member for Cooroora and the other agrarian socialists on the Government side.

Government Members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! The House will come to order.

Mr HAMILL: You, Mr Deputy Speaker, see the truth in what I am saying.

Government members are in favour of deregulation when it suits them. Of course, it suits them to try to reduce the level of wages and general conditions of employment of the workers in Queensland, but their philosophical commitment to market forces and deregulation certainly does not extend to those men employed by the electricity authorities.

The Government went to the trouble of setting up its own special industry tribunal, and it is trying to regulate conditions of employment to suit its specially designed contracts of service. It is high time that the Government came clean and declared exactly where it stands on these very important issues. It cannot have it both ways. It cannot advocate deregulation for one sector of economic activity and not for another. When it comes to the hip pockets of Government members, they are not prepared to deregulate and take their chances in a free and competitive market.

Unfortunately, Government speakers this afternoon have found it expedient to mouth the fashionable, conservative ideology of the time. I am sure that they are inspired by other people to argue the deregulation of the labour market and the breaking down of centralised wage fixation.

Recently, a very interesting discussion on this matter, which arose at the centenary conference of the Victorian Employers Federation, came to my attention. Among the speakers were members of the Federal Opposition, whom Government members support. They advocate the concepts of privatisation and deregulation, and it will be interesting

to see where honourable members opposite stand on those issues when it comes to providing services in their own constituencies. The members of the Federal Opposition who, at this conference, argued the case for a return to the laws of the jungle, found that they did not receive an altogether sympathetic hearing from other delegates. In particular, the comments of one of the employer advocates who addressed the conference, Mr Colin Polites, were most instructive.

A report of the conference, which appeared in the journal of the Victorian Employers Federation of 4 October 1985, reads—

> "Employers' advocate, Colin Polites, opposed the replacement of independent industrial tribunals with a system of collective bargaining. He said de-regulating industrial relations must mean the abolition of the existing system because there was no convenient half-way house."

The report quoted Mr Polites directly as saying—

> "The two systems are mutually exclusive and it seems quite clear that some form of hybrid system where there is partial collective bargaining and partial conciliation and arbitration is not feasible."

So said Mr Polites, and I suggest that a large section of Australian business people would agree with him. They can see the voodoo economics that lie behind the fashionable cries for deregulation and abandonment of the industrial system that has served this country particularly well.

Along these lines, I refer honourable member also to the Hancock report, which was recently tabled in Federal Parliament. In his address to the Chamber when the report was tabled on 20 May this year, the Federal Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (the Honourable Ralph Willis) said—

> "The fundamental finding of this Report is for the continuation of Australia's system of conciliation and arbitration. The Committee thoroughly examined arguments for change and concluded that no realistic proposals nor compelling arguments to abandon the current system had been put forward. The Committee specifically warned against accepting the 'Grass is Greener' fallacy—the assumption that because given arrangements have defects, there must be some preferable and available alternative."

Those comments are very appropriate to this legislation, because it is founded on the belief of the Government that there is a better alternative to the industrial courts of this State for determining the wages and conditions applying in the electricity industry. A special tribunal was established and special contracts of service have been introduced. The Government should take a hard look at the comments of those who compiled the Hancock report because, if it does, it will find that the fallacy of its ways have been exposed.

This legislation underlines the hypocrisy of the National Party Government, which mouths free enterprise, free market and deregulation principles. However, it only does so when it suits it.

Mr Alison: Mr Hamill——

Mr HAMILL: I wonder whether the honourable member for Maryborough will go back to the dairy-farmers and the cane-growers in his electorate and advocate the deregulation of the rural industry.

Mr Alison: They are being looked after.

Mr HAMILL: Of course they are—by regulation, not by a free market. Because of the legislation of this Parliament, an artificial system has been created to provide for guaranteed conditions. As I have said, Government members cannot have it both ways, but I do not expect the honourable member to understand that argument, even though it is very simple. If there is to be deregulation, it must not be carried out only in those areas in which it suits the Government.

Mr Casey: Do you also know that, in the sugar industry, all of the growers are virtually compulsory unionists in their own organisation, again by regulation of this Parliament?

Mr HAMILL: That is right. I do not hear the sort of criticism that is attached to electricity unions levelled at organisations such as the Cattlemen's Union. Again, the interest goes only so far as the politics of the issue.

The voluntary contract legislation before us has a very clear intention. The Minister says that the contracts are voluntary, that he is prepared to have some people working in the industry under contracts of service and some employees not under those contracts. Presumably, the terms and conditions of employment between one group and another will vary. Because of the Government's irresponsible industrial relations policies, as played out in the early part of this year during the power dispute, those differences are of the Government's own making.

If the Government is prepared to have different terms and conditions applying on the same job site, why is this legislation before us this afternoon? As I say, the intention is very clear—it is that everybody should sign the contract of service. So much for the voluntariness involved. As I say, if it was not for that, the Bill would not be before us.

If a moral can be found in this saga, it is this: those who bowed to the dictates of the Government, and gave their support to its approach to industrial relations by returning to their employment in the power authorities under a whole range of promises of having their conditions of employment maintained in one way or another, have been quite clearly duped. This legislation seeks to do one thing and one thing only: reward those who fell into line with the Government. It does that by offering them terms and conditions of employment that are inferior to those that prevail under the properly determined industrial awards of this State.

Mr COOPER (Roma) (5.32 p.m.): The first of the few points I wish to make relates to a comment by the member for Nundah (Sir William Knox) to the effect that to this point the power station operators have not been penalised. I point out to him that that case is still before the Supreme Court. As it is still pending determination, it should not be discussed at this time.

The Queensland Government has provided for the rest of Australia an outstanding example of what can be done to curb excessive union power. It is not a matter of trying to bash unions or anything like that. The Government is fully cognisant of the fact that rank-and-file union members have families to support and want to work. All the Government is trying to do is provide an essential service for all of the people of Queensland and sort out some of the more militant union-leaders. The Government can be very proud of its achievement, and that is exactly what it is—a very real achievement.

When the union movement decided to try on SEQEB management over its decision to use contractors to carry out some selected projects during periods of heavy work-load, the union movement simply made the wrong choice. It is as simple, and yet as drastic, as that. SEQEB management was being fair and reasonable in approaching the unions with a request for their support in the use of contractors. No jobs were placed in jeopardy until the Electrical Trades Union began its industrial action against the management.

In its support for SEQEB management in its stand, the Government did the right thing. When the ETU continually rejected the recommendations and the orders of the Industrial Commission, its members should have expected what would happen to them. No responsible Government can stand idly by and allow such unbridled union power to continue unchecked, especially in an essential service industry, which is what the Government regards the electricity industry as. The vast majority of the people of Queensland concur.

For a very long time, the Government remained patient. Honourable members should not forget that the dispute began back in December 1984, but once the Government decided to act, it did so very firmly and very decisively. I commend it for that.

The unions are beginning to accept that they have lost the war. I do not believe that the Government regards it as a victory in those terms. It regards it as a victory for the people of Queensland. The unions are beginning to accept that they have lost this particular war with the State Government over who has the right to decide working arrangements—the employer or the employee. As far as we are concerned, in this instance it is the employer. The union knows that what the State Government has done to resolve the issue of excessive union power at SEQEB has the popular support of the vast majority of the people of Queensland.

The Australian Labor Party and the Trades and Labor Council should have the courage to fight the Redlands by-election on that series of interconnected issues, such as the SEQEB dispute, the Government initiatives that resolved it and the widespread private or, should I say, unofficial union acceptance of the waning power of unions.

The State secretary of the Building Workers Industrial Union (Hugh Hamilton) had the guts to stand up and be counted in an article in *The Sunday Mail* of 13 October. It is there for everyone to see. I wonder how many other unions are prepared to do the same.

Great screams and cries of anguish have come from union officials because they know that Hugh Hamilton is right. They keep saying that they know he is right. They know it privately. They accept what he is saying. They keep saying, "We would like to be able to say it ourselves." Because they realise that their own members would crucify them, they cannot do that.

Those self-same union officials were wrong in the SEQEB dispute and in other disputes. Can they not see that they are wrong now? They refuse to face reality. If they would face facts and accept what Hugh Hamilton is saying, or even if they supported him publicly, their members would respect them more for accepting and facing reality. Already, Hugh Hamilton has received support from his own members, who are tired of paying out the weekly levy to help support the sacked SEQEB workers whose jobs are no longer available to them. That is entirely their problem now.

Is not Ray Dempsey's silence deafening? Why is he so silent? He probably knows that, in the past few months, he has done more harm to the union movement in Australia than almost any other man, except Dinny Madden from the Electrical Trades Union. Many union officials would agree with that. As Dinny Madden did not make it in the Queen's Birthday honours, a number of employers and employer organisations in Queensland would like to nominate him for a mention in the new year honours. He has done more for industrial stability than anyone in Queensland, including Ray Dempsey. The record now shows that.

Surely everyone in the Labor movement knows that the TLC has only to accept publicly what the union officials have accepted privately and it would have the public on its side in a flash. I should not have to tell the ALP how to run its Redlands by-election campaign. I should not have to tell it how it could win the by-election. As we have seen today, it has more problems from another candidate, who is standing for the by-election purely because of the actions of the Labor movement in the union dispute.

Practical people know full well that the unions have had it too good for too long in Queensland and that they believed, in February, and still believe even now, that the power of the unions must be curbed. Practical people do not set out to destroy unions. Like everyone else, the unions have a place in the community. As practical members of the Queensland Government, we will try to ensure that union power is kept in check and under more control than previously. Mr Deputy Speaker, do not let the ALP try to tell you that the National Party is out to destroy unions. That is not the case. As Hugh Hamilton suggests, now is the time for the union movement to fall back to a new position from which it can present a united front as the champions of a new breed of worker who wants his just share of the prosperity of this State, not the whole box and dice.

Many of the points made by Hugh Hamilton are correct, but a few of them are a long way short of the mark. It is about time that the union movement accepted that it would win many friends in Government if union-leaders put a reasonable hat on their heads and wore it.

The ALP has let the unions down very badly throughout this dispute. Perhaps it is time that the unions considered the possibility of dumping the ALP hierarchy and replacing it with a more responsible, intelligent and wise group of men and women. It is clear from the silence of the present ALP hierarchy on the issue of union power that it is reluctant to face the public, which includes union members and what it regards as another losing ticket.

I refer to an editorial in *The Courier-Mail* approximately a week ago—perhaps not quite that long ago—which suggested that the Government should extend the hand of reasonableness, I suppose, to the SEQEB employees who are still out of work and reinstate their superannuation and lost benefits. In my opinion, that is a totally unrealistic approach. Workers in the electricity industry have cried wolf for too long. Those workers have gone out on strike and been threatened with the loss of their benefits. No matter whether they have won, lost or drawn, those workers usually got back their benefits. In this instance, they thought the same would happen again. However, this time the workers lost. I believe that it would be totally unrealistic to now give back to those employees their lost benefits. As far as I am concerned, it is not on.

I believe that the contract system will work. It is working in other areas. It is voluntary; it provides security and it contains plenty of flexibility. I commend the Minister on his initiative.

Debate, on motion of Mr Wharton, adjourned.

HOLIDAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs), by leave, without notice: I move—

> "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Holidays Act 1983 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Lester, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs) (5.42 p.m.): I move—

> "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Since becoming Minister for Employment and Industrial Affairs, I have arranged for a number of Acts to be examined with a view to eliminating any shortcomings. As a result, I am of the opinion that the Holidays Act should be amended to facilitate the granting of a special holiday and thus ensure that the community receives the benefit of a holiday on occasions such as a local agricultural, horticultural or industrial show.

The intent of section 6 of the Act with reference to the granting of a special holiday, particularly on the occasion of a local show, is for the local authority in the area concerned to be the body responsible for requesting a holiday. I am of the opinion that, in most instances, this is the correct procedure. In some of the larger provincial shires, it is pertinent for only certain divisions of the shire to have a holiday on the occasion of a show in a specific centre. It may be preferable for other areas of the shire to have a holiday in conjunction with a show in another town, either in that local authority or an adjoining shire.

Nevertheless, it has been of concern to me that, as the Act presently stands, the situation could arise in which a local authority may not apply for a holiday on the occasion of the local show and thus the citizens of the authority could be disadvantaged. There is no authority in the Act for the granting of a special holiday in situations in which the local authority does not make application to the Minister for such a holiday.

In order to meet such extenuating circumstances, one of the amendments now proposed provides for the Governor in Council to grant a holiday in respect of that particular district. This will not result in the approval of any additional holidays other than those that would usually be granted for the annual agricultural, horticultural or industrial show in each local authority.

In addition, situations have arisen in which a local authority has sought a show holiday on a day other than that proposed by the local show society. In some cases, arrangements have been made by the show society well in advance for His Excellency the Governor or another dignitary to officially open the show on a particular day. The legislation gives the Minister responsible for the Act discretionary power in the day to be actually allocated as a holiday in order that regard may be had to all circumstances.

One of the matters that has been the subject of some debate in the past has been that employees of building societies and other financial institutions should be included in the provisions relating to the granting of a bank holiday. That particular aspect has been discussed with representatives of relevant organisations. Having regard to the limited number of bank holidays granted during any one year and the areas in which a bank holiday is observed, it is considered that no action should be taken at this stage to include building societies and other financial institutions in the provisions of the Act.

I point out to honourable members that non-show holidays are in the form of bank holidays and are mainly half days for local country race meetings. For instance, in 1985, bank holidays were granted for the occasion of country race meetings in such centres as Cooktown, Charleville, Richmond, Coen and Laura. Bank holidays were also granted for other events such as the Cloncurry annual merry muster rodeo and the Gregory rodeo in the shire of Burke.

In 1983, during his reply to the debate when the present legislation was before the Parliament, the then Minister said that when the Act next came before Parliament, consideration might be given to the repeal of the provisions of the Act that could be considered to be outdated or not applicable in this day and age. In this connection, it is proposed to repeal section 9 of the Act, which presently prescribes procedures that banks are required to follow if they desire to close a branch in the afternoon of any day, including that the bank must publish a notice of the closing in a local newspaper between the third and the fourteenth day before the day of closing. The penalty for non-compliance with the section is $400. It is considered that in this modern era that requirement is no longer appropriate.

I therefore commend the Bill to the House and seek the co-operation and assistance of members in its passage.

Debate, on motion of Mr McLean, adjourned.

AUCTIONEERS AND AGENTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General), by leave, without notice: I move—

> "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Auctioneers and Agents Act 1971-1981 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr Harper, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (5.50 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Initially, the Auctioneers and Agents Act Amendment Bill was introduced in to this House on 3 April 1985. As was my intention, the Bill was allowed to lie on the table during the recess to allow interested parties to comment on provisions within the legislation. A number of submissions were received and considered. It was for that reason that the Bill was not reinstated on the Business Paper when the House resumed. Consequently, the Bill has been amended in response to those submissions.

One area of amendment is in relation to franchise agreements. A phasing-in period has been set for franchisees to comply with the requirements of the Bill in regard to notice being given that the agency is subject to a franchise agreement. The date has been set at 1 January 1987 but, in recognition of the fact that there may be need for some flexibility in cases in which permanent signs are concerned, the Bill allows for an application to be made by a franchisee so that further time may be granted for compliance with the Bill.

Another change relates to notification of beneficial interest by a real estate agent. At present, this is limited to notification when purchasing a property. I considered that a request by the Real Estate Institute of Queensland to have this extended to include the sale of property by an agent was both reasonable and desirable.

A number of amendments have been included in regard to pastoral houses. Following receipt of a submission by pastoral houses, it was agreed to extend licences to sell rural land and livestock to include also plant, machinery, furniture and other items intrinsically tied in with sales of rural land. Consideration has been given to urban property in areas served by pastoral houses as such. Each place of business of a pastoral house will now be able to auction up to four non-rural properties during any one year. As most pastoral houses have extended their activities beyond traditional roles and have diversified into the sale of urban property generally, they will be required to take out a real estate agent's licence if they exceed the concessional limit of four non-rural sales annually.

It is to be noted that the Bill requires each place of business to be managed by a person licensed under the Bill—either a working director who would hold a real estate agent's licence or the holder of a pastoral house manager's licence. These amendments represent the more important changes to the Auctioneers and Agents Act Amendment Bill originally introduced in this House.

When introducing that original Bill, I indicated that submissions had been received from a wide cross-section of the industry. The opportunity for further submissions to be made during the period of the parliamentary recess has been beneficial. I believe that the Bill presently reflects the balanced needs and requirements of the industry and the community.

I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Burns, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5.54 p.m.